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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Monday, November 16, 2015, at 2 p.m.

Senate

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2015

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal Father, inspire our lawmakers to give You their best. Striving to serve You and country, may they refuse to bring You the leftovers of their time, talents, and trust. Inspired by Your providential movements in our world, help them to raise the bar of their expectations. Remind them that You can accomplish through them more than they can ask or imagine.

Lord, today we pay tribute to all American veterans, living or dead. We praise You for the gift of people who are willing to serve their country honorably during times of war and peace. Inspired by their exemplary lives, grant to us all a new dimension of compassion, courage, and competence. Use us to touch Your world and leave it better than we found it.

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 (Mrs. ERNST). The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, for the information of all Senators, this morning the Senate will resume consideration of the MILCON–VA appropriations bill. Several amendments were agreed to yesterday, and we expect more to be considered before we complete action on the bill. Senator KIRK and Senator TESTER expect to wrap up consideration today, so any Senators with amendments to the bill should be talking to the two managers.

We will have a rollcall vote on the NDAA at approximately 11:20 a.m., and I hope to vote on passage of the MILCON–VA appropriations bill shortly thereafter.

If we complete action on NDAA, MILCON–VA, and send the long-term highway bill to conference later today, that will allow the Senate to adjourn for the Veterans Day holiday.

COMMEMORATING VETERANS DAY AND PASSING LEGISLATION SUPPORTING OUR VETERANS AND TROOPS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, like many of my colleagues, I plan to commemorate Veterans Day with the people I am honored to represent here in the Senate. I will join Kentuckians at a ceremony in Shelbyville's Veterans Memorial Park. Hands will be put to heart as the ''Star Spangled Banner'' is played. Heads will bow in reverence as 106 names are read aloud, each a Kentuckian who made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of others, and each a reminder of our enduring debt to America's men and women in uniform.

I am proud to represent the nearly 330,000 Kentuckians who have served in the Armed Forces. I am also proud to represent the many thousands of soldiers and their families who reside in or hail from our great Commonwealth, whether at Fort Knox, Fort Campbell, the Blue Grass Army Depot, or beyond.

I recently had a chance to meet some of Kentucky's brave soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines who currently serve in Afghanistan and Iraq. Sadly, a NATO helicopter had just crashed in Kabul, killing five people, including two American servicemembers. I was honored to take part in a prayer service led by a chaplain from Lexington, KY, and I note that the occupant of the Chair was with me at the time.

What an incredibly humbling moment it was. The tragic crash is a stark reminder of the incredible danger our service men and women face every day, and a stark reminder of what all Americans owe them.

Veterans should know that they have many champions fighting for them here in the Senate. One of them is Senator ISAKSON, the chair of the Veterans' Affairs Committee. Under his leadership, the committee has actively sought to do right by the men and women who never hesitate to do right

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

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by us. He has sent important legislation to the Senate floor that we have been able to pass on a bipartisan basis and that the President has signed into law.

One law we passed would improve the Veterans Choice Program, for instance, while another, the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act, would help reduce the tragedies that befall too many of our heroes and the heartbreak that befalls too many of their families.

Important Veterans' Affairs Committee oversight has also been brought to bear on an agency that has lost the trust of many it serves; that is, the VA.

Of course, there is much more to be done. Veterans deserve the very best, and the VA crisis will not be resolved easily or quickly, but working together, there is a lot we can do for the men and women who risk their all for their country.

One way to do so is by passing the Veterans funding bill that is before us. It is a result of great work by another champion of veterans, Senator KIRK, chair of the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee. Just like Senator ISAKSON's Veterans' Affairs Committee, the subcommittee led by the Senator from Illinois has done great work for veterans in sending important legislation such as this to the floor. We will pass one important measure today.

Senator KIRK's bill would fund the health care and the benefits our veterans rely on. It would support military families by funding the housing, schools, and health facilities that sustain them. It would provide support for medical research, for women's health, and for veterans suffering from traumatic brain injury. And in Kentucky, it would provide funding for a special operations headquarters at Fort Campbell, for educational facilities at Fort Knox, and for design work for a new medical center in Louisville.

Senator KIRK's bill would also fund reforms designed to help address the crisis we have seen at the VA. These reforms would allow for greater national and regional progress in reducing claims backlogs, and they would deploy important protections for whistleblowers as well.

It is obvious why our veterans deserve this bill right now, so let's not wait a moment longer. Let's pass this important legislation later today. The men and women who have worn our uniform have had to wait long enough for it already.

We will also turn to legislation today for the men and women who currently wear our uniform and have had to wait too long for it.

When Senator MCCAIN says that it is the first duty of the Federal Government to protect the Nation, he means it. He knows what it means to serve. He knows what it means to sacrifice. And in his role as chair of the Armed Services Committee, he worked hard to craft a bipartisan Defense authorization bill with input from both parties.

It would transform bureaucratic waste into crucial investments for our troops and their families, like the raises they have earned and the quality of life programs they deserve.

It would provide hope for wounded warriors and extend a hand of compassion to heroes who struggle with mental health challenges.

It would also authorize a new medical facility at Fort Knox, an important project I have championed literally for years.

And at a time when our country faces the most ''diverse and complex array of crises'' since the Second World War, as Henry Kissinger observed, Senator MCCAIN's bill would help position our military to confront the challenges of tomorrow as it offers support to the men and women serving in harm's way today.

The Defense authorization bill is legislation we typically consider every year. It is legislation that typically passes with broad bipartisan support. We expect that to finally happen again today. We expect the President to finally sign it this time.

This should have been allowed to happen a whole lot sooner. We all know the unfortunate and unnecessary roadblocks the Defense authorization bill has faced this year. We all know the President decided to veto the version of the bill we passed last month. That veto is particularly unfortunate and puzzling, given the two chief concerns the President cited when he vetoed it. No. 1, he said he was concerned that the bill relied upon contingency funding to meet the Department's operational costs. No. 2, he said he was concerned that the bill again contained a clear, bipartisan prohibition on moving Guantanamo Bay terrorists into our local communities.

But the bill really hasn't changed much since then, and the top line has now been settled by the bipartisan budget agreement. Either way, we look forward to the Senate passing this essentially unchanged legislation and the President's signing the bipartisan bill, along with—along with—its restrictions against bringing terrorists into the United States, into law.

This bill will include restrictions on bringing terrorists into the United States, and he is going to sign it. That is the right thing for our men and women in uniform, and that is the right thing for our country.

Before I leave the floor, I wish to underline a point I just referenced. This morning the Senate will pass two bills. It will pass a Veterans funding bill that supports Americans who have already served their country, and it will pass a Defense authorization bill that supports Americans who are currently serving. Each of these bills contains a clear, bipartisan prohibition on the President moving Guantanamo Bay terrorists into the backyards of the American people. Both of these bills include restrictions on moving terrorists into our country.

The Senate has voted many times over the years to enact these bipartisan prohibitions. We have enacted them in Congresses with split party control. We have enacted them in Congresses with massive, overwhelming Democratic majorities. And, today, the Congress elected by the American people will express itself clearly one more time—not once, but twice—today.

The President may not like this bipartisan action. It may conflict with a campaign slogan from 8 or 9 years ago. But here is how one Senator put it: ''Congress' job is to pass legislation. The President can veto it or he can sign it.'' That was then-Senator Obama as he was criticizing the idea of doing an ''end-run around Congress.''

''I believe in the Constitution,'' he said at the time—Senator Obama—''and I will obey the Constitution of the United States,'' said Senator Obama. Those were his words then. They should guide his actions now.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS APPROPRIATIONS BILL

Mr. REID. Madam President, as I mentioned yesterday morning, the Republican leader is right about a lot of what he talked about regarding the Military Construction-VA-HUD legislation, but the one thing he just glossed over is that as a result of our holding firm—we as a Democratic caucus holding firm—the veterans now have $2 billion more than they would have, had we followed the Republicans' lead—$2 billion more—allowing 70,000 veterans to be treated who wouldn't have been otherwise. So we are satisfied that this bill is a good bill, and it is a good bill because veterans are getting $2 billion more. There are other reasons, of course. I think the bipartisan support we got for the bill was important, but for our veterans, the most important part was $2 billion extra.

FIFTH CIRCUIT COURT IMMIGRATION DECISION

Mr. REID. Madam President, the Fifth Circuit Court's decision yesterday was a political move that ignores past precedents on Executive action on immigration.

The Republicans have spoken out against the President's action on what he has done on immigration. Why did he do it? Because he was trapped. He had to do it because the Republicans refused to legislate.

And like every President before him, President Obama has a legal right to establish clear immigration enforcement priorities and allocate resources accordingly.

But the attorney general of Texas and 25 other Republican Governors and attorneys general filed a lawsuit stating that the President had exceeded his authority. This decision affects millions of American families who are now subject to being torn apart, and as many as 5 million immigrants could be set for mass deportation.

I expect the administration will swiftly appeal this decision to the Supreme Court and that the Court will find the actions lawful. It is sad that Republicans are wasting their time talking about mass deportation when they could be doing things to solve the problem, such as passing a bill that reforms our immigration system once and for all. The Republican Party has neglected the lessons of the 2012 elections and has plunged over a cliff following Donald Trump, Ben Carson, and the others.

The Executive actions were neither a complete nor a permanent solution to the problems plaguing the immigration system, but they were a commonsense step in the face of inaction.

As Judge Carolyn Dineen King stated in her dissent very clearly, ''a mistake has been made.'' So it is now up to the U.S. Supreme Court to correct this grave mistake—a mistake that sets not only a dangerous precedent but one that is bad for families, bad for our communities, and bad for the future prosperity of our country. Again, as Judge King said, ''a mistake has been made.''

IRAN NUCLEAR AGREEMENT

Mr. REID. Madam President, today I want to address more directly the Republican leader's remarks that he gave yesterday regarding the Iran nuclear agreement. In short, no matter how Republicans misrepresent the Iran nuclear agreement, the agreement brought about the long-sought goal of preventing Iran from having a nuclear weapon. The agreement is nothing more, nothing less. It prevents Iran from having a nuclear weapon.

HOSTING PRIME MINISTER NETANYAHU

Mr. REID. Madam President, later today the Republican leader and I will host Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, as we have done on many other occasions. It is always a pleasure to meet with Prime Minister Netanyahu and reaffirm America's longstanding commitment to the security of Israel. Israel knows it has an ally in the United States—in fact, no greater ally in the world than our great country.

While some Republicans in Congress are trying to drive a false narrative of acrimony between the United States and Israel, I choose to see the full picture, and the full picture is one of strengthened cooperation and shared interests.

Israel has always and will always depend on the United States to be by its side. That is why the United States and Israel are negotiating right now a new 10-year memorandum of understanding on security assistance. Much of yesterday's meeting between the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Israel centered on the continued assistance we would provide Israel. Israel's interests have always been protected by the United States in matters that come before the United Nations, as Israel has always protected the interests of the United States before the United Nations.

In recent years we have seen how resolutions before the United Nations General Assembly and the U.N. Human Rights Council have unfairly targeted the people of Israel. The administration has denounced such efforts, but we also stand against Palestinian attempts to use the United Nations to go around a negotiated peace process. Wherever, whenever, and however, the United States will always stand by Israel.

VETERANS DAY

Mr. REID. Madam President, I share the Republican leader's hope that we can conclude the Military Construction-VA bill later this morning. I commend the managers of that legislation for doing a good job. There is no Senator I admire more than JON TESTER from Montana, and he has been ably leading the direction of this bill.

I join with the Republican leader as we honor our veterans tomorrow on Veterans Day.

Madam President, I just want to take a brief minute to talk about a veteran, whom I look to with admiration.

Today the chaplain gave a prayer saying that he prayed for veterans who have already left us and those veterans who are still alive.

My town is Searchlight, NV, a little tiny town with not a lot of people in it. It has been that way for a long time. For a brief period Searchlight was bigger than Las Vegas. It had 3,000 people there.

During World War II a young man who was already married and had children went to a movie with his wife in Las Vegas. He came out of the movies and told his wife: I think I have to join. He didn't have to, but he felt he had to.

So this young man joined the U.S. Army Air Corps, which is now the U.S. Air Force. It was a huge sacrifice for him and his family. He traveled with his wife and children to Georgia where he did his training and then went to the European theater as a pilot.

He served gallantly, bombing, strafing, and all the other things you did in the air in World War II. He had been through 68 different missions. He was through. But as happens sometimes in life, things develop that change your life. He volunteered for one more flight because one of the other pilots was unable to go.

On his 69th flight, somewhere over Belgium, Bill Nellis, the boy from Searchlight, was shot down. He is still there. That is where his grave is.

I know his family. I know his son Gary and his Aunt Thelma, whom I knew in Searchlight.

This good man was so gallant in the eyes of people from Nevada that a previous congressional delegation, in conjunction with the President of the United States, decided it would be appropriate to name the Las Vegas Gunnery School, as it was called at that time, Nellis Air Force Base.

Today Nellis Air Force Base, named after this man from Searchlight, is the finest Air Force fighter training facility in the world. Thousands and thousands of people serve there.

It was originally on the outskirts of Las Vegas. Now it is in Las Vegas in a very populated area. No one complains about it. We are so proud of that Air Force base. It is a huge facility that has the finest gunnery range for Air Force pilots in the world. We have exercises there every year where pilots from all over the world bring their own aircraft from Australia, Great Britain, and other places to train there.

We in Nevada are very proud of Nellis Air Force Base, as is the entire military complex in the United States. It is a wonderful facility. Tomorrow is the day we honor Bill Nellis and the other gallant people who have served and are serving in the U.S. military.

Would the Chair announce the business this morning.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 2029, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2029) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Kirk/Tester amendment No. 2763, in the nature of a substitute.

Kirk amendment No. 2764 (to amendment No. 2763), to clarify the term ''congressional defense committees.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 11 a.m. will be equally divided in the usual form.

The Senator from Utah.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 312

Mr. LEE. Madam President, I rise today to support and to request the Senate's approval of this resolution, which would designate the second week of November as National Pregnancy

Center Week in honor of the lifesaving and life-affirming work of America's community-supported pregnancy centers.

I am asking for my colleague's unanimous consent because there is absolutely nothing contentious about this resolution, S. Res. 312, nor is there anything contentious about the pregnancy resource centers commemorated by this resolution.

There are approximately 2,500 pregnancy resource centers in America. Every single day they serve an average of 65,000 women and men faced with challenging pregnancy decisions, providing them with a wide array of resources. That includes, at many centers, health care services such as pregnancy tests, ultrasounds, and testing for STDs and STIs. It includes emotional and educational support such as options counseling and parenting classes. It includes material and logistical assistance to help new moms and dads deal with all the little things that easily add up to big obstacles in the first few weeks and months of parenthood.

America's pregnancy resource centers aren't out to make a profit nor are they out there to push a particular political agenda. They are just there to help and to do so in a way that is compassionate, considerate of individual privacy, and respectful of the equal dignity of all human life.

Any way you look at it, America's pregnancy resource centers deserve our recognition and they deserve our respect and our gratitude. The real measure of their significance isn't in the words of a floor speech in the Senate or the outcome of a vote, it is in the thousands of lives they help save from the pain of abortion every year and in the millions of teachers, soldiers, nurses, neighbors, friends, and spouses whose lives and contributions to our communities we might never have known had it not been for the unassuming heroes down at the local pregnancy center who give their time to keep the lights on, answer the phones, and help young women find the hope and the courage to choose life.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 312, submitted earlier today; 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. Is there objection?

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I would ask the Senator to modify his request and offer a resolution that actually helps to move women's health and rights forward.

Simply put, the resolution that the Senator has offered is more of the same. It is another effort to pander to the extreme Republican base by using women's health and constitutionally protected rights as a political football. Unfortunately, it makes it clear for the umpteenth time that when it comes to improving access to affordable health care for women, some Republicans are determined to stand in the way of progress.

I expect that some of my Republican colleagues will say this resolution shows how much they care about women's health. The truth is it shows the opposite. It shows once again that the Republican Party wants to interfere in a woman's medical decision. Strengthening women's health care doesn't start with telling women what they should and should not do with their own bodies, but that is exactly what that resolution does.

If my Republican colleagues really want to support women's reproductive care, they would work with Democrats on improving access to affordable birth control under the Affordable Care Act, including emergency contraceptives, ensuring women and families make their own decisions about their health care—not their bosses—and fighting back against efforts across the country to undermine women's constitutionally protected health care rights.

It is time for Republicans to drop the political attacks on women's health and instead join Democrats to focus on these priorities and more like them, so that women—not politicians, not insurance companies, not CFOs or CEOs—are in control of their health care, as it should be.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 37

That is why I ask the Senator to modify his request and instead ask unanimous consent that the HELP Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 37, and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; 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. Will the Senator so modify his request?

Mr. LEE. Madam President, reserving the right to object, there is nothing divisive about this resolution I have offered today, nothing divisive whatsoever.

This simply seeks recognition of the great work that is performed by the men and women who staff these pregnancy centers. There is nothing about it that is a political football, nothing about it that is designed to drive a wedge.

Unlike our resolution, the resolution I submitted today, S. Res. 312, which mainly commends community volunteers around the country for helping young mothers and their children—hardly divisive—the Senator's counterproposal is divisive and controversial. My cosponsors and I only wanted to recognize the life-affirming and lifesaving work, the kind of work that brings families and communities together the counterproposal would only pull Americans further apart and further away from the more humane and compassionate society that all Americans deserve.

If calling for recognition of these brave and noble men and women who serve people at pregnancy centers around the country is divisive, we have significant problems, but the fact is, it is not. I would encourage anyone within the sound of my voice to read S. Res. 312, and they will discover it is not the least bit divisive and doesn't discuss anything that is the least bit controversial.

On that basis, I can't agree with the modification, and I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard to the modification.

Is there objection to the original request?

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I object to the original request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Maryland.

ARMED SERVICES AUTHORIZATION BILL

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I rise to speak as in morning business in terms of the bill we will be voting on at 11:20 a.m. today, the armed services authorization, as well as what we are going to be voting on this afternoon, which is veterans health care. They actually go hand in hand and what a great set of votes in a symmetry that shows our support for national security, our support for our U.S. military, our support for our U.S. military who are on Active Duty today, and then also for our veterans who in their hearts are always on Active Duty.

Today we have the ability to actually show we can govern, we can pass bills on a bipartisan basis that will help our country be able to defend itself, show our support to the U.S. military, and honor our commitment to the veterans. I am looking forward to voting on the armed services authorization because it does give the tools we need to be able to defend ourselves. I commend Senators MCCAIN and JACK REED for their excellent work.

Madam President, I wish to speak now as the vice chair of the Appropriations Committee. I am so excited that we are bringing the MILCON-VA bill to the Senate. I have been voting for veterans ever since I have come to Congress. Veterans are our Nation's heroes. They put their lives on the line to fight for our freedom. They have made tremendous sacrifices for our country. Whether it is veterans who are still alive from World War II, those who fought on Pork Chop Hill during the Korean war, the Vietnam war at Mekong Delta, and of course Desert Storm, Iraq, and Afghanistan, we owe our veterans a debt of gratitude. We want to show our gratitude not only with words and yellow ribbons but with deeds. I believe the best deed is to make sure we adequately fund the Veterans' Administration to end the backlog for disability benefits—if you fought on the frontlines, you shouldn't stand in line to get your disability benefits—and to robustly fund veterans

health care, along with other benefits this Congress has so authorized.

We have accomplished a lot over the years working for our veterans, and we will have a lot to do with what is in our legislation. I wish to commend the subcommittee chair, Senator MARK KIRK, and our vice chair, Senator JON TESTER, for the work they have done. As we were working on our bill this summer and through the spring, veterans told me and they told them that the Senate funding was too spartan; that we were underfunding our veterans and not just by a few dollars but by $850 million. So we held it up, not as a parliamentary ping-pong, not as a parliamentary temper tantrum but as a way of saying our veterans need more money.

As a result of the budget agreement, we are able to do this. We are on the floor today where an amendment will be offered by Senators KIRK and TESTER to add $2 billion for veterans health care, $2 billion to be determined by the Secretary.

What do we look forward to? Well, lifesaving drugs. One of course is this issue of being able to pay for hepatitis C; the other, while we are looking at actual hands-on medical care, we want to reduce the wait times. There is too much waiting at the Veterans' Administration, whether you are waiting for your disability claim or you are waiting to see your doctor or your mental health counselor or your ophthalmologist. We need to be able to reduce the wait times, and this is what part of this $2 billion will do.

Then there are those who are not only chronically ill from the wounds of war but are chronically and devastatingly injured. So we looked at those who are unable to care for themselves but are being cared for at home by loved ones. This will add more funds to be able to help those caregivers who are stepping up for their responsibility. So they are taking family responsibility, but we have to take USA responsibility. That is what we fought for in the $2 billion.

I urge my colleagues to move ahead and be able to vote for this bill. I do believe this legislation, by adding the money and the kind of excellent work that has been done by our authorizers, the insistence of good provisions being put into the bill—we are going to shrink that VA backlog. Also, we are going to do something else. We are going to advance funding for mandatory veterans' benefits. So no matter what government means, if we ever get into more shutdown, slamdown, slowdown politics due to us, the veterans' benefits will go forward.

I have been working on this backlog for a long time. By the time we got to March 2013, we were at a national standoff. There were over 600,000 claims pending. In Maryland we had one of the worst claims offices in my own hometown of Baltimore. I couldn't believe it. When I met with my Veterans Advisory Board and stories poured out of the kinds of calls that were coming into my Constituent Services Offices, not only were they waiting in line—this isn't like just standing in line at the supermarket, this is for disability benefits, for people who are in danger of losing their homes and other kinds of things. So we went to work on a bipartisan basis. I am proud of what we did. I am proud of our authorizers.

I see Senator ISAKSON from Georgia is on the floor. He was a big part of the reform effort. It shows our military knows how to win wars, but we need to know how we can govern so they don't have to fight a war with the VA bureaucracy. We hope we will be able to make these reforms. We are not going to throw money at it. We are going to insist on metrics.

The last point I wish to talk about is the advance appropriations. People will say: Aren't VA benefits mandatory? They are unless we get into one of our parliamentary ping-pong debates.

So I worked with the Disabled Veterans of America and a coalition of several voluntary veterans service organizations—great groups: the American Legion, Vietnam Veterans and Iraq and Iran Veterans of America. They asked me to add advance appropriations to the omnibus 1 year in advance—making sure we funded things 1 year in advance—protecting them from shutdown and slamdown politics. We were able to do that again, and I hope we can do that again this year.

I know I have other colleagues on the floor who wish to speak now, but I wish to say we can really show we not only know how to fight for America and its security, but we know how to fight for those who do the fighting.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I rise on the eve of Veterans Day to urge my colleagues to support the fiscal year 2016 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs appropriations bill.

This marks the first time in 2 years that we have had the opportunity to debate, amend, and vote on this important legislation on the Senate floor. It is vital to those who serve and to those who have served our Nation.

I first learned to honor our veterans from my father. My father is a World War II veteran who was wounded twice in the Battle of the Bulge and earned his Purple Heart and his Bronze Star. It was he who would take me to the parades on Veterans Day and on Memorial Day and boost me high on his shoulders. From the best vantage point in the parade, I would watch our veterans march by. He taught me of their sacrifice and that we have a never-ending obligation to thank those who wore the uniform of our country.

Passing this bill fulfills important obligations that we owe to our Nation's 22 million veterans, 127,000 of whom live in the great State of Maine. It sends an important message to our veterans: We will honor the sacrifices that you made and are making on our behalf. It would be a mistake to send the opposite message by further postponing or delaying consideration and final passage of this important bill before we celebrate our veterans, honor, and remember them tomorrow.

As a member of the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Subcommittee, I know this bill before us now is the result of bipartisan compromise. I commend the leadership of Chairman KIRK and Ranking Member TESTER, who have worked hand in hand to craft the managers' amendment that they will be bringing before us today.

In May of this year, the Appropriations Committee reported this funding bill by a strong vote of 21 to 9. Since then the Bipartisan Budget Act has been enacted, which provides needed additional resources to fund vital national priorities and that will be reflected in the managers' amendment. The managers' substitute would provide a total of $79.7 billion in funding, which I would note represents more than $1 billion more than the President's budget request.

This bill increases funding for our veterans in areas where they need it most, including mental health care and benefit claims processing, two issues which the Senator from Maryland has been so active in resolving. This bill also includes funds aimed at reducing veterans homelessness. This is a special priority of mine as the chairman of the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Subcommittee. I worked with Senator MURRAY on this issue, and we have made real progress—exciting progress—in reducing the number of homeless veterans across this country through the VASH Program, but there is still more work to be done. In addition, this bill includes $270 million in funding for the Office of Rural Health, through which the Access Received Closer to Home or the ARCH Program is funded. In five pilot States in which it operates, ARCH ensures that rural veterans, who often have a very difficult time accessing the regular VA health care system—particularly the VA hospitals—can receive care closer to where they live and where their families live.

I will never forget the story shared with me by a Maine veteran who broke his hip during a terrible snow storm and needed urgent care. The ARCH program, located at Cary Memorial Hospital in Caribou, ME, ensured he could receive the care he needed in his community and close to his family, rather than enduring a 4-hour drive over bumpy winter roads during a ferocious snow storm to the Togas VA Medical Center in Augusta, ME. ARCH has made a tremendous difference for our veterans and continues to help those who live in rural communities and who are facing similar challenges and emergencies.

The managers' substitute also increases Veterans Affairs medical services by nearly $2 billion, including $10

million for programs supporting caregivers. We all know of the wonderful work that Elizabeth Dole has done in this area, and I have been very pleased to join with my colleague Senator PATTY MURRAY in introducing the Military and Veteran Caregiver Services Improvement Act. The bill before us is going to help provide benefits for those who shoulder the responsibilities associated with long-term care for critically injured veterans. This bill would expand comprehensive caregiver benefits for those who take on those responsibilities.

I would note, Madam President, that the Senator from Wisconsin, Senator BALDWIN, and I have a broader bill dealing with caregivers that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions is considering and I hope will be approving shortly.

In addition to the vital funds for veterans programs, this bill also funds military construction projects, which unfortunately had been adversely affected—cut, delayed, deferred—as a result of the budget caps and the impact of sequestration. Therefore, I am particularly pleased this bill includes $7.2 million in funding needed to repair, renovate, and upgrade the 101st Air Refueling Wing's fire and crash rescue station in Bangor, ME. This is funding for which I have strongly advocated, and I thank the managers for including it the bill. The 101st ''MAINEiacs'' provide critical 24/7 air and ground refueling services that support local military operations, and this funding will strengthen their capabilities.

I would note, Madam President, that I recently met with General Breedlove, our NATO commander, and he told me he refueled at Bangor, ME, on his way back from Europe recently.

Madam President, I could go on and on about the important programs and priorities in this bill. They are essential to providing what we owe to our servicemembers and our veterans: safe and reliable infrastructure so that our troops can complete the missions they are assigned, access to medical care, earned compensation and benefits, and assistance to help our veterans successfully transition to their civilian lives.

Tomorrow, on Veterans Day, our Nation will pause to honor all those who served. Today, we have the opportunity to say to the American people, to our veterans, and to those who are considering military service to our Nation that no matter what partisan issues may divide us, we stand united in fulfilling our commitment to those who serve and those who have served.

We can send that message by passing this measure and sending to the President a funding bill that takes care of our servicemembers, our veterans and their families, and that honors their service to our great country.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

(At the request of Mr. MCCONNELL, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

• Mr. VITTER. Madam President, I wish to support the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act. This bipartisan bill provides critical resources for our active military, veterans, and their families.

The courage and sacrifice that define our soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, coastguardsmen, and all servicemembers over the years cannot be understated. Major chapters in our Nation's rich history have been and continue to be written by our brave servicemen and women, many of whom hail from Louisiana.

The very least we can do in return is keep our commitments to them. It is our obligation to fund veterans' health care and benefits, and this bill does just that while also making necessary reforms to the scandal-plagued Department of Veterans Affairs.

Our Louisiana veterans have waited a long, long time to have efficient access to effective health care, and they deserve much better than what has been handed to them. That is why I have worked for years to authorize new VA clinics and build interim clinics in southwest Louisiana, including one in Lake Charles, LA, that is expected to open before the Thanksgiving holiday.

The latest National Defense Authorization measure has been revised to reflect the recent budget deal, which modified the spending caps for both base and war defense spending. In light of these changes, I firmly believe the administration should honor past statements that current military reductions are due to defense budget cuts stemming from sequestration, which have now been postponed for 2 years.

It is critically important to recognize that the newly revised 2-year budget deal provides necessary relief for the Department of Defense and allows a much-needed opportunity to avoid further cuts to the Active-Duty Army's troop strength. Since 2013, the U.S. Army alone has decreased troop strength 21 percent. That is both dangerous and unacceptable.

I have fought against dangerously steep drawdowns and was proud to fight this issue on the Senate floor last year. The United States cannot afford continued troop cuts at a time when military leaders say that we are facing an unprecedented number of threats.

I urge my colleagues to support our military and to support this bipartisan bill.•

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for 5 minutes.

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

VETERANS DAY

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, this Veterans Day we pause to honor the men and women in our military who stepped up to fight for our freedom and to protect our families. In my home State of Washington, we have a lot to be thankful for. More than 600,000 of our friends, our neighbors, and our family members have bravely served their country.

As the daughter of a World War II veteran, I know the sacrifice it takes to keep our country safe and protect our values. Thanks to my father and the countless other veterans I have had the honor of meeting, I believe that when brave individuals sign up to serve our country, we must fulfill our promise to support them when they come home. We should honor our veterans by showing them we have their backs long after the war is over.

While I would like to stand here and say that our country is doing everything we can for the people we owe the most to and that we are fulfilling the promise we made to them when we sent them off to fight for us, I believe our work is far from over. Though Congress passed a sweeping bill last year to provide new resources and add more accountability to the VA, I continue to hear from veterans across my home State of Washington about care that is falling short. Despite structural changes at the VA, veterans are still waiting on surgeries and MRIs and oncology appointments, mental health screenings, you name it. Our veterans have already fought for our country. They should not have to fight to get their health care or the benefits they were promised, so we have to fight on their behalf.

As the senior member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I am committed to making this country work better for our veterans. Even though there are challenges, there is hope. Just 2 weeks ago, we successfully passed the Homeless Veterans Services Protection Act out of the Senate to make sure a VA policy change doesn't cut off services and force veterans onto the street. That bill cleared one hurdle; now I call on my colleagues in the House to get this done.

I am also fighting to end the VA's outdated ban on fertility services for veterans so they can start families. There is absolutely no reason to deny this service for members of our military, especially when they are injured while fighting for our country. And I believe we must extend the critically important military caregiver support services program to veterans of all eras—a program that enables injured veterans to recover and stay in their homes with their families instead of being in a hospital or a nursing home.

Madam President, these aren't the only things I am working on. Because our veterans kept their end of the bargain, we have to keep ours. That means they should have access to mental health care to help deal with the often invisible wounds of war. That means a solid path to a college degree. That means job training programs and transitional services so that veterans have a path to good careers after their military service is complete. These things aren't about going above and beyond; they are the bare minimum of what our country should be doing to fulfill its promise to care for our veterans.

So as our country recommits to that promise this Veterans Day, I want to let veterans know in my home State of Washington and across the country that I will not stop fighting for them. I again want to express my heartfelt thanks to all the veterans around the country who have served and for all who are still serving today.

I call on all of my colleagues and fellow citizens to honor our veterans every day of the year with the kind of action that shows them we are grateful for their service.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Madam President, I want to thank Senator KIRK and Senator TESTER for their outstanding work on this appropriations bill; Senator MURRAY for her cooperation and help on caregivers and so many programs in the committee; and Senator COLLINS and her work on MILCON. I want to encourage all my fellow Members of the Senate to vote favorably on this legislation when it comes before us later today.

I want everyone to stop, take a deep breath, and think about three things: No. 1, today is the 240th anniversary of the United States Marine Corps—the strongest veterans we have, veterans who fought and died for us around the world for 2½ centuries. Tomorrow, at the eleventh hour, on the eleventh day of the eleventh month, we celebrate the armistice of World War I and Veterans Day in America. And today on the floor of the Senate, we are fixing some problems that have confronted our veterans for the better part of the last 10 years. As the Members of the committee who are on the floor know, the VA literally almost collapsed 2 years ago. Health services in Phoenix, AZ, were a disaster. People were cheating on appointments and shortening veteran times to make themselves look better. The VA had a reputation of being the worst agency in the Federal government.

Now, I don't take credit for it as chairman, but I will tell you what your committee members have done—members like Senator TESTER and Senator MURRAY. Instead of complaining about people, instead of putting targets on the wall and saying they are the problem, we decided to be part of the solution. I want to recite for just a second what has happened in the last 10 months.

No. 1, we passed the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act, and this bill funds it. It will help to reduce the number of suicides. Today, 22 veterans per day commit suicide, and we want that reduced to a perfect score of zero at some point in time. But you do that only by investing funds, hiring psychiatrists, and making a commitment. This Senate and the House have done so.

We had an overrun of $1.428 billion—more than I can count to—in the Denver hospital the VA was trying to build. They were 13 years into construction and not even half finished. This committee said that will not stand. We passed legislation to complete the funding by taking the money out of VA without additional appropriations from the Congress, and more importantly we got the VA out of the construction business. We said: You guys are supposed to take care of the health of our veterans, not——

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority time has expired, Senator.

Mr. ISAKSON. I ask unanimous consent to have 3 additional minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. TESTER. I just need about 1 minute, JOHNNY—sorry, the Senator from Georgia. You can have everything, but just give me 1 minute.

Mr. ISAKSON. How much time remains?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Approximately 2½ minutes, Senator.

Mr. ISAKSON. Well, let me just give you the closing, and I will leave all the juicy parts for later on. We will talk about those in the press release.

The story that should be read about this appropriations bill is we are not letting our veterans down. We are uplifting our veterans, and we are seeing to it they get what they deserve. We are seeing to it that the problems we have seen illustrated in the papers of the United States of America are being fixed.

The VA is a work in progress. There will still be problems but not because of attitude or lack of funding and not because of a lack of commitment by this Congress. We are going to do what our veterans did for us. We are going to stand ground, we are going to take the hill, we are going to hold the hill, and we are going to see to it that those who fought and died for the United States of America are rewarded, not only for themselves and for their health care but for their retirement benefits and for their loved ones as well.

I commend Senator TESTER on what he has done, Senator KIRK for what he has done, and all the members of the committee.

I yield back the remainder of the time to the distinguished Senator from Montana, who can call me JOHNNY any time he wants to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Madam President, I thank the Senator from Georgia. I appreciate his comments and very much thank him for the compliments. This MILCON–VA appropriations bill is a critically important bill. Why? Because we are demanding a lot from the VA. In order to demand a lot, we need to give them the tools and resources they need to be successful. It would be totally unfair to put them on the line without the resources they need to take care of our veterans.

That is important because today we have unprecedented demand. Not only are our Vietnam veterans getting older, not only do they need services like never before, but we have been at war for 15 years in the Middle East, and we have folks coming back with complex injuries. We have men and women who need help when they get back. Some of these veterans would not have survived if they had been in any other war but this one. So the pressure on the VA is incredibly important, and if we are going to fix the access problem, if we are going to serve our veterans in the way they need to be served, we need to pass this bill.

Let me finish with a quick story. Not long ago a guy by the name of Henry—a Vietnam vet from Helena, MT—walked into my office. Henry fought in Vietnam. He was awarded four Purple Hearts for his combat and for his sacrifice. Henry walked into my office, sat down across from my staff member, and said: I can't live any more. Henry was in trouble. He had behavioral health problems that he needed professional help to get fixed. We were able to get him to the VA. The VA had a behavioral health professional who was able to help Henry, and Henry is living a good life today.

Our veterans deserve no less than to make sure they get the help they need when they need it, and that is what this bill is about. So we will be voting on a managers' package soon, and then we will be voting on passing this bill and getting it to the President's desk. Hopefully, we can do it with a strong, healthy vote—a unanimous vote, as a matter of fact—because this is an important bill not only for military construction but also for veterans.

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

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

RELATING TO PROVISIONS OF THE BORDER PATROL AGENT PAY REFORM ACT OF 2014

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Chair lays before the Senate the House message to accompany S. 1356, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Resolved, That the bill from the Senate (S. 1356) entitled ''An Act to clarify that certain provisions of the Border Patrol Agent Pay Reform Act of 2014 will not take effect until after the Director of the Office of Personnel Management promulgates and makes effective regulations relating to such provisions,'' do pass with an amendment.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—H. CON. RES. 90

Mr. MCCAIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate proceeds to the consideration of H.

Con. Res. 90, as under the previous order, it be in order for me to offer an amendment to the resolution; further, that the amendment be agreed to and all other provisions under the previous order remain in effect.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

MOTION TO CONCUR

Mr. MCCAIN. Madam President, I move to concur in the House amendment to S. 1356.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 20 minutes equally divided prior to a vote on the motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 1356.

The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Madam President, today the Senate will once again consider the National Defense Authorization Act. This legislation passed the House last week in an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote of 370 to 58. I hope we will have a similarly resounding vote here today.

Today's vote would not be possible without the hard work of Chairman MAC THORNBERRY, chairman of the House Armed Services Committee. It has been a privilege to work alongside him and the gentleman from Washington, Congressman SMITH, to produce a defense authorization bill worthy of the troops it supports.

I thank my friend and colleague from Rhode Island, Senator REED, for his dedicated work on this legislation and his many substantive contributions that made this a better bill.

I thank the majority leader, Senator MCCONNELL, for bringing this legislation to the floor today and for his commitment throughout this process to ensuring we give our military the certainty they need to plan and execute their missions.

For 53 consecutive years, Congress has passed the National Defense Authorization Act. That is a testament to the vital importance of this legislation, which provides the authorities and support necessary for our military to defend the Nation. But perhaps at no time in the last half century has this legislation been so critical. Our Nation confronts the most diverse and complex array of crises since the end of World War II—the rampage of ISIL's terrorist army, Iran's malign activities across the Middle East, Russia's invasion of Ukraine and bloody intervention in Syria, China's continued pattern of assertive behavior toward its neighbors in the Asia-Pacific, and the list goes on, including what appears to be the recent bombing of an airliner over Egypt which apparently caused the loss of 244 lives, apparently an act of terror of monumental consequences.

Rising to the challenges of an increasingly dangerous world requires bold reforms to national defense, and that is what this legislation delivers. The legislation is a reform bill. This legislation delivers the most sweeping reforms to our defense acquisition system in a generation. The NDAA modernizes a 70-year-old military retirement system and extends benefits to hundreds of thousands of servicemembers previously excluded under the old system. The legislation also makes significant reforms to Pentagon headquarters and management to ensure that precious defense resources are focused on our warfighters rather than bloated staffs. The bill identifies $11 billion in excessive and unnecessary spending from that request and reinvests those savings in critical national security priorities, including more fighter aircraft, accelerated shipbuilding, strengthening our cyber defenses, and $300 million in vital assistance to Ukraine to resist Russian aggression.

We did all of this while upholding our commitments to our servicemembers, retirees, and their families. The NDAA reauthorizes over 30 special pays and bonuses, makes military health care more portable, increases access to urgent care facilities, strengthens sexual assault prevention and response, and knocks down bureaucratic obstacles to ensure servicemembers maintain access to the medicines they need as they transition from Active Duty.

Finally, the legislation before us recognizes that a strong national defense requires supporting our friends and allies and responding to common threats. With Vladimir Putin on the march, the NDAA includes $300 million to help Ukraine resist Russian aggression, including $50 million for lethal assistance and counter-artillery radars. As China continues its aggressive behavior in the South China Sea, the NDAA will provide $50 million to assist and train our allies in the region to increase maritime security and the maritime domain awareness. As the Taliban mounts an offensive across Afghanistan, the NDAA authorizes $3.8 billion for the Afghanistan Security Forces Fund to preserve the gains of the past decade and continue to degrade and defeat terrorists who want to attack the United States and our allies.

This is an ambitious piece of legislation, but in the times we live, we cannot afford business as usual in the Department of Defense. To prepare our military to confront our present and future national security challenges, we must champion the cause of defense reform, rigorously root out Pentagon waste, and invest in modernization and next-generation technologies to maintain our military technological advantage. That is what this legislation is all about.

Additionally, I would point out that as our citizenry and our voters are deeply frustrated and angry about our failure to get anything done here in the Congress of the United States, I would at least make the comment that our highest priority and responsibility is defending the Nation. I believe this legislation is an example of working not only on both sides of the aisle but on both sides of the Capitol. I would argue that this is the most significant reform legislation that has been passed in 30 years, but I would also tell my colleagues that this is just the beginning. This is the beginning of a bipartisan effort to reform the Pentagon, to reform the way we do business, to reform our priorities, and to reform the way the Pentagon was structured and our defense was structured. The last time it was reformed was 30 years ago under legislation called Goldwater-Nichols. Obviously, in the last 30 years that world situation has changed dramatically—dramatically.

On a bipartisan basis, working across the aisle and across the Capitol, I can assure my colleagues that next year at about this time, they will be seeing legislation that will try to address the challenges we are now facing in the world—in a more chaotic world than we have seen since the end of World War II. That is not just JOHN MCCAIN's opinion; that is the opinion of every knowledgeable, respected national security expert, ranging from Henry Kissinger, to Madeleine Albright, to Zbigniew Brzezinski, to Brent Scowcroft and others. We have to have a reformed Pentagon to meet the challenges. One great example of that is cyber security. Thirty years ago there were no cyber attacks on the United States of America. Today it is one of the looming challenges we face.

I intend to carry on in the long tradition of this committee in which the Senator from Rhode Island and I have worked in partnership in addressing these new challenges and these grave challenges to America's security.

I am proud of this legislation. Could we have done more? Yes. Were there different areas to which perhaps we should have paid more attention? Perhaps. But I would argue that this is the most significant reform legislation in the last 30 years.

I thank my friend and colleague from Rhode Island.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Madam President, I rise to speak in support of the revised National Defense Authorization Act conference report we have before us today. It is the result of months of collaborative work by the Senate Armed Services Committee and a very thoughtful conference. I would like to join Chairman MCCAIN and commend Chairman MAC THORNBERRY of Texas and Ranking Member ADAM SMITH of Washington. The collaboration, the thoughtfulness, and the consideration were extraordinary and outstanding throughout the conference process.

I have to say that from my point of view, the reason we are here today most fundamentally is the leadership of Chairman MCCAIN on the committee. It was thoughtful, it was bipartisan, and it encouraged participation by all the members of the committee. There was vigorous debate and then there were votes, and that is the way this

committee and this Congress should operate.

Ultimately, too, I think it reflected what the Chairman has always brought to his duties as a Member of the U.S. Senate and before that the U.S. House of Representatives and before that the U.S. Navy—understanding that what we do here ultimately reflects and influences and shapes the service and sacrifice of millions of young Americans in uniform. The Chairman never forgets that. He has laid out some of the extraordinary reforms that have been included in this legislation, and he has also indicated that we will continue to work next year under his leadership on additional reforms. These reforms in compensation, personnel policies, and a host of others, are going to set us and our Department of Defense on a better path forward. Again, much of it is because of his leadership and his direction.

Previously, the National Defense Authorization bill came before the Senate and there was one area of major disagreement; that was the use of the overseas contingency operations fund. I must again thank the Chairman because he allowed a vigorous debate, a vote on the floor, and ultimately and very satisfactorily this has been resolved in the recent budget agreement. So now we have legislation before us that raises the annual budget cap of the Department of Defense and other agencies, and it allows our defense to be more forward-looking and more able to rationally budget going forward. I think this has given us both the budget authority and the proper direction so that we can have a much more stable and much more predictable future. Again, I think it will be a wonderful facilitator as we consider additional reforms next year in the Defense Authorization bill.

The budget agreement also recognizes the fact that one of the challenges is not only those programs that are controlled by the Department of Defense but also other agencies that are involved in national security. Relief for those agencies is also important in carrying out the mission of the Department of Defense and protecting the American people.

With this new NDAA, I think we have been able to keep our pledge to the men and women in uniform of the United States.

Let me finally conclude where I began. I thank Chairman MCCAIN, Chairman THORNBERRY, and Ranking Member SMITH, but more particularly the staff. We who have the privilege of serving on the Armed Services Committee understand the extraordinary hours, the effort, the insight, and the total commitment of not only the committee staff members but the staffs of the individual members. Their efforts are reflected in this bill. It will not bear their names but, more importantly, it will bear their work. For that I thank them very, very much.

Let me urge all of my colleagues to support this bill, to join Senator MCCAIN and others so that for the 54th straight year we will have a National Defense Authorization Act that will become the law of the United States.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, earlier this year, I voted in opposition to the fiscal year 2016 National Defense Authorization Act, NDAA. Since the Senate last voted on the fiscal year 2016 NDAA, Congress has passed and the President has signed the new Bipartisan Budget Act, which raised the discretionary caps on spending across the government, averted a default, and provided a path forward on appropriations.

The Bipartisan Budget Act also enabled authors of the NDAA to fix a gimmick that called for spending from overseas contingency operations, OCO, funding to meet requirements that should have been supported by the Department's base budget. I remain concerned, however, that, in order to meet the new caps, budgetary authority had to be cut from this bill. Specifically, I do not believe that readiness funds for the Army, the Army National Guard, and the Army Reserves should be slashed at the same time that many in this body are demanding more soldiers be sent to places like Eastern Europe. This authorization bill will spend hundreds of millions of dollars on unneeded and ineffective missile defense programs, for example, while cutting the training and preparation funds for the men and women we send overseas. The bill also makes significant changes to the defense acquisition system and, inexplicably, cuts key provisions to support the National Guard that enjoyed support in both the Senate and the House.

But perhaps most importantly, I am concerned that, in this new version of the bill, Congress failed to reconsider the ill-advised restrictions on detainee transfers from Guantanamo Bay that are contained in this NDAA—restrictions that President Obama cited as one reason for his veto of the original version of the bill last month. I opposed passage of that conference report in part because it contained a needless prohibition on transferring detainees to the United States for detention or trial, and it imposed unnecessary restrictions on transferring detainees to foreign countries.

Rather than working to address these misguided provisions, Republicans in Congress have evidently decided to stand in the way of finally bringing this terrible chapter to a close. They are making a grave mistake. For over a decade, the detention facility at Guantanamo has been a stain on our national reputation and served as a recruitment tool for terrorists. Guantanamo is also a tremendous waste of taxpayer dollars, costing approximately $3.4 million per year to maintain a single detainee—an astonishing amount of money that could be repurposed to keep our men and women in uniform safe. Closing Guantanamo is the morally and fiscally responsible thing to do, and I am deeply disappointed that these restrictions have been included. That is why I was proud to cosponsor an amendment filed by Senator FEINSTEIN to strip these troubling provisions from the bill.

The bill does include an extremely significant provision: the McCain-Feinstein antitorture amendment. Last year, Senator FEINSTEIN and the Senate Intelligence Committee did this country a great service in exposing the CIA's horrific practices under the Bush administration. The McCain-Feinstein amendment is a major step toward finally bringing to a close that dark, shameful chapter in our Nation's history. This provision finally codifies in statute the interrogation standards in the Army Field Manual—not just for military personnel, but for intelligence agents as well. It will clearly define acceptable interrogation practices and will hopefully ensure that America never engages in torture again.

Providing certainty for the Department's men and women and their families, as well as for military planners, is very important, and in significant ways, this bill accomplishes that. While this bill has shortcomings I hope we can address in the near future, I have given my support to its adoption and will only add that, in advance of Veterans Day and every day the men and women who serve and protect us deserve nothing less than the thanks of a grateful nation.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I wish to express reluctant support for the fiscal year 2016 National Defense Authorization Act.

Many parts of the agreement represent bipartisan consensus between Chairman MCCAIN, Chairman THORNBERRY, Ranking Member REED, and Ranking Member ADAM SMITH. We all appreciate their hard work on those matters for our troops and their families.

It provides well-deserved pay increases to our uniformed and defense civilian workforce. It modernizes the personnel benefit system to include a government matched savings plan. It authorizes $300 million in assistance to Ukraine, of which $50 million may be lethal assistance. It codifies the President's Executive order against torture and ensures that interrogations follow the Army Field Manual. I wish to thank Senator MCCAIN and Senator FEINSTEIN in particular for their leadership on this issue.

In addition, it extends the Afghan Special Immigrant Visa program so that we may continue to keep faith with foreign translators who risked their lives working with our troops. It authorizes a number of military construction projects around the world, including $29 million in family housing units at Rock Island Arsenal, IL. It reauthorizes the DOD–VA pilot program at North Chicago, the Lovell Federal Health Care Center.

For these and many other reasons, I voted for the agreement, but it is a

compromise, and I must express my opposition to a few of its provisions.

One of those points of disagreement is that the bill prevents the closure of the U.S. military base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The reality is that, every day that it remains open, Guantanamo prison weakens our alliances, inspires our enemies, and calls into question our commitment to human rights.

Time and again, our most senior national security and military leaders have called for the closure of Guantanamo. In addition to the national security cost, every day that Guantanamo remains open, we are wasting taxpayer dollars. We are spending $3.3 million per year for each detainee held at Guantanamo Bay—compare that with the estimated $78,000 that it costs to hold a detainee in a Federal super maximum security prison.

Yet the conference agreement makes it even harder to transfer detainees to foreign countries, prohibits transfers to the U.S., and prohibits construction or modification of facilities in the U.S.

All of us are committed to preventing terrorist attacks. Terrorists deserve swift and sure justice and severe prison sentences.

But holding detainees at Guantanamo does not administer justice effectively. It does not serve our national security interests, and it is inconsistent with the country's history as a champion of human rights.

In order to conform to the budget agreement, the bill also includes $1.7 billion in reductions to headquarters management personnel. Everyone in the Senate wants to cut the fat from the Pentagon, but we must make sure that these cuts are targeted toward inefficiency and waste, as opposed to recklessly eliminating our valued DOD civilian workforce.

The women and men who serve our Nation's defense outside of a uniform are our teammates in making our country secure. They process military pay; investigate fraud, waste, and abuse; oversee expensive weapons programs; and many more important functions. I am proud of each DOD civilian, especially those who work in Illinois, and I will work to make sure that the Congress supports their contributions to our country.

This is a very good agreement, these reservations notwithstanding. It is full of provisions which help our troops, reforms the way the Pentagon does business, and provides for our military families. I thank Senator MCCAIN and Senator REED for their hard work and commend the bill's passage for the 54th year in a row.

Mr. MCCAIN. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—H.R. 2029

Mr. KIRK. Madam President, the ranking member and I have a package of amendments that have been cleared by both sides. I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate resumes consideration of H.R. 2029, the following amendments be called up, reported by number, and the Senate vote on the amendments en bloc: Moran, No. 2774; Murkowski, No. 2775; Murkowski, No. 2776; Blumenthal, No. 2779; Blumenthal, No. 2781, Toomey, No. 2785; Sullivan, No. 2786; Sullivan, No. 2787; Collins, No. 2788; Cornyn, No. 2789; Bennet, No. 2795; Durbin, No. 2794; and Boxer, No. 2798.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question occurs on agreeing to the motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 1356.

Mr. DAINES. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

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

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

The result was announced—yeas 91, nays 3, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 301 Leg.]

YEAS—91

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

NAYS—3

Merkley	Sanders	Wyden

NOT VOTING—6

Cruz	Heller	Rubio
Graham	Paul	Vitter

The motion was agreed to.

MAKING A TECHNICAL CORRECTION IN THE ENROLLMENT OF S. 1356

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of H. Con. Res. 90, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 90) directing the Secretary of the Senate to make a technical correction in the enrollment of S. 1356.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

AMENDMENT NO. 2796

(Purpose: To modify the resolution)

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 2796.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Arizona [Mr. MCCAIN] proposes an amendment numbered 2796.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under ''Text of Amendments.'')

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, amendment No. 2796, offered by the Senator from Arizona, Mr. MCCAIN, is agreed to.

Under the previous order, the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 90, as amended, is agreed to.

Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill 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.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016—Continued

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, what is the pending business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. H.R. 2029.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 2774, 2775, 2776, 2779, 2781, 2785, 2786, 2787, 2788, 2789, 2795, 2794, AND 2798 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2763

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the clerk will report the following amendments by number.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Illinois [Mr. KIRK], for others, proposes amendments numbered 2774, 2785, 2786, 2787, 2788, and 2789 to amendment No. 2763.

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. MCCONNELL], for Ms. MURKOWSKI, proposes amendments numbered 2775 and 2776 to amendment No. 2763.

The Senator from Montana [Mr. TESTER], for others, proposes amendments numbered 2779, 2781, 2795, 2794, and 2798 to amendment No. 2763.

The amendments are as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 2774

(Purpose: To prohibit the use of funds to pay for the transfers or relocations of senior executives of the Department of Veterans Affairs)

At the end of title II, add the following:

SEC. _____. None of the amounts appropriated or otherwise made available by title II may be used to carry out the Home Marketing Incentive Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs or to carry out the Appraisal Value Offer Program of the Department with respect to an employee of the Department in a senior executive position (as defined in section 713(g) of title 38, United States Code).

AMENDMENT NO. 2775

(Purpose: To require the Comptroller General of the United States to submit to Congress a report evaluating the implementation by the Department of Veterans Affairs of section 101 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. (a) Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the congressional veterans committees a report evaluating the implementation by the Department of Veterans Affairs of section 101 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–146; 38 U.S.C. 1701 note).

(b) The report required by subsection (a) shall include, with respect to the implementation of such section 101, an evaluation of the following:

(1) The effect of such implementation on the reduction in the use of purchased care by the Department, including delays or denials of care and interruptions in courses and continuity of care.

(2) The ability of health care providers to meet the demand for primary, specialty, and behavioral health care under such section 101 that cannot reasonably be provided in medical facilities of the Department.

(3) The efforts of the Department to recruit health care providers to provide health care under such section 101.

(4) The accuracy of the information provided to veterans through call centers regarding the receipt of health care under such section 101.

(5) The timeliness of referrals of veterans by the Department to health care providers under such section 101.

(6) Unique issues and difficulties in the implementation of section 101 with respect to veterans residing in rural areas, the States of Alaska and Hawaii and states lacking a full service VA Hospital.

(7) With respect to rural areas: (A) an identification of the average wait times for veterans in rural areas to receive health care under such section 101, measured from when the veteran first calls the Department or contracted call center to request an appointment; (B) an assessment of utilization rates for health care provided under such section 101 in rural areas (C) an assessment of the accessibility of veterans in rural areas to primary and specialty care at medical centers of the Department and from non-Department health care providers under such section 101; (D) an assessment of the status of any pilot programs created by the Department to provide care under such section 101; (E) an identification of the number of health care providers providing health care under such section 101 to veterans in rural areas, broken out by primary care providers, specialty and subspecialty providers, and behavioral health providers in each Veterans Integrated Service Network.

(8) Recommendations for such improvements to the provision of health care under such section 101 as the Comptroller General considers appropriate.

(c) In this section, the term ''congressional veterans committees'' means the Veterans Affairs Committees of the United States Senate and the House of Representatives and the Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies of the Committees on Appropriations of the United States Senate and the House of Representatives.

AMENDMENT NO. 2776

(Purpose: To require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit to Congress a report on the provision of health care to veterans in Alaska through the use of non-Department of Veterans Affairs health care providers)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. Not later than February 1, 2016, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report that supplements the report required under section 4002(c) of the Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–41) and that contains the following:

(1) A description of the changes in access, if any, of veterans in Alaska to purchased care from the Department of Veterans Affairs that have resulted from implementation of section 101 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–146), including denials of care and interruptions in the course and continuity of care.

(2) An assessment of the performance of the Department in providing health care under such section 101 in Alaska, including—

(A) the performance of call center service provided to veterans;

(B) the accuracy of call center information provided to veterans and health care providers;

(C) whether health care providers are agreeing to provide health care under such section 101 in each of the major communities in Alaska;

(D) gaps in the availability of health care providers, disaggregated by primary, specialty, subspecialty, and behavioral health care;

(E) impediments to the provision of health care under such section 101; and

(F) plans to mitigate those impediments.

(3) An assessment of the status of health care provider vacancies at the VA Alaska Healthcare System as of the date of submittal of the report under this section, including impediments to filling those vacancies and plans to mitigate those impediments.

(4) A description of the manner in which the Department plans to serve the primary, specialty, and behavioral health care needs of veterans in Alaska if the plan and recommendations set forth in the report submitted under such section 4002(c) are implemented, including a description of specific strategies to be employed by the Department to address gaps in the provision of health care to veterans and the supply and demand of health care providers for veterans, including the roles of tribal health providers and community providers in addressing those gaps.

AMENDMENT NO. 2779

(Purpose: To require that amounts appropriated to the Department of Veterans Affairs for medical and prosthetic research are used to ensure the provision of gender appropriate prosthetics and to conduct research related to toxic exposure)

On page 31, line 23, strike the period and insert '': *Provided*, That such sums are allocated to ensure the provision of gender appropriate prosthetics and to conduct research related to toxic exposure.''

AMENDMENT NO. 2781

(Purpose: To require that amounts appropriated to the Department of Veterans Affairs for medical supplies and equipment are used to procure gender appropriate prosthetics)

On page 30, line 6, strike the period and insert '': *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall ensure that amounts appropriated to the Department of Veterans Affairs for medical supplies and equipment are allocated to ensure the provision of gender appropriate prosthetics.''

AMENDMENT NO. 2785

(Purpose: To prohibit the use of funds to carry out Fast Letter 13-10 or create or maintain certain patient record-keeping systems)

At the end of title II, add the following:

SEC. 247. None of the amounts appropriated or otherwise made available by this title may be used—

(1) to carry out the memorandum of the Veterans Benefits Administration known as ''Fast Letter 13-10'', issued on May 20, 2013; or

(2) to create or maintain any patient record-keeping system other than those currently approved by the Department of Veterans Affairs Central Office in Washington, District of Columbia.

AMENDMENT NO. 2786

(Purpose: To require the Comptroller General of the United States to submit to Congress a report on the recruitment and retention of health care providers by the Department of Veterans Affairs)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. (a) Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report on the recruitment and retention of health care providers by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(b) The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) An identification of the ratio of veterans to health care providers of the Department, disaggregated by State.

(2) An analysis of the workload of primary and specialty care providers of the Department, disaggregated by State.

(3) An assessment of initiatives carried out by the Veterans Health Administration to recruit and retain health care providers of the Department.

(4) An assessment of the extent to which the Veterans Health Administration oversees health care providers of the Department.

(5) Such recommendations for improving the recruitment and retention of health care providers of the Department as the Comptroller General considers appropriate.

AMENDMENT NO. 2787

(Purpose: To require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit to Congress a report on the implementation by the Department of Veterans Affairs of section 101 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 in rural areas)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. (a) Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the implementation by the Department of Veterans Affairs of section 101 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–146; 38 U.S.C. 1701 note) in rural areas.

(b) The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) An identification of average wait times for veterans in rural areas to receive health care under such section 101, measured from when the veteran first calls the Department to schedule an appointment.

(2) An assessment of utilization rates for health care provided under such section 101 in rural areas.

(3) An assessment of the accessibility of veterans in rural areas to primary and specialty care at medical centers of the Department and from non-Department health care providers under such section 101.

(4) An identification of the number of health care providers providing health care under such section 101 in each Veterans Integrated Service Network.

(5) An assessment of the status of any pilot programs created by the Department to provide care under such section 101 in rural areas.

AMENDMENT NO. 2788

(Purpose: To require a report on the use of social security numbers by the Department of Veterans Affairs and the plans of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to discontinue such use)

At the end of title II, add the following:

SEC. 247. REPORT ON USE OF SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the use of social security numbers by the Department of Veterans Affairs and the plans of the Secretary to discontinue the unnecessary use.

(b) CONTENTS.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A list of documents and records of the Department of Veterans Affairs that contain social security numbers.

(2) A list of all government and non-government entities and the numbers of their employees that have access to the social security numbers of veterans that are stored by the Department.

(3) A description of how the Department, other governmental entities, and persons use social security numbers they obtain from the Department, including a description of any information sharing arrangements that the Secretary may have with the heads of other governmental entities.

(4) The number of data breaches of Department of Veterans Affairs information systems that involved social security numbers that occurred during the five-year period ending on the date of the enactment of this Act that the Secretary discovered or that were reported to the Secretary, a description and status of the investigations conducted by the Secretary regarding such breaches, and a description of the plans of the Secretary to remediate such breaches.

(5) The plans of the Secretary, including a timeline, to discontinue the unnecessary use by the Department of social security numbers.

(c) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means—

(1) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

AMENDMENT NO. 2789

(Purpose: To require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit to Congress a report on wait times for medical appointments at the South Texas Veterans Health Care System of the Department of Veterans Affairs)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. (a) Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that includes, with respect to the South Texas Veterans Health Care System of the Department of Veterans Affairs, the following:

(1) A description of the nature and scope of any foreseeable increase in wait times for medical appointments.

(2) An assessment of whether a shortage of health care providers is the primary cause of any such increase in wait times.

(3) An identification of any other causes of any such increase in wait times.

(4) A description of any action taken by the Department to correct any such increase in wait times.

(5) An assessment of any issues relating to access to care.

(6) A plan for how the Secretary will remedy any such increase in wait times, including a detailed description of steps to be taken and a timeline for completion.

(b) In this section, the term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means—

(1) the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives.

AMENDMENT NO. 2795

(Purpose: To require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct a study on the impact of combat service on suicide rates and other mental health issues among members of the Armed Forces and veterans)

At the end of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2____. (a) Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, enter into a contract with an independent third party described in subsection (b) to carry out a study on the impact of participation in combat during service in the Armed Forces on suicides and other mental health issues among members of the Armed Forces and veterans.

(b) An independent third party described in this subsection is an independent third party that has appropriate credentials to access information in the possession of the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs that is necessary to carry out the study required under subsection (a).

AMENDMENT NO. 2794

(Purpose: To modify the amounts appropriated to the Department of Veterans Affairs for medical services and medical and prosthetic research)

At the end of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2____. (a) The amount appropriated or otherwise made available by this title under the heading ''MEDICAL AND PROSTHETIC RESEARCH'' under the heading ''VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION'' is hereby increased by $8,922,462.

(b) The amount appropriated or otherwise made available by this title for fiscal year 2016 under the heading ''MEDICAL SERVICES'' under the heading ''VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION'' is hereby reduced by $8,922,462.

AMENDMENT NO. 2798

(Purpose: To make available $5,000,000 for a pilot program on awarding grants to provide furniture, household items, and other assistance to formerly homeless veterans moving into permanent housing)

At the end of title II, add the following:

SEC. 247. Of the amounts appropriated or otherwise made available by this title for ''MEDICAL SERVICES'', not more than $5,000,000 shall be available to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to assess the feasibility and advisability of awarding grants to veterans service agencies, veterans service organizations, and nongovernmental organizations to provide furniture, household items, and other assistance to formerly homeless veterans who are moving into permanent housing to facilitate the settlement of such veterans in such housing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to the amendments en bloc.

The amendments (Nos. 2774, 2775, 2776, 2779, 2781, 2785, 2786, 2787, 2788, 2789, 2795, 2794, and 2798) were agreed to en bloc.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Brown amendment No. 2801 be called up and agreed to, the Kirk amendment No. 2764 be withdrawn, and the Senate vote on the Kirk amendment No. 2763, as amended; further, that following the disposition of the Kirk amendment No. 2763, the bill, as amended, be read a third time and the Senate vote on passage of H.R. 2029, as amended.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2801 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2763

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the Brown amendment.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Montana [Mr. TESTER], for Mr. BROWN, proposes an amendment numbered 2801 to amendment No. 2763.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to develop and publish an action plan for improving the vocational rehabilitation services and assistance provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs)

At the end of title II, add the following:

SEC. 247. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS ACTION PLAN TO IMPROVE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND EDUCATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall develop and publish an action plan for improving the services and assistance provided under chapter 31 of title 38, United States Code.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The plan required by subsection (a) shall include each of the following:

(1) A comprehensive analysis of, and recommendations and a proposed implementation plan for remedying workload management challenges at regional offices of the Department of Veterans Affairs, including steps to reduce counselor caseloads of veterans participating in a rehabilitation program under such chapter, particularly for counselors who are assisting veterans with traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder and counselors with educational and vocational counseling workloads.

(2) A comprehensive analysis of the reasons for the disproportionately low percentage of veterans with service-connected disabilities who served in the Armed Forces after September 11, 2001, who opt to participate in a rehabilitation program under such chapter relative to the percentage of such veterans who use their entitlement to educational assistance under chapter 33 of title 38, United States Code, including an analysis of barriers to timely enrollment in rehabilitation programs under chapter 31 of such title and of any barriers to a veteran enrolling in the program of that veteran's choice.

(3) Recommendations and a proposed implementation plan for encouraging more veterans with service-connected disabilities who served in the Armed Forces after September 11, 2001, to participate in rehabilitation programs under chapter 31 of such title.

(4) A national staff training program for vocational rehabilitation counselors of the Department that includes the provision of—

(A) training to assist counselors in understanding the very profound disorientation experienced by veterans with service-connected disabilities whose lives and life-plans have been upended and out of their control because of such disabilities;

(B) training to assist counselors in working in partnership with veterans on individual rehabilitation plans; and

(C) training on post-traumatic stress disorder and other mental health conditions and on moderate to severe traumatic brain injury that is designed to improve the ability of such counselors to assist veterans with these conditions, including by providing information on the broad spectrum of such conditions and the effect of such conditions on an individual's abilities and functional limitations.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, amendment No. 2801 is agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2764 WITHDRAWN

Under the previous order, amendment No. 2764 is withdrawn.

AMENDMENT NO. 2763, AS AMENDED

Under the previous order, the question occurs on the substitute amendment, as amended.

The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, if I may have 1 minute, I urge my colleagues to vote for this Military Construction-VA appropriations bill before us.

Thank-yous are in order. I thank the chairman, Senator KIRK, and his staff, Bob Henke, D'Ann Lettieri, and Patrick Magnuson. I also thank Tina Evans and Chad Schulken. By the way, it is Chad's birthday today, so make sure you wish him a happy birthday. I also thank Michael Baine, Tony McClain, and the other staff who worked on this bill.

This bill does right by our veterans, and I am proud to have worked with our colleagues in this Chamber.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the substitute amendment, as amended.

The amendment (No. 2763), as amended, was agreed to.

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

The bill was read the third time.

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

Mr. CRAPO. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

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

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

The result was announced—yeas 93, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 302 Leg.]

YEAS—93

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

NOT VOTING—7

Cruz	Heller	Vitter
Gardner	Paul	
Graham	Rubio	

The bill (H.R. 2029), as amended, was passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

DRIVE ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask that the Chair lay before the Senate the House message accompanying H.R. 22.

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate the following message from the House of Representatives:

Resolved, That the House insist upon its amendment to the amendment of the Senate to the text of the bill (H.R. 22) entitled ''An Act to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes,'' and ask a conference with the Senate on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon.

COMPOUND MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to disagree to the amendment of the House, agree to the request from the House for a conference, and authorize the Presiding Officer to appoint conferees.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

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

The bill clerk read the following:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to disagree to the amendment of the House, agree to the request from the House for a conference, and authorize the Presiding Officer to appoint conferees with respect to H.R. 22.

Mitch McConnell, Mike Rounds, Lamar Alexander, Johnny Isakson, Deb Fischer, John Cornyn, Chuck Grassley, Thad Cochran, Joni Ernst, Cory Gardner, John Thune, Daniel Coats, Orrin G. Hatch, John Barrasso, James M. Inhofe, Thom Tillis, Roy Blunt.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time between 2:15 p.m. and 2:45 p.m. be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees and that notwithstanding rule XXVIII, at 2:45 p.m. the Senate vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the compound motion to go to conference; further, that if cloture is invoked, that the Senate agree to the compound motion to go to conference and that Senator WICKER be recognized to offer a motion to instruct the conferees; that there be up to 4 minutes of debate equally divided on the motion and that following the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate then vote in relation to the Wicker motion; that following the disposition of the Wicker motion, Senator BLUMENTHAL be recognized to offer a motion to instruct the conferees; that there be up to 4 minutes of debate equally divided on the motion and that following the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate then vote in relation to the Blumenthal motion.

Mr. President, I ask to withhold my request until Senator CARPER arrives.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I understand that a request is pending, and I would like to reserve my right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection to the majority leader's request?

Mr. CARPER. I have a statement I would like to make at this point in time. If this is the appropriate time to do it, then I would like to do it. I would like to speak for 10 minutes.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I renew my request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. CARPER. Reserving the right to object.

Mr. INHOFE. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. CARPER. I am happy to yield.

Mr. INHOFE. There is a lot of mumbling going on. I am not sure what we finally decided to do.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I will speak for 10 minutes on transportation, and then we will have our caucus lunch.

Mr. INHOFE. All right.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at the conclusion of the remarks of the Senator from Delaware, I be recognized for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WICKER). Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, something came to my attention today that I haven't seen before. Actually, it is a blog which was apparently written by Ben Bernanke, the immediate past Chairman of the Federal Reserve. He wrote it for the Brookings Institute, and he talked about one of the pay-fors for the transportation bill for which we will be sending conferees to discuss later today.

As my colleagues may recall, the House passed a 6-year authorization bill for transportation—roads, highways, bridges, and transit—with funding for 3 years. When we sent our legislation over to the House, they came up with some new pay-fors. Frankly, it is not user fees, it is not even like pension smoothing, it is not like stealing TSA fees or Custom fees, but something new. They found money—about $40 to $50 billion—in the Federal Reserve and said: Why don't we use that for transportation spending?

Interestingly enough, the former Chairman of the Federal Reserve has written about this issue, and it has been editorialized in today's Washington Post, among others. I will read a sentence or two out of Chairman Bernanke's comments, if I may, talking about the new pay-for, where we take money from the Federal Reserve and use it for transportation purposes.

Here is what Chairman Bernanke says:

More substantively—and this is what I want to focus on in the post—''paying'' for highway spending with Fed capital is not paying for it at all in any economically meaningful sense. Rather, this maneuver is a form of budgetary sleight-of-hand that would count funds that are already designated for the Treasury as ''new'' revenue.

Every year this extra money that the Federal Reserve has is turned over to the Treasury. In fact, it may be as much as one-half trillion dollars. That money goes into the earnings that the Federal Reserve makes, and at different points during the year, they turn money over to the Treasury.

What the House language says here is that we are going to reduce that amount of money that would normally go from the Federal Reserve to the Treasury during some part of this year, and we are simply going to pull that money out and use it for transportation. Now, that money was going to go to the Treasury anyway. It was going to go from the Federal Reserve to Treasury anyway, and now we are going to sort of slip in and pull that money out and say: No, no, we are going to use it for roads, highways, and bridges. It is a sleight of hand. GAO is blowing the whistle on it as well, and I am delighted Chairman Bernanke is calling it for what it is.

Look, we had the opportunity to pay for transportation projects. We had the opportunity to pay for roads, highways, and bridges, and to do it the old-fashioned way, and frankly, in a way that the chairman of our committee, Senator INHOFE, was in favor of. We have a tradition and history in this country of saying that things that are worth having are worth paying for, and people and businesses that use roads, highways, and bridges here in the past have said we ought to pay for the use of them. Now we are looking at a transportation bill that says: No, we are going to take money from TSA—TSA fee increases—and instead of using it to make our skies and aviation safer, we are going to steal 10 years of TSA revenues and put it over here in transportation. We are going to take money that ought to go to fortify our borders to make us stronger and better equipped so we can do a better job of finding out whether what is in the trucks is really produce or some other product, such as narcotics—our border crossings, where we have literally tens of millions of dollars' worth of trade going through trade every day—and instead we are going to take those revenues and put them into transportation.

There is the idea of taking money out of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, where we pay $80 to $90 to $100 a barrel and are now selling it for about half that and using the proceeds from that—buy high, sell low—to pay for transportation.

The latest trick from the House is to take the money out of the Federal Reserve when it is already going to go to Treasury anyway. Instead, we are going to take that money away from the Federal Reserve and pretend like it has no consequence. Well, actually that $50 or $60 billion would have reduced the deficit. That is where it would have gone.

This is not the way to do business. We had the opportunity to fully fund a robust transportation plan. Several of us—Senator DURBIN, Senator FEINSTEIN, and I—offered legislation, very much like Bowles-Simpson, that would actually restore the purchasing power of the gas and diesel taxes in this country. We have not raised them since 1993.

Since 1993, the Federal gasoline tax has been roughly 18 cents. It is now worth less than a dime because of inflation. The diesel tax, since 1993, is worth less than 15 cents. Nominally, it is 23 cents. Meanwhile, roads, highways, and bridges are more expensive. Asphalt is more expensive, as is concrete, steel, and labor. Instead of being able to fund transportation in a genuine, honest kind of way, we are spending about $50 billion a year at the Federal level for transportation. It is about one-third of what is being spent nationally. Out of that $50 billion, we are only raising $35 billion through our user fees, and we just go out and borrow the money for the rest. When we run out of money in the general fund, we go around the world and borrow money from China and other places so that we can build roads, highways, and bridges.

When the Chinese are mucking around in the South China Sea or the Spratly Islands or some of those other places, we say: You can't do that. They say: We thought you wanted to borrow our money. If they are manipulating their currency or dumping their goods and products into our markets, we say: You can't do that. They say: We thought you wanted to borrow our money.

We should not be beholden to them or to anybody else. We should fully fund transportation projects, and we could do that.

The legislation that Senators FEINSTEIN, DURBIN, and I offered would gradually raise the tax on diesel and gasoline by 4 cents a year for 4 years, and then index it going forward. How much money would that generate? That would generate about $220 billion over the next 10 years.

Our roads, highway, and bridges get D-plus these days. Why? Because about a quarter of our bridges are in bad shape and the service of our roads and highways is as well. People say they don't want to pay any more money for user fees on gas or diesel. Well, people paid less than $2 a gallon for gasoline at about 30,000 gas stations across America last week.

My friends, as it turns out, if we actually did raise the price for gas and diesel by 4 cents a year for 4 years, what would the effect be in 2020—4 years from now—for average drivers? The out-of-pocket impact would be about the cost of a cup of coffee a week. Meanwhile, because our roads, bridges, and highways are in such lousy

shape, we, as constituents—people who drive around this country—have an average cost of damage to our vehicles, tires, steering, and rims of our tires of over $350 a year. That is not my number; that is a real number.

The other thing that is going on here is that we sit in traffic a lot in our country these days because we are not addressing our bottlenecks and doing what we ought to be doing in terms of upgrading our roads, highways, and bridges.

Every year Texas A&M does an analysis. What they do is to look at how much time we sit in traffic in this country. The average driver in this country sits in traffic 42 hours a year. In cities such as Washington, DC, the numbers are more like 80 hours a year. We are not moving. We are just sitting there wasting time, wasting fuel, and polluting the skies. We don't have to do that. Instead of doing something that is intellectually honest, what we are doing is really, I think, shameful. I think it is shameful.

Initially, I was just confused by what the House wants to do with the Federal Reserve by moving $50 to $60 billion out of there. Now that I understand what they are doing, it is even more shameful. We can do better than this, and the American people deserve better than that.

Our friends at the McKinsey Global Institute spent some time last year trying to figure out if we were actually investing robustly in our roads, highways, and bridges in this country. They looked at how it would affect our GDP and if it would have any effect on putting people to work. If we are willing to make robust investments for the next 10 years instead of, frankly, not much at all in terms of investments, here is what they said: We would grow GDP by about 1.5 percent per year for the next 10 years. So far this year it has been somewhere between 2 and 2.5 percent. We could increase it by another 1.5 percent if we make these kinds of honest investments. We are not going to come close to making robust investments.

The McKinsey Global Institute also told us that in terms of new employment, if we were actually to invest robustly in roads, highways, and bridges in this country, we would put 1.8 million people to work building roads, highways, bridges, and transit systems. But we are not going to do that.

We are not even close to what the McKinsey Global Institute was calling for in robust investments that would actually grow our GDP by 1.5 percent each year and increase employment by 1.8 million people. In fact, what we are passing here isn't even close to the 4 cents a year for 4 years and indexing going forward. That produces $220 billion over the next 10 years.

What we are doing is barely keeping Federal funding at $50 billion, and the way we are doing most of that is by sleight of hand and by using money that has nothing to do with roads, highways, and bridges and nothing to do with businesses and people that use those transportation modes to pay for them—nothing. And now we are about to name conferees and go to conference on that kind of deal? The American people aren't stupid. They are not stupid.

Do you know what a bunch of States around the country—like 12 States in the last 2 years—did when they found out they were running out of money to build their transportation systems in their States? They raised their user fees. They actually raised them.

Do you know what happened when they had elections last November? Some 95 percent of the Republicans who voted to raise their user fees were reelected, and 90 percent of the Democrats who voted to raise their user fees in those 12 States were reelected. They didn't pay a penalty for it. They were rewarded for it. The people who voted the other way—who voted not to raise the user fees—didn't do as well. People aren't stupid.

We are going to have an opportunity here to name conferees and go to conference, and I just want to say that this man sitting next to me, JIM INHOFE, is a good man. He chairs our Environment and Public Works Committee. Our committee reported out a very good 6-year authorization bill. He is proud of it. Senator BOXER and I worked on it, and I am very proud of what we did. I commend Senator INHOFE for a great bill. That is the authorization piece. If we could just stop there, we would be fine. Unfortunately, the authorization is only half the game.

What was the picture of the guy they had on the floor not long ago? It was a picture of a cowboy wearing a big hat and lying back sleeping, and the caption under the picture says: All hat, no cattle. Well, when you have a great authorization bill but no real money to pay for it, that is really all hat, no cattle. I don't think there is a better example of it that I have seen than the legislation that we are going to be conferencing on very soon.

I wish I could sit here and say it is all going to work out and we will do just fine, but that is not the truth. We have let a great opportunity pass us by. We are about to let a great opportunity pass us by.

We are worthy of a better opportunity than that, and frankly the people of our country deserve a better effort than that.

With that, I yield the floor to my friend from Oklahoma.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the request?

Mr. CARPER. I withdraw my objection.

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

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, let me say in response that a couple of times my good friend from Delaware has observed that the American people are not stupid, but the American people also want highways. That is one of the big things they want. In fact, we have a document called a Constitution that says we are supposed to be doing two things here: defending America, and roads and bridges. And I think we both agree on the significance of that.

BURUNDI

I hope I will have time to get into something because our State Department of the United States of America is getting involved in Burundi, in their election. They had a duly-qualified election. The constitutional convention declared that Nkurunziza, who is the President, had a legal election, and we ought to stay out of their business. If there is time, I would like to elaborate on that, but I know I am competing for time.

GITMO

On the President's Gitmo message, we have—I will give a little chronology on that. On January 22, 2009, Obama signed an Executive order to close Gitmo within the year.

On February 3 of that same year, 2009, I introduced a bill to permanently prevent Gitmo detainees from being relocated anywhere in the United States. At that time they were ready to talk about relocating them to parts of my State of Oklahoma, in the Fort Sill area.

In May 2009 I authored bipartisan legislation with Senator Danny Inouye to block funding to close Gitmo and to move the detainees anywhere on U.S. soil. That passed 90 to 6.

Every year since, Congress has blocked the attempts by this President and his administration to close Gitmo or move terrorist detainees into the United States.

Every year, Congress has passed laws that continue to limit the transfer of these detainees, including in the conference report for the fiscal year 2016 NDAA bill. That is what we are talking about right now. It prohibits the transferring of Gitmo detainees to the United States through December 31, 2016. That also tightens the restrictions on the detainees being transferred to other countries.

The fiscal year NDAA also included language preventing closure of Gitmo through December 31, 2016. However, this has not prevented President Obama from trying to empty Gitmo and releasing these terrorist detainees to any country he can pay to take them back and now threatening an Executive order to bring them to the United States—to the States of Colorado, South Carolina, and Kansas—against the will of the Senators from those States, the House Members from those States, and the American people.

This is not the first time the President has gone against the will of the American people and violated our laws. The President violated the law last June when he transferred the Taliban Five from Gitmo in exchange for Sergeant Bergdahl, and my colleagues will

remember that issue. He failed to notify Congress. The laws we passed said they had to notify Congress 30 days in advance of any transfer of terrorists to any facility. His failure to adhere to the law he signed placed our Nation's security at great risk.

Let me just mention—I carry this with me. If people realize whom he turned loose, the Taliban Five—this is a statement that was made by the Taliban commander. His name is Mullah Khan. He was talking about Mohammad Fazl. Keep in mind he was arguably the most dangerous person—terrorist—who was being held in Gitmo. He said:

> His return is like pouring 10,000 Taliban fighters into the battle on the side of jihad. Now the Taliban have the right lion to lead them in the final moment before victory in Afghanistan.

These are the kinds of people he is turning loose.

According to the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, 29 percent of the detainees transferred out of Gitmo have either been confirmed or suspected of returning to the fight and killing Americans. That is how serious this is.

Gitmo is outside the sovereign territory of the United States, which means detainees held there do not have constitutional rights. But if we put them back in the United States, it is very likely they would have those rights.

I have a quote from former U.S. Attorney General Michael Mukasey, who said:

> The question of what constitutional rights may apply to aliens in government custody is unsettled, but it is clear from existing jurisprudence that physical presence in the United States would be a significant, if not a decisive, factor.

I am also concerned about the security of the people here who would have to guard these terrorists.

Back when a Thomson, IL, prison was discussed—that was in 2009—Representative MARK KIRK—at that time he was in the House; that was before he was in the Senate—called the move ''an unnecessary risk,'' and other Illinois Members were concerned that the transfer of prisoners—some for trial and some for indefinite detention—could make the State a target for terrorists. MARK KIRK was then and is now correct that prisons holding these detainees will become magnets, and there is the very real possibility that these detainees would recruit more terrorists.

We have to keep in mind that a terrorist is not a criminal. A terrorist is someone who trains other people to be terrorists, and that is what we would be seeing happening in our courts.

FBI Director Robert Mueller said there is the very real possibility that Gitmo detainees will recruit more terrorists from among the Federal inmate population and continue Al Qaeda operations from outside the country.

I have been to Gitmo several times, as has the occupier of the chair. It is a state-of-the-art facility that provides humane treatment for all detainees. When I was there, the biggest problem they had with the detainees was that they were overweight. They are all obese because they are eating so well. It is fully in compliance with the Geneva Convention and provides treatment and oversight that exceed any maximum security prison in the world, as tested by human rights organizations such as the Red Cross, Attorney General Holder, and an independent commission led by Admiral Walsh. It is a secure location away from population centers, and it has a $12 million expeditionary legal complex. That is a courtroom. We can't use our courtrooms because of the confidentiality of information that is extracted from these individuals and used in the courtroom, so they use the expeditionary legal complex.

The last thing I would say is that it is clear that—and this comes from former CIA Director Leon Panetta. He was talking about the fact that our President—talking about the way they were able to get the bad guy, and what they have refused to understand is the information they extracted at Gitmo was used to actually capture Osama bin Laden.

Anyway, we don't want that to happen, we can't afford to let that happen, and we are going to do everything we can to keep the President from making that happen. This has become an obsession of his, and we are not going to let that happen.

BURUNDI

Lastly, I do want to mention that on this whole issue in Burundi right now, we have to understand in this country that there are other nations that have their own systems of government. They are the ones that have their elections. In this case, I happened to be there in Burundi when the court declared that the incumbent President, Nkurunziza, was qualified to run again, even though they have a term limit. The first term was not a complete term, so that didn't count, according to the court. For us to come in afterward and say ''Well, we think the court was wrong, we don't think he is qualified to run, and we are going to withhold things from that country'' is something we should not be doing in this country.

I can assure my colleagues that the six Members who went with me over there were all on the scene and agreed that Nkurunziza should be legitimately elected, and we should stay out of their business.

With that, 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 1:39 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

DRIVE ACT—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 2:45 p.m. is equally divided.

The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 10 minutes.

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

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, in a few moments we are going to vote on a motion to instruct the conferees on the highway bill. It will be a motion to instruct them not to proceed with a Federal mandate that would force these long double trailers called twin 33s on the 38 States where currently they are illegal.

This Senator would observe that it is not often we get a chance to vote on a motion that will accomplish so much. We are going to get a chance in 30 minutes or so to vote on a motion that will save lives. It is a motion that would prohibit a Federal mandate, that supports small business, and that would save $1.2 billion to $1.8 billion per year in highway maintenance. It is a vote that is supported by an overwhelming majority of the American people. This is a rare opportunity for us to come together on a motion that does all of those things.

It is also a bipartisan motion to instruct. It will be sponsored by the Senator from California, Senator FEINSTEIN, and there will be bipartisan votes for the motion on both sides of the aisle.

Now, why are we here? The motion is here because it stems from an amendment in the Appropriations Committee to the Transportation appropriations bill, which would require every State to allow these twin 33-foot trailers on Federal highways. Currently some 12 States do allow them. They have a right to do that, and if they made a considered decision in their State legislatures and in consultation with their departments of transportation, then more power to them.

Well, 38 States say that these trucks are not safe and that these trucks are too long. They tell us they don't want them on the highways. I think we should respect that decision by these 38 States.

Who supports the Wicker-Feinstein motion to instruct the conferees? I go back to the point that this is a vote to save lives. Who says this? AAA, a respected nationwide organization that knows quite a bit about highway safety, says support the Wicker amendment. Don't mandate on 38 States something they don't want to do with these extra long trucks.

I would point out on this diagram the size of the average passenger car. Look how much longer this proposed twin 33 double rig with the tractor part on the front is. Frankly, the American people don't want to contend with these long double trailers on their roads.

The Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety say this isn't safe. A ''yes'' vote

on the Wicker-Feinstein motion would be a vote for safety.

The National Troopers Coalition—we ought to listen to them—say these trucks are not safe, and at the very least, there should be no mandate from Washington, DC. In the time remaining, I would suggest to Members and legislative staff back in their offices to call their local troopers in their various States and see what the troopers say about this. I will tell you that troopers in State after State say don't mandate these long trucks. Sheriff's associations say don't mandate these long trucks.

Chiefs of police say don't mandate these long, twin 33 double trailers. So you may ask yourself what a chief of police in a municipality has to do with this. Aren't we talking about interstate highways and big old Federal highways? Not true at all. I don't know about you, but in the place where I live, if something comes in by truck, they bring it right into town. So the chiefs of police say: We don't want these twin 33s on our two-lane streets; we don't want them on the two-lane highways. That would be the result of the mandate that is contained in the appropriations bill unless we turn that around.

Who else is opposed to mandating twin 33s on the 38 States that don't want them? The State trucking associations are opposed to this mandate. One would think that the truckers would be for this. After all, if you are a big enough trucking company and you have enough money, you can buy the truck, haul more, and make more money. That is the idea, but we need to bear in mind that most of the truckers in the United States are small business owners. Frankly, some of them have told me that if this mandate on all 50 States is passed, they are going out of business.

We have resolutions from the Mississippi Trucking Association, the Arizona Trucking Association, Louisiana Trucking Association, and we have an alliance of small business truckers from States that include Indiana, Texas, Tennessee, Nebraska, Louisiana, Maryland, Washington, Iowa, Mississippi, Arizona, Pennsylvania, Oregon, and Arkansas—and I can go on. Trucking companies and small truckers in all of these States are saying: Please don't put us out of business by having us try to compete with these large twin 33s.

I would submit to my colleagues that 20 minutes from now we are going to have a vote. This is the only opportunity that 100 Senators elected by the people of the 50 States will have to address this issue. This vote we are going to take in just a few moments will send a strong signal to the people in some office here on Capitol Hill, in some room on Capitol Hill, where they are devising the Omnibus appropriations bill. We need to send a strong signal to them that we don't want this mandate in the omnibus. We don't want the mandate in the highway bill.

We need a strong vote. This is a chance to vote on how we stand with small business in our States, with the troopers, the sheriffs, the chiefs of police, the trucking associations, and the advocates for highway safety.

I would urge my colleagues to thoroughly consider this in the next 20 or 25 minutes. When you come to vote, a ''yes'' vote will be a vote to avoid the Federal mandate. I urge my colleagues to join me on a bipartisan basis—and I believe they will join me on a bipartisan basis—in allowing the 38 States that opt out of this to continue to do so, making a stand for small business, for the States' decisionmaking, and for safety.

Mr. President, I understand we are going to move to a vote at 2:45 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the remaining time while we are in quorum calls be divided equally between the parties.

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

Mr. WICKER. 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. BOXER. 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. BOXER. Mr. President, we are about to vote on whether we want to go to conference with our Transportation bill that passed this body with well over 60 votes in July. We have been pushing hard—Senators on both sides of the aisle—to move the House toward a situation where we can finally go to conference and reconcile the two bills. We are at that point, and I certainly hope we get a very solid vote.

I am also hopeful the Wicker-Feinstein motion does succeed, and I certainly will try my best to raise it in the conference. We still have about 1.5 million unemployed construction workers since the recession. We have seen terrific job growth, but we know it hasn't hit all the sectors, so this is an extremely important bill.

Also, we know that thousands in businesses rely on a robust highway trust fund. Whether it is the granite people, the cement people, they are all for going to conference. Whether it is the international association of machinists or it is the labor union, the chamber of commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, it is a rare and glorious occasion to see everybody come together and say: Let's get a bill.

We want to have a robust bill. We don't want to have a bill that is business as usual and this is why—we have 60,000 bridges that are deficient. They were not built with the kinds of traffic they are now withstanding in mind, so we must have this vote to go to conference.

I thank the majority leader, Senator MCCONNELL, for his work and the Democratic leader, Senator REID. I also extend my thanks to Senator CANTWELL, who worked so hard with other Senators on this side to get Ex-Im included in this bill. We will have the Export-Import reauthorization in this bill.

I am very excited to get to conference. My goal is just to put it on the table, to bring to that conference the bipartisan spirit we had when we did this bill in the Senate. When I thank both the majority leader and the Democratic leader, it is because they put strong people on this conference. I think it is going to be a strong conference. We have a lot of similarities. Somebody who looked at both bills said the House bill is about 90 percent similar to the Senate bill. This is a good thing. This means we don't have to take our time because the trust fund, the authorization runs out very soon, right before Thanksgiving. So it is a good moment for the Senate.

I think we showed leadership on both sides of the aisle on getting this bill done. We continue to work well together, both leaders have sent strong conferees to the conference. I know our staffs are already speaking, and I am hopeful we get a strong vote, which I think we are going to have in a few minutes. Am I correct it is about 3 minutes from that vote?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

Mrs. BOXER. All right. So in 3 minutes I hope we have a solid vote to take our bill to conference with the House, where I will work very closely with Chairman SHUSTER and the rest.

The last point I make is I read that Congressman DEFAZIO—who is our Democratic ranking member in the House T&I Committee—has had a very serious eye situation and had to go for emergency surgery. I wish to say my heart is with him. He is a very important person in terms of weighing in on the transportation needs. I will work with him, I will speak with him, and I am very hopeful that although he may not be present—I hope he will be present for the conference—if he is not, I wish to reassure him that we will take his concerns into this conference.

I am looking forward to a strong vote.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to yield back all time and proceed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The 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 the motion to disagree to the amendment of the

House, agree to the request from the House for a conference, and authorize the Presiding Officer to appoint conferees with respect to H.R. 22.

Mitch McConnell, Mike Rounds, Lamar Alexander, Johnny Isakson, Deb Fischer, John Cornyn, Chuck Grassley, Thad Cochran, Joni Ernst, Cory Gardner, John Thune, Daniel Coats, Orrin G. Hatch, John Barrasso, James M. Inhofe, Thom Tillis, Roy Blunt.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to disagree to the amendment of the House, agree to the request from the House for a conference, and authorize the Presiding Officer to appoint conferees with respect to H.R. 22 shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

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

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 82, nays 7, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 303 Leg.]

YEAS—82

Alexander	Ernst	Murphy
Ayotte	Feinstein	Murray
Baldwin	Fischer	Nelson
Barrasso	Franken	Peters
Bennet	Gillibrand	Portman
Blumenthal	Grassley	Reed
Blunt	Hatch	Reid
Booker	Heinrich	Roberts
Boozman	Heitkamp	Rounds
Boxer	Hirono	Sanders
Brown	Hoeven	Schatz
Burr	Inhofe	Schumer
Cantwell	Isakson	Scott
Capito	Kaine	Sessions
Cardin	King	Shaheen
Carper	Kirk	Stabenow
Casey	Klobuchar	Sullivan
Cassidy	Lankford	Tester
Coats	Manchin	Thune
Cochran	Markey	Tillis
Collins	McCain	Toomey
Coons	McCaskill	Udall
Cornyn	McConnell	Warren
Cotton	Menendez	Whitehouse
Daines	Merkley	Wicker
Donnelly	Mikulski	Wyden
Durbin	Moran	
Enzi	Murkowski	

NAYS—7

Corker	Perdue	Shelby
Flake	Risch	
Lee	Sasse	

NOT VOTING—11

Crapo	Heller	Rubio
Cruz	Johnson	Vitter
Gardner	Leahy	Warner
Graham	Paul	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 82, the nays are 7.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

Under the previous order, the compound motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Mississippi.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I have a motion to instruct at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Mississippi [Mr. WICKER] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 22 be instructed to insist upon the inclusion of the following section in title XXXII:

SEC. 32___. TRUCK TRACTOR-SEMITRAILER-TRAILER COMBINATION LENGTH LIMITATION.

The Secretary may promulgate a rule to increase the minimum length limitation that a State may prescribe for a truck tractor-semitrailer-trailer combination under section 31111(b)(1)(A) of title 49, United States Code, from 28 feet to 33 feet if the Secretary makes a statistically significant finding, based on the final Comprehensive Truck Size and Weight Limits Study required under section 32801 of the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Enhancement Act of 2012 (title II of division C of Public Law 112–141), that such increase would not have a net negative impact on public safety.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I understand I have 2 minutes. I will speak briefly and then yield to Senator FEINSTEIN.

This is what this is about, these twin 33 double trailers, which are longer than is legal in 38 States. The question is whether we as a Senate, we as a Congress, we as a Federal Government, are going to mandate on the 38 States that don't allow these to allow them on their roads at any rate. So a ''yes'' vote would be a vote against the Federal mandate.

When do you get in one fell swoop an opportunity to vote—a vote that will save lives, a vote to prevent a Federal mandate, a vote for small business, a vote to save $1.2 to $1.8 billion a year in highway maintenance, and a vote supported by the overwhelming majority of the people?

Vote yes not to mandate this on the States.

I yield the floor to the Senator from California.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, if we look at that, that is 91 feet with the twin 33s and the cab, 91 feet of truck. Thirty-eight States do not want that in their States. This bill overwhelms that. We had an amendment in the Appropriations Committee that would prevent that. It was a tie vote.

Senator WICKER and I ask you, please don't force States to do this before the safety work is done by the Secretary. We have 4,000 people killed every year from these trucks in all kinds of horrific accidents—and they are not as long as this one. These trucks would not only be on the freeways, but they would be in the villages, the towns, and the cities as well.

I hope you will support this motion to instruct to protect the 38 States and say: Before you do this, do the safety investigations and tell us these trucks are safe.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there time taken in opposition?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the motion.

Mr. WICKER. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

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

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 56, nays 31, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 304 Leg.]

YEAS—56

Baldwin	Franken	Perdue
Bennet	Gillibrand	Peters
Blumenthal	Grassley	Portman
Booker	Heinrich	Reed
Brown	Hirono	Reid
Burr	Isakson	Sanders
Cantwell	Kaine	Sasse
Cardin	King	Schatz
Carper	Klobuchar	Schumer
Casey	Manchin	Shaheen
Coats	Markey	Stabenow
Cochran	McCain	Tillis
Coons	McCaskill	Toomey
Donnelly	Menendez	Udall
Durbin	Merkley	Warren
Ernst	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murphy	Wicker
Fischer	Murray	Wyden
Flake	Nelson	

NAYS—31

Alexander	Daines	Risch
Ayotte	Enzi	Roberts
Barrasso	Hatch	Rounds
Blunt	Heitkamp	Scott
Boozman	Hoeven	Sessions
Capito	Kirk	Shelby
Cassidy	Lankford	Sullivan
Collins	Lee	Tester
Corker	McConnell	Thune
Cornyn	Moran	
Cotton	Murkowski	

NOT VOTING—13

Boxer	Heller	Rubio
Crapo	Inhofe	Vitter
Cruz	Johnson	Warner
Gardner	Leahy	
Graham	Paul	

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I have a motion to instruct at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Connecticut [Mr. BLUMENTHAL] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the bill H.R. 22 be instructed to insist upon the inclusion of the rail safety provisions contained in the amendment passed by the Senate on July 30, 2015, including the authorization of grants for the installation of positive train control.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will be 4 minutes of debate equally divided.

The Senator from Connecticut is recognized.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, in recent years all of our constituents have seen a scourge in rail accidents. There have been similar accidents all around the country. This motion insists that the Senate's provisions be included in this conference and in what comes out of the conference committee, including the authorization of grants for the installation of positive train control.

This summer, with the leadership of the committee chairman, Senator THUNE, and the ranking member, BILL NELSON, who are both champions of rail safety, in this instance it resulted in some very key reforms, and the Senate passed the DRIVE Act which is not perfect—troublesome in some highway safety elements—but forward thinking on rail safety. It includes funding for PTC, redundant signal protection, improved inspection practices, and a followup on the FRA's deep dive investigation. Along with cameras and grade crossing, these provisions help to advance the cause of rail safety.

The House has done nothing. The House bill is completely and abjectly lacking on rail safety, and therefore this motion instructs our conferees to insist on the Senate's provisions. I know that our conferees will be extremely sympathetic and supportive, but in order to simply to express our views, I ask unanimous consent that this measure be approved and that the motion be taken on a voice vote.

I ask unanimous consent that all remaining time be yielded back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question occurs on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The Presiding Officer appointed Mr. INHOFE, Mr. THUNE, Mr. HATCH, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. CORNYN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. NELSON, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. SCHUMER conferees on the part of the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BLUNT. 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.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for up to 15 minutes.

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

VETERANS DAY AND LEGISLATION SUPPORTING OUR VETERANS AND TROOPS

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I am honored to represent nearly 500,000 Missouri veterans in the Senate. Tomorrow, on Veterans Day, we pause to reflect on the countless contributions and sacrifices that the men and women who serve in uniform and have served in uniform have made to our country. I hope we will all use this opportunity to recommit ourselves not only to appreciate their service but to be sure that the commitments our government has made to them are commitments that we move forward on and that they are commitments that we look at the time, place, and the veterans being served and decide when they need to be changed. I think one of the things we have done in the last year to create more choices and more competition for veterans is an important step in that direction.

When I introduced the Excellence in Mental Health Act with Senator STABENOW, one of our biggest support groups for that act, which not only would treat behavioral health care like all other health care but would also create more opportunities to access behavioral health care, were the younger veterans. The Iraq and Iran veterans and the veterans from Afghanistan wanted to have more choices and were big supporters of not just traditional VA services but other services as well.

I am pleased that the bill today steps forward in important ways and does things for veterans. The bill we just voted on, the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs appropriations bill, actually reached a record level of funding for veterans services. It increases veterans services by $7.9 billion over last year's levels, and it appropriates $1 billion more than the President asked for.

It was also a bipartisan vote for lots of reasons. There should be no more of a bipartisan cause among all the funding bills than a bill that takes care of veterans and provides the facilities for those who are serving and for their families' needs. This is an important matter for us to address, and this is a great week for us to do it.

This bill provides specific funding for women veterans. I was at a women's veterans clinic in St. Louis recently. This bill includes additional care for Iraq and Afghanistan veterans. It provides treatment for the kinds of traumatic brain injuries that veterans often leave the military with today, which they did not have post-9/11 and post the cowardly devices that are used to attack our people in the service.

It increases veterans funding in areas such as health care, benefit claims processing, medical research, and technology upgrades. It also includes funding for construction and renovation of projects that ensure military readiness and improve the quality of life for military families.

As GEN Ray Odierno, the recently retired Chief of Staff of the Army, has said, our military families are the strength of the military. Senator GILLIBRAND and I recently introduced a bill—The Military Families Stability Act—that allows us to do new things. It allows families for educational or professional reasons to stay longer or leave earlier, depending on when the person serving gets transferred. If there is a month of school left or a professional matter that the spouse needs to be a part of and needs to finish a job quickly or go to a job early, why wouldn't we want to allow that to happen through legislation? This legislation looks at military families' needs, among the other things it looks at.

Because of the dissatisfaction that many of our veterans appropriately have with the Veterans' Administration, this bill includes necessary reforms such as protection for whistleblowers, the kind of protection that construction oversight managers need, and it assesses some new measures for construction oversight so that we don't have these facilities costing more than they should cost.

Frankly, if we look at competitive alternatives that veterans should have available to them, it is probably a good time to think about how we could make that program work better—rather than to continue to invest more money in facilities that they have to drive by—with better locations to get to that would give them that choice.

This bill has been ready for months now. I was disappointed the Democrats blocked consideration of this bill earlier this year, but I am pleased that we finally got to a bill that everybody could vote for. It actually shows how shortsighted the lack of willingness was to let us do our work, to bring this

bill to the floor, and to let Members offer amendments. Those amendments were either included in the bill or explained to Members: No, this is already in there. We have already taken care of this, and this is why this doesn't have to be done.

We have a real obligation to take care of our veterans—those who have served for our country—and I hope we continue to build on the work we have done today.

Earlier today we also passed the bipartisan Defense Authorization Act, another bill we could have gotten to earlier. In fact, the House passed it earlier. The President vetoed it, but now that same essential bill goes back to the President's desk because some other problem has been solved that should never have been tied to authorizing the defense of the country.

Every year since 2011, the Congress has passed and the President has signed a bill just like the bill we passed today that would make it clear to the President that the Congress doesn't want the President to go forward with his proposed changes for Guantanamo. Unfortunately, the media reports suggest that the President once again is considering acting unilaterally to bring terrorists to the United States. Both of these bills today said no terrorist can be brought to the United States from Guantanamo.

It is another example of the President ignoring the law, deciding instead: I am going to enforce the law I want to enforce, and I am going to ignore the law I want to ignore. He did that a few months ago with Executive amnesty. The President decided there are some laws that relate to people who are in the country and who are here without documents that he doesn't intend to enforce. Unfortunately for the President and fortunately for the law, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit ruled last night that the President can't do what the President said he was going to do. An earlier court had immediately said the President can't do what he said he was going to do.

This morning, I heard one of the spokesmen for the White House say: Well, every legal expert we have talked to believes the President has the authority to do this. Well, apparently none of the legal experts they have talked to are Federal judges, because Federal judges now, at the two levels below the Supreme Court, have decided that the President doesn't have, in all likelihood, the authority he says he has.

The courts, along with a bipartisan majority of the Congress, have taken the President to task on a sweeping new rule on waters of the United States—an issue we debated here last week. The law says the EPA has the authority to regulate navigable waters in the country. For 170 years everybody understood what that meant, and I think everybody still probably understands what that means, even the people at the EPA, who want it to mean something much broader than it clearly means. The Federal courts, again, at both the first level and the appeals level—the appeal of the appeal court and the appeal court have said: No, you don't have the authority to do that. We are not going to let that rule go into effect.

That rule, by the way, in my State would put more than 99 percent of all of the geography of Missouri under the control of the EPA for anything that is related to water, including any water that runs off a roof, any water that runs off a parking lot, any water that runs down a roadside ditch. If the EPA wants that authority, they need to come to the Congress and say: Change the law. Give us the authority over all of the landmass, 99.3 percent of Missouri and similar amounts in many other States. Give us that authority.

Of course, the Congress wouldn't do that. The Congress knew what they were doing when they said ''navigable waters,'' and the EPA has never suggested to the Congress that the Congress change the law. The EPA would like to change it on their own, but the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals said: No, you don't have the authority to do that.

Here is another issue that has to go to the Supreme Court. Apparently, the President doesn't mind going to the Supreme Court and doesn't mind being reversed by the Supreme Court. The President particularly, it appears, doesn't mind being reversed by the Supreme Court if somehow the rules got by the other two levels of Federal court, as the mercury rule did 2 years ago. Twenty-two months later, when the Supreme Court finally ruled, they said: No, the EPA doesn't have the authority to regulate that item in that way. But even people at the EPA said: Well, even though we didn't have the authority, 1,500 powerplants had to close down permanently because of the rule. And they seemed to take great pleasure in the fact that the rule accomplished its goal even though the law was not served and the EPA, according to the Supreme Court, didn't have the authority for that rule.

On the President's overreach, I reintroduced a law again this year—the Executive Needs to Faithfully Observe and Respect Congressional Enactments of the Law Act—the ENFORCE Act—which simply says something one would never think the Congress would have to say to the President, which is: Mr. President, you have to enforce the law. Mr. President, you have taken an oath to uphold the Constitution. There is a way to do this job in a constitutional way, and there is a way to do the job in the way you are doing it now.

We shouldn't need this bill. The President swore to uphold the law. With the action we took today, we see another place where the Congress has clearly spoken over and over and over again, and the President says: If the Congress won't do this, I am going to do it on my own.

Apparently, the President has discovered some authority as Commander in Chief to close military bases. Does that mean the President on his own can close any military base in the country? I don't think that is a precedent we want to set. There is a way to do this. The Congress has to be involved. The laws of the Constitution have to be respected.

Over and over again, even on the eve of Veterans Day—a celebration of those who did more than anybody else to defend our freedoms—even on the eve of Veterans Day, we need to remind ourselves what the Constitution is all about, what the country stands for, and the freedoms those veterans were willing to serve to defend.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, it is my habit to give my ''Time to Wake Up'' speeches once a week when the Senate is in session. It is also a practice of mine to go to other States—particularly States that have Republican Senators—to look at what is happening in the States and get a sense of where the local universities and the local experts are with respect to climate change. My last visit was to Ohio. I have also been to New Hampshire, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, and Iowa. The thing that is common across all of those trips is that there is no denying climate change in those States. The denial is the function of this building, and it is the function of the wall of money the fossil fuel industry has erected around this building. But pick a State university in the country and go there, and we find there is simply not climate denial.

I am joined today by my friend SHERROD BROWN, Ohio's senior Senator, who was kind enough to accompany me on the trip—on several parts of it, anyway. We went to Cleveland. We had a couple of meetings there together. Another one of my visits was to Lake Erie, which got clobbered by the cyanotic bacteria that shut down Toledo's water system, which is also climate change-related.

Let me yield to the Senator from Ohio for a few moments, and then we can talk about Cleveland and the lake.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I thank Senator WHITEHOUSE.

When I introduced Senator WHITEHOUSE to the mayor of Cleveland and to a number of experts in Cleveland, from public health officials, to wind energy entrepreneurs, to community groups to whom climate change matters so much, I introduced him as probably—not just probably—there is no person in the Senate who has done a better job of focusing public attention on the threats of climate change and what it means to our way of life and what it means to our country. I thank Senator WHITEHOUSE for that.

I want to point to what happened in Toledo, OH, in 2011. This green color in this picture is algae bloom. This is a small boat that is making its way through the algae bloom.

This wasn't even the year Toledo residents lost their water supply. In 2014—last August, 15 months ago—algae blooms were so serious in Lake Erie and in the western basin—Toledo is in the western basin of Lake Erie, Cleveland is sort of central, and then Ashtabula and Erie, PA, are in the eastern basin of Lake Erie. Again, this is not the most serious situation, although the algae bloom is so overwhelming here. This green is all algae bloom. The lake actually should be the color—where you can see dark blue here, that is normally the color of the lake. We can see the wake of the boat, and that is the normal color of the lake, as the boat plowed through the algae bloom.

The problem with Lake Erie is that it is the most vulnerable lake because it is the shallowest lake in the western basin of Lake Erie. In this part of Lake Erie, it is only 30 feet deep. It is fed by the Maumee River, which is the largest tributary of any river into any of the five Great Lakes. Keep in mind that it is 30 feet deep here, fed by farmland and commercial activity and industry and homeowners—greater Toledo in northwest Ohio. Contrast that with Lake Superior. It is 30 feet deep here, and Lake Superior is 600 feet deep on average. And Lake Superior mostly drains forests, so we can see why Cleveland and Toledo are so vulnerable to climate change and so vulnerable to pollution and all that has happened with the algae blooms.

People in Toledo—500,000 people lost their drinking water for 2½ days. People were great, stepping up from all over southern Michigan, eastern Indiana, and northwest Ohio to ship in water for people. But it made such a—it says to us that climate change isn't the only reason this happened, but it is clearly happening. We are seeing this algae bloom worse and worse and worse in hot weather.

One other thing about this Great Lake. Lake Erie is only 2 percent of all of the Great Lakes' water—five Great Lakes. Lake Erie is only 2 percent of all the Great Lakes' water because it is shallow and its surface areas are not as big as the others. Fifty percent of the fish of all of the Great Lakes are in Lake Erie because fish will produce and will prosper in shallower, warmer water, but the water was too warm because of climate change and all of the things that came out of that.

In this meeting we had with Dr. Aparna Bole—a pediatric specialist at Cleveland's University Hospital—she talked about asthma rates. We heard from others too.

I will turn it back to Senator WHITEHOUSE and ask him what he learned from these meetings. He was not just in meetings with people in Cleveland learning about what climate change means there, he also went to the Stone Lab and he can tell us about that. Then he had an amazing meeting at Ohio State University with some of America's amazing climate scientists. I will kick it back to Senator WHITEHOUSE and again thank him for traveling the country every single week and looking for places where climate change has done the most damage in terms that people can understand. His leadership is so important.

I thank Senator WHITEHOUSE for the work he has done, and I am so grateful he came to the city of Cleveland and joined us.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Well, I was very happy to join the Senator. I thought Frank Jackson was extremely impressive on this subject. He pointed out that there are times in life when we simply have to go to the future, and if you decide to hang on to the past, you will fail as a result of missing that curve. He said that the business community in Cleveland was really beginning to get that, beginning to take it on. So he has led with a Cleveland Climate Action Plan, which is one of the best ones in the country.

We went to a great place where they are growing lettuce hydroponically, 3, 4 acres in an old building, under an open glass ceiling. They are using captured rain water; they are recycling it. The people there have jobs that pay well. They were the owners of the project and they were really vested in it. Wasn't the morale of the people working there phenomenal? It was terrific.

Dr. Aparna Bole, whom Senator BROWN mentioned, was very in tune to what was happening in minority communities as a result of climate change from asthma, from heat. She is seeing it with her young patients. She was wonderful, talking about that. At this point, because of toxic ground level ozone and ragweed being triggers for asthma attacks—she has seen so much of that. She said that more than one in five African-American kids in Cleveland has asthma, and she connects it to what is happening in climate change.

Of course, we understand that in Rhode Island because we have the same bad air days where we have to have kids stay indoors and elderly people stay indoors, all because of the air coming from the Midwest that has been fouled by these coal-burning powerplants.

Out on Lake Erie I met with some of the scientists from Stone Labs and a couple of the lifelong fishing captains who had been out there on the lake. Here are some of the water samples we took while we were out. It is clean now—this is what the water should look like—but back before, when the climate change-driven rain bursts were flooding Lake Erie with phosphorus from the farms in the watershed, there was an explosion of cyanotic bacteria to the point where these guys said driving their boats wasn't like driving through water, it was like driving through pudding, and the wake would slurp over instead of turning the way a regular boat's wake would. One of them had been doing this for 35 years and he said: I don't know this lake any longer. I don't know where the fish are going to be. For 35 years I have fished this lake, and now it is like a stranger to me because of all these changes that are happening.

That is exactly what my Rhode Island fishermen are telling me, too, about Narragansett Bay and Rhode Island Sound. We are here with the Senator from Massachusetts. ''SHELDON, it is getting weird out there. SHELDON, this is not my grandfather's ocean.'' We have some responsibilities to pay attention to these people and to listen to them.

One of the most impressive parts of the trip was this at Ohio State. Ohio State is host to the Byrd Polar and Climate Research Center named after the famous polar explorer Admiral Byrd. These two scientists, Ellen Mosley-Thompson and Lonnie Thompson, have spent their lives traveling all over the planet going to these incredible, faraway places—the North Pole, the South Pole, to the Greenland icecap, going to glaciers high in Peru, going to glaciers in the faraway mountains of China. They drill down and take a core sample out of the glacier and get hundreds of thousands of years of data in that core sample.

Then there you are on the top of a glacier in Peru or China, and you have to figure out how to get this core sample back to Ohio—and it has to stay frozen the whole time. So they had this huge logistical challenge. They conquered all of that. They are two amazing people.

These are all the core samples from glaciers all around the globe. Some of them, because of the way climate has dissipated the glaciers, where they drilled the core sample the glacier doesn't exist anymore. It is the last record of gone glaciers.

Here is a picture they had. This is the same site. On this side is a picture of the glacier. You can see striations from the seasons and years going by, and they took this picture from the same place. You can see how the glacier used to be right in front of them and now this glacier is off in the distance. It has moved back as the climate has warmed.

They gave me this. This is a piece of plant matter. You can hardly see it. It is plants that were unearthed as the glacier moved back, and they can date them. Those plants were last out 6,626 years ago, when a snow covered those plants. Snow piled on to snow and it was buried under the glacier. It stayed and it stayed, and thousands of years went by. Then, after thousands of years had gone by, Jesus came and walked the Earth, and then thousands more years came by, and now the glaciers are melting so fast that here it is. You can look, and you can still see the leaves. It is squashed and old, but it hasn't decomposed because of the way

it was preserved under the glacier that is going away now. In this laboratory they have this incredible treasure. You can go in and you can find air that was on this planet when Jesus walked the Earth, and it is still preserved just the way it was in the ice. You can find dust from dust storms that were written about in Egyptian hieroglyphics, and there is the actual dust held in the ice. This is the record that the climate science is based on, and it truly is a marvel.

The last thing I will mention is that we also stopped by the Ohio State Center for Automotive Research. Here is a brandnew Camaro in the background. They work with GM to get cars brand-spanking-new, a high-performance American Camaro. These students are going to take it apart and put it back together so it runs cheaper, faster, and with less fuel. They are going to make a hybrid Camaro with the same level of performance, and it is really very impressive what they are doing. They know climate change is here. That is why they are doing this stuff.

I will close out because I have other Senators waiting, but I thank Senator BROWN for taking me around Cleveland, meeting all the people we did, and taking me on those visits. I thank the folks at Ohio State. Stone Labs out on Lake Erie is an Ohio State facility. The Byrd Polar and Climate Research Center is an Ohio State facility. I met with the John Glenn Institute folks at Ohio State University.

Look, if you are a Buckeye fan and you are listening, pay attention to what Ohio University says about climate change. Don't listen to the fossil fuel phonies. Listen to what your home State university says. These guys are deadly serious. They know it is real. I don't think there is a home State university in this country that is denying climate change, and yet this body is stuck in denial. It has nothing to do with the facts; otherwise the home State universities would say something different. You can't go home and root for the Buckeyes on the weekend and then come here and deny climate change and pretend you are being true to your home State university. I don't care what your home State is—Iowa, Oklahoma, Florida, Georgia—you name it. Go to the big State universities. They understand that climate change is real.

What prevents us from acting isn't information, it is the wall of special influence money that the fossil fuel industry has built around this place, and it is time we woke up and got on with our business. So I will close with that.

I am grateful for the people in Ohio who showed me around, particularly to Dave Spangler and Paul Pacholski, lifelong charter boat captains. They make their living out on Lake Erie. They know what it is like out there, and they know what climate change is doing to their beloved lake and their beloved way of life.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

OVERSIGHT OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, oversight of the executive branch of government by the Congress is as old as the Constitution, it is a critical role, and it is one that was intended by the writers of the Constitution. I believe oversight leads to better government, better laws, and actually saves the taxpayers money. That is why this Senator works very hard at oversight.

I went after the Reagan Defense Department for wasteful spending in the 1980s. I held up the Department of Justice nominees during the Bush administration to get my oversight letters answered, just as I am doing now with the Obama Department of State. I voted in support of giving the Judiciary Committee the authority to issue subpoenas regarding its inquiry into the firing of U.S. attorneys during the Bush administration when a lot of Republicans didn't want that to happen. My belief in and exercise of the oversight role by Congress is longstanding and nonpartisan.

Yesterday the Senate minority leader said my investigation into the Department of State's use of special government employee designations and how Secretary Clinton's private email arrangement interfered with the Freedom of Information Act compliance is political. This simply is not so. This investigation involves many things, but it does not involve politics. His speech yesterday inferred that I was doing all these things for political reasons. That is simply not true, nor is it in accordance with my reputation as an equal opportunity overseer.

My investigation into the potential abuse of the special government employee designations and Secretary Clinton's use of a personal email server and the potential spillage of classified information is not political. It is evidence-based, and it has something to do with our national security.

Unfortunately, the Department has been largely uncooperative since June of 2013. The Department's lack of cooperation has caused me to place 22 holds on its nominees. These are not secret holds. I have placed, according to the rules of the Senate, a statement in the RECORD of why those holds are placed, and to correct the senior Senator from Nevada, my holds do not include 600 Foreign Service officers and do not include individuals from Iowa.

With respect to my pending requests to the Department of State, I am still waiting for a full production of documents from my June 2013 oversight request—the constitutional responsibility of those of us who pass laws and appropriate money. That happened to be 2½ years ago, and the State Department has still not produced the materials I have requested. The Department has implemented several clever strategies to delay the process. I will give you some examples. The Department routinely assigns new employees to handle different requests. Each time a new employee is assigned we get the same excuses why they cannot deliver on our requests. These excuses go something like this: I am new, so I don't know who to talk to and where to find the documents.

For years the Department has delayed in productions, each time with more excuses. For instance, the Department still refuses to answer whether Secretary Clinton's private server was approved. The Department has failed to provide emails for Department personnel communicating about Secretary Clinton's private server that we have strong reason to believe exist. The Department took over 2 months to schedule a single interview with a former employee. The Department for over 2 months has refused to provide instructions it gave to Clinton attorney David Kendall to secure the thumb drives that contained classified information—even though the Department was quoted in the news as providing those instructions. The Department has failed to provide travel reimbursements and leave documents for its employees. On August 5 of this year, I requested classification nondisclosure forms for Secretary Clinton, Huma Abedin, and Cheryl Mills. On November 5, the Department provided those documents to a Freedom of Information Act requester but not to the committee.

I highlight that. The Freedom of Information Act request was made, but the same information that was sought by a congressional committee—one was granted and the other so far has been denied. While the Department provided the documents to that requester under the Freedom of Information Act, Department employees told me they had been unable to find those documents.

Not only has the Judiciary Committee experienced unacceptable Department of State delays in receiving the information we request, others inside and outside of the government have experienced delays as well.

The Associated Press sued the State Department over the failure to satisfy repeated document requests under the Freedom of Information Act related to these same agents. One of these requests dates back 5 years ago.

Judge Richard Leon of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, the judge responsible for this case, scolded the State Department for its failure to produce documents on time:

> Now, any person should be able to review that in one day—one day. Even the least ambitious bureaucrat could do this.

Let there be no mistake about this investigation. This investigation is centered on the Freedom of Information Act, a law that is within the Judiciary Committee's jurisdiction. This investigation is centered on potential abuse of the special government employee designation that allows government employees to be paid by outside

employers, in this case hundreds of thousands of dollars by a consulting firm run by a former Clinton administration employee.

This investigation is centered on potential violations of the Federal Records Act and holding government officials accountable for their actions. This investigation is centered on whether public officials properly handled classified information.

Nobody is above the law. Senior government officials and regular employees should get equal treatment under the law, and that treatment should be fair and objective. It should not depend on what your position is.

When it looks like the treatment is different, we have to figure out what is going on. For example, it looks like other government employees are subject to very different treatment when accused of mishandling classified information.

Army LTC Jason Amerine, a decorated war hero, contacted Congress to try to warn about bureaucratic problems with U.S. hostage recovery efforts, problems that he believed were putting lives at risk. He was accused of improperly transmitting classified information to Congress in the process.

This war hero was removed from his job, was escorted out of the Pentagon, had his clearances suspended, had his scheduled retirement delayed indefinitely, was fingerprinted and had a mug shot taken, was threatened with court-martial, and was subject to extensive investigation.

After almost a year of being investigated, the Army decided not to court-martial Lieutenant Colonel Amerine.

Instead, he was awarded the Legion of Merit for exceptionally meritorious service and was finally allowed to retire. But look at how differently he, a war hero, was treated when accused of mishandling classified information compared to Secretary Clinton and her associates. Where was the minority leader in trying to help this war hero from these attacks from this administration?

Nowhere to be seen is the answer to that.

It is apparent that some have a selective memory when it comes to putting value on oversight and investigations. But I do not. I have been consistent in my oversight role my entire career, investigating Republicans and Democrats.

My oversight and investigations unit is involved in many investigations. The vast majority of them have nothing to do with Secretary Clinton.

Looking out for the public interest isn't a waste of time, and I will keep at it regardless of misguided attacks on my motivations and mischaracterizations of my work. I will continue this investigation because the American people have a right to the truth and government officials have an obligation to answer to ''We the People.''

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that an article dated September 4, 2015, be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Daily Beast, Sept. 4, 2015]

THE HILLARY EMAIL DOUBLE STANDARD

(By Danielle Brian)

How whistleblowers see their lives destroyed over infractions the powerful get away with.

Watching the news about Hillary Clinton's emails, it is remarkable to see how many people now have opinions about the overclassification of information and the relative merits of prosecuting people for mishandling classified material or destroying government records.

Newspapers, blogs, and television reports are full of pundits explaining the law as they see it, with people opining about who is right: the two Inspectors General who assert there was classified material in her emails, or the State Department, which asserts that the information was not classified at the time.

So where were all these ''experts'' when whistleblowers accused of the same infraction—mishandling classified material—were forced to spend a fortune on lawyers, were fired from their jobs, and were threatened with imprisonment?

The amount of time being spent by Hillary Clinton defenders and detractors parsing rules, policies, and laws on whether she broke the law is maddening. That time desperately needs to be spent on transforming the classification system and modernizing electronic records retention policies, as promised in the Obama administration's second National Action Plan for the Open Government Partnership nearly two years ago.

It is hard to reconcile Clinton's actions with her speech at the 2012 opening session of the Open Government Partnership: ''In the 21st century, the United States is convinced that one of the most significant divisions among nations will not be north/south, east/west, religious, or any other category so much as whether they are open or closed societies. We believe that countries with open governments, open economies, and open societies will increasingly flourish. They will become more prosperous, healthier, more secure, and more peaceful.''

She was right then. It is essential to maintain the records of our policymakers for historical analysis so that the public can know what actions have been taken in our name by our leaders. Clinton did not maintain these records. The fact is she indisputably broke the rules, and although that is not a criminal offense, it certainly is a political one.

Even more infuriating is the disparity of treatment between the politically powerful and everyday truth-tellers. High-level officials often receive little more than a tap on the wrist for mishandling classified information. But whistleblowers seeking to expose wrongdoing and protect the public are almost without exception subjected to overzealous investigations and prosecution.

Rather than focusing on the distinction between whether a person deliberately released classified information or not, the more appropriate lens is whether there was an intended public benefit for that disclosure, such as protecting public health or safety or revealing wrongdoing.

Of *course* the Secretary of State had some classified information in her emails. As Bill Leonard, former director of the federal Information Security Oversight Office, told Reuters, information that foreign officials give U.S. officials in confidence is ''born classified.''

And yes, the government is dramatically overclassifying information. Clinton herself tweeted that the government's ridiculous classification rules are the ''real problem.'' But rather than tackling the many problems with the classification system, or investigating Clinton through the post-Wikileaks ''insider threat'' program created to investigate individuals who exploited, compromised, or made an unauthorized disclosure of classified information, the State Department has spent weeks defending their former boss and claiming dismissively that nothing was classified at the time anyway.

General Petraeus, who deliberately gave classified information to his lover/biographer, was afforded similar latitude, with Senator Feinstein going so far as to make a public plea for clemency in his case. In the end he was only given a paltry fine—one that he will be able to pay off with less than one of his speaking engagement fees.

The Department of Defense Inspector General (IG) tried to bury, and then gutted, its own report that concluded then-CIA Director Leon Panetta had released classified information about the Osama bin Laden raid to the *Zero Dark Thirty* Hollywood producers. Panetta was never penalized despite the IG's findings.

In stark comparison, even national security whistleblowers who worked through proper channels, including reporting to their superiors, Inspectors General, and the Congress, are faced with a white-hot vindictive frontal attack from the government.

NSA whistleblower Tom Drake and Justice Department whistleblower Thomas Tamm both had armed FBI agents raid their homes. Drake reported to the Pentagon IG and Congress about the NSA's unconstitutional and wasteful overreach through its domestic surveillance program (years before Edward Snowden). Tamm also challenged the legality of the government's warrantless wiretap program.

Tamm lost his clearance and his government career. Drake was prosecuted for espionage and lost his career after pleading to the misdemeanor of ''excceding the authorized use of a computer.'' Both spent a fortune on attorneys.

Air Marshal Robert MacLean had to take his case all the way to the Supreme Court to prove that he had a right to reveal *un*classified information to a TV reporter about the TSA's decision to remove air marshals from high-risk flights after 9/11. His disclosure forced the TSA to reverse their plan and to better protect the public by keeping air marshals on cross-country flights. MacLean won, but he and his family had to put their lives on hold while he fought his case for years without a paycheck.

Lieutenant Colonel Jason Amerine is being investigated by the Army Criminal Investigation Division over accusations of revealing classified information *to Congress*, which is permitted by law to receive disclosures about wrongdoing in the executive branch. His disclosure to Congress led the White House to overhaul its hostage recovery policies. Yet his retirement from the military, after an extraordinary and decorated career in the Army, has been put on hold indefinitely as the investigation drags on.

Our system now protects the powerful and attacks the heroes, both of which are fundamentally un-American.

So let's stop wasting time making politically expedient proclamations that serve no purpose but to score points for candidates. There are real issues all the campaigns should address: We need to dramatically shrink the incidence of and incentives for overclassification. We also need to apply a public interest balancing test so that when there is an alleged breach of classified information, the violation is weighed against the benefits of the information becoming known.

And we need to level the playing field so that there aren't different accountability standards for those with clout and those without.

If the dialogue doesn't change, most federal employees who witnesses waste, fraud. or abuse will feel the chill and decide against stepping forward while the politically powerful class will continue to be rewarded and see their transgressions forgiven.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR LARGE FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, before long, two must-pass pieces of legislation will come to the floor, a highway bill and a government-funding bill. It is like ringing the dinner bell for Wall Street banks. The lobbyists are swarming this place. They want to roll back financial regulations, and they are working every contact they can to attach these rollbacks to anything that moves.

It is a pretty neat trick. They probably can't get a rollback of financial regulations passed out in the open where Americans can see what is happening and see which Senators and which representatives voted to gut the rules for Wall Street banks. So they slipped these rollbacks into must-pass legislation, which gives the financial industry's friends in Congress a lot of cover.

Of course, it is not just Wall Street that is trying this. Lobbyists and their Republican allies want to weaken the rules protecting workers, retirees, and our environment. They want to defund Planned Parenthood, attack civil rights laws, and shove all kinds of other provisions that would be terrible for our country. But, as in so many things, Wall Street is the true master of this strategy.

It has been almost 1 year since Citigroup lobbyists wrote a provision to blast a hole in Dodd-Frank and, at the last minute, got it attached to a government funding bill. Since the government would have shut down if the funding bill hadn't passed, that Citigroup amendment made it through tacked on the back of the funding deal.

The provision that got blown up last year was called ''Prohibition against Federal Government bailouts of swaps entities.'' The idea behind the rule is pretty simple. If a bank wanted to enter into certain risky deals—such as the credit default swaps that had been at the heart of the 2008 crisis—it had to bear all of the risk itself instead of passing it along to taxpayers. That was the provision that Congress repealed.

Because Democrats weren't willing to shut down the government, Wall Street won that round. But this isn't over. Congressman ELIJAH CUMMINGS and I decided to hunt down the impact of the Citigroup amendment. We opened an investigation, and today we released our findings.

There are lots of details, but here is the takeaway. The FDIC estimates that the provision written by Citigroup lobbyists last year allows a few banks to put taxpayers on the hook for risky swaps with an estimated value of nearly $10 trillion. And what does it mean to load up on swaps such as this? The FDIC said: ''Generally speaking, large volumes of derivative activity conducted by a [bank] would be expected to increase its risk profile.

And who is gobbling down most of this $10 trillion of risk? Three huge banks: Citigroup, JPMorgan Chase, and Bank of America—three banks, nearly $10 trillion.

Now $10 trillion is a lot of risky business. Just remember, the whole TARP bailout was less than $1 trillion. Now a few banks—a few too-big-to-fail banks—are going to keep another $10 trillion in risky business on their books. These banks will happily suck down the profits when their high-stakes bets work out, and they will just as happily turn to the taxpayers to bail them out when there is a problem—all of this because the lobbyists persuaded Congress to do just one little favor for them.

Earlier today Congressman CUMMINGS and I asked the Government Accountability Office to do more analysis of these issues. But whatever the GAO finds, Congress now has 10 trillion reasons to stand up to Citigroup and bring back the swaps pushout rule to ensure that working families in this country—families with mortgages and student loans to pay and kids to take care of—aren't on the hook again, this time for $10 trillion of the big banks' risky bets. Congress has one job here. Congress should strengthen, not roll back, financial rules before one of these banks takes down our economy again.

But bills to hold the big banks more accountable aren't getting much traction around here. Instead, right now people in Congress are talking about repealing more Dodd-Frank provisions. That is right. At this very moment lobbyists and Senators are plotting new ways to take cops off the beat on Wall Street and to weaken, delay or dilute the rules that protect consumers and hold big banks accountable and then to hook those rollbacks either onto a bill to fund our highways or to keep our government open.

Now, Republicans say: Hey, if you want to get something done, if you want to repair our roads or keep the government open, this is the price; help the big banks.

To be fair, Republicans are also getting some help from some Democrats. They say: Wall Street accountability is important, but I just want to get something done around here for a change; so let's go along.

Well, yes, I want to get something done too. Who doesn't? But I didn't come here to carry water for the big banks.

If Republicans think it is time to talk about financial reform, then let's put it all on the table and let's have everyone in Congress—Democrats and Republicans—declare publicly where they stand. If the industry wants to push rollbacks, then I want to make it easier to send bankers to jail when they launder money for drug cartels or when they rig foreign exchange markets or when they cheat pension funds out of desperately needed money.

If the industry wants to chip away at financial oversight, then I want to have a serious, on-the-record conversation about breaking up the biggest banks. Let's start with the three that are taking $10 trillion in risky business onto their books: Citibank, JPMorgan Chase, and Bank of America.

Yes, the American people want us to get something done. They are begging us to do some real work, but I don't hear a lot of my constituents asking us to water down financial rules and to do more favors for the big banks.

So let's put it to the American people. Are you ready to weaken Dodd-Frank, to give the biggest banks in the country more chances to take more risks and to leave you holding the bag, or is it time for a little more accountability—accountability for large financial institutions that month after month are in the headlines for breaking the law? Is it time to stop pretending and truly get rid of too big to fail once and for all? We can let every Republican and every Democrat vote in Congress on these questions. Let's do it with microphones on and the cameras rolling, but not behind closed doors and out of public view.

We need to vote on a highway bill. We need to vote on a government funding bill. And if there is anyone in this Chamber, Republican or Democrat, who thinks they can slip goodies for Wall Street into these bills without a fight, they are very wrong.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

VETERANS DAY

LUCIUS FORSYTH AND ROBERT ''EMMETT'' STANLEY

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, in commemoration, celebration, and honor of Veterans Day, I would like to share the stories of two Louisiana heroes who served in World War II: Lucius Forsyth and Robert ''Emmett'' Stanley—two Louisianans who answered the call to serve and did so most honorably.

Lucius Forsyth left his home in Paulina, LA, to serve in World War II in his late teens as a U.S. Navy seaman aboard the USS *Saratoga*. On February 21, 1945, Lucius and the crew of the *Saratoga* experienced the most concentrated assault of World War II against a warship. The *Saratoga* and her 3,500 sailors fought bravely as the Japanese forces attacked the ship for 3 hours. Bombs were dropped and five Japanese kamikazes crashed their aircraft into the *Saratoga*.

Seven levels below the main deck, Lucius knew that the impact of a bomb or a kamikaze near his location would

mean certain death. Ignoring the danger, Lucius continued to work in the compartments adjacent to the ammunition stockpiles. Mr. President, 125 members of the *Saratoga* lost their lives that day.

Lucius remained aboard the *Saratoga* for the rest of the war. After the Japanese surrendered, he returned home, married Rita Bourgeois of Gonzales, LA, raised 5 children, and today is blessed with 21 grandchildren and 20 great-grandchildren.

The other Louisiana veteran I would like to recognize is Robert ''Emmett'' Stanley. Born in New Orleans in 1923, Emmett left home shortly after graduating from high school to serve the United States. He enlisted in the Navy Reserve in 1943 and served as a seaman first class on the USS *Luce*.

On the morning of May 4, 1945, 1 day after Emmett's 22nd birthday, Japanese kamikaze pilots attacked the USS *Luce*. Emmett was knocked to the deck as shrapnel pierced his scalp through his steel helmet and fragmented pieces went into his legs. He still feels pain from those injuries today.

Emmett and the other crew members were soon given orders to abandon the USS *Luce* after more kamikazes struck. Emmett swam 40 yards away from the sinking ship to avoid being sucked under by the waves, but a second explosion forced more shrapnel into his stomach. Out of the 312 men on the USS *Luce*, 126 were killed in the attack.

Although eligible then, Emmett did not receive his Purple Heart until October 17 of this year, when he was the honoree at the U.S. Navy Birthday Ball. He was thrilled to be surrounded by his entire family.

These are two stories about heroism and valor, but there are many more. Let me brag a little bit about a couple of young men who work on my staff.

One young man, Chris Anderson, enlisted in the Army after completing his college education. He could have pursued business or graduate school, but Chris wanted to serve our country in the War on Terror. He did so bravely and honorably in Afghanistan clearing ordnance. Imagine what his mother thought every night, knowing the job he had. Now he is a tireless advocate for VA reform so that those he served with can get the care they need and deserve.

Another member of my staff back in Baton Rouge, Michael Eby, served in the Louisiana National Guard for 9 years and was awarded the National Defense Medal and the Louisiana War Cross.

To Lucius, Emmett, Chris, and Michael and all who served and serve now, thank you for your service. This Veterans Day and every day, we remember your sacrifices, courage, and dedication to ensuring that our children, their children, and we all can live in freedom in the greatest Nation in the world. May God bless you, your families, and the United States of America.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOZMAN). The Senator from Pennsylvania.

CHILD POVERTY

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise this afternoon to talk about a set of issues we don't, frankly, spend enough time on that relate to our children. I have often said—and I think it is true throughout this Chamber when we talk about these issues—that we come to this because we are concerned about the future of this country when we talk about what happens to our children.

I have always believed—and I think this is a prevailing point of view here in this Chamber and across the country—that every child is born with a light inside them, the light of the full measure of their potential. Some children don't need a lot of help along the way. They are born into circumstances or into families or born to parents or there are other factors that give them an advantage. They have a lot of ability, and they do not need much in the way of intervention from any part of our society, including the government. Some children are born with a bright light, but it may not burn as brightly or shine as brightly as some other kids, and they need a little extra help. Some of those kids, if they get help when they are very young, can thrive and succeed and grow without any further help or assistance.

If we are serious about growing the economy, if we are serious about creating jobs and creating the kind of opportunity that we say we are concerned about and that we say is part of the fabric of being an American, then we have to be concerned about what happens to our kids.

A lot of what I will talk about today can be summarized in maybe one line: As kids learn more now, they are going to earn more later. We know all the data shows that. The child who has access to early learning will earn more later in life. It also is essential that they have access to quality health care and the kind of security that comes when you have enough to eat—food security.

If we want our children to learn more now and earn more later, we have to make the right investments. Unfortunately, that child or any child won't be able to learn more now and therefore earn more later if they live a life of poverty. Maybe some will get through, but that is very difficult. If we don't take action against child poverty, we have already erected barriers in their path.

Today, as of 2014, the latest numbers for child poverty in the United States are 21.1 percent. That number is up substantially since the great recession—a couple of percentage points—and therefore there are millions more children living in poverty.

In Pennsylvania, it is only a little lower—19.4 percent. No one here would try to make the case that is acceptable, that 21 percent of children living in poverty is something we can accept. We should all be not only outraged by it but take action and have a sense of urgency to combat it.

There are a couple of things we can do. First of all, we have to know what is happening to children on a broad range of topics. That is why we have to rely upon public policy expertise. There is a whole group of folks out there in organizations. I am holding in my hand just one example. You can't see it from a distance, but this is a kind of one-page summary by the Annie E. Casey Foundation—no relation to me but a great foundation that has tracked child well-being for years. They have four categories: economic well-being, education, health, and the fourth category is family and community.

If you could see this up close, you would notice some categories. There are 16 altogether, with 4 indicators in 4 categories.

If you look at the orange, wherever you see orange, that means the numbers are getting worse for children. If you see green, that means we are doing better. So it is a mixed report, with some numbers getting better over the last 5 years or 7 years or time increments such as that. But what has gotten worse since the great recession is that the number of children living in poverty has gone up. The number of children whose parents lack secure employment has gone up. Unfortunately, two other indicators of poverty—children in single-parent families is up, meaning the number has worsened, and children living in high-poverty areas is worse.

I won't go into those numbers today, but that is just an indication that childhood poverty has been a challenge for a long time. It got a lot worse after the great recession, when our economy began to collapse and folks across the country paid the price, and a lot of children have paid the price.

So what do we do about it? One thing we do is to begin to see that at long last we can't just talk about reducing child poverty. We can't just nibble around the edges or hope a program here or a program there will help. We have to have a strategy. In order to have a strategy, we have to have a goal, and the goal ought to be that we reduce child poverty and take the same approach, frankly, the United Kingdom took a couple of years ago.

I will walk through some of the background, but Senator BALDWIN and Senator BROWN and I introduced a bill just last week—the Child Poverty Reduction Act—to establish that kind of a target to reduce child poverty. Under the legislation, child poverty would be cut in half in 10 years. So child poverty would be cut in half in a decade. The second goal would be to eliminate child poverty in 20 years. Deep poverty would be eliminated in 10 years—meaning the worst kind of poverty for our children and for our families.

To meet these goals, we would give an assignment to an interagency working group to reduce child poverty, to develop a plan, and include recommendations to improve coordination and efficiency of existing programs and initiatives, because there are a lot of them—and we can get to those in a moment—along with recommendations for new legislation, new strategies, and new approaches to focus on child poverty.

Here is what happened in the United Kingdom. In 1999, the UK established a national child poverty target and measured in U.S. terms the UK's child poverty target, and the policy changes made in conjunction with that effort reduced Britain's child poverty rate by 50 percent in the first 10 years—a significant achievement. In comparison, between 2000 and 2013—a little more than a decade—in the United States, the child poverty rate increased by over 20 percent. So roughly in the same time period, as our poverty rate was going up for kids, the UK's poverty rate for children was going down. One of the reasons for that—not the only reason—is they set a target, and both sides came together—the labor party, the conservatives—and the country made it a goal. We haven't done that yet, and we need to focus on that kind of a goal.

So one thing we need to do is to focus on a goal and have legislation to enact part of the strategy. Then, of course, we can't just stop there. We can't just assume having a target and working toward it is enough.

One of the most powerful examples in my home State of Pennsylvania over the last couple of years of what it means to live in poverty—in this case, moms who were willing to tell their stories—is the effort undertaken by Witnesses to Hunger. That is what this photograph depicts—a child who was photographed by her mother. Other mothers were willing to take pictures of their children to tell the world about their own circumstances and to give us living proof of what it means to live in poverty, what it means to be a child living in poverty. That is Witnesses to Hunger.

This all started at Drexel University, where they gave cameras to a group of moms who decided to open up their own lives, courageously and generously, and to tell us more about these challenges.

The first picture after that is a picture of a young woman by the name of Monique who is on her way to her local WIC office—the Women, Infants, and Children Program—the office in this part of Philadelphia. Monique says: ''I love WIC because it supports me by helping me nurse my baby.'' That is a picture of her and her baby.

The next picture is a picture of a group of classmates, and the mom's name is Shearine. Shearine's daughter joins her classmates in this photo. Here is what Shearine says about her circumstances and what she hopes for the future:

> My daughter and her classmates are symbols of change. They have hope for a brighter future and faith that the adults in their lives will work together to make a change. We must do whatever it takes so that they can grow up and be strong, educated adults.

I think Shearine gave us all an assignment, not just speaking to herself. I think she gave us all an assignment that we have to make sure we are taking the steps necessary and essential to do all we can to give that bright future and to validate the faith those children have in us, whether we are going to meet our obligations to help those children—every single one of those children in that class picture.

Finally, the last picture is of a young boy giving his mother Gale a great smile. In this photo, Gale captures her son's happiness as he holds up nutritious bananas. It is good to have that in the picture. When we talk about child poverty and hunger, it is not just some public policy issue, some issue for a think tank to analyze. Child poverty is depicted in some of these pictures, but it is also in our newspapers every day of the week and in our midst. I hope more of us will be summoned by our conscience to do something constructively about this issue.

We have a lot to do in the next couple of months. We have child nutrition reauthorization, which is a great opportunity for us to, at long last, begin to take steps in the right direction.

The Women, Infants, and Children Program I mentioned before is one of those. One reason I am so concerned about where we are in the WIC Program is that some children literally are caught in a nutrition gap. Because they are age 5, they may be caught in a gap where they are not getting school meals and they are not getting nutrition any other way. Some children can experience this nutrition gap almost 12 months, almost a year being caught because they turned 5. The time in this nutrition gap is a time when they are neither supported by WIC nor supported by a school meals program.

We had the privilege recently of talking to a constituent from Western Pennsylvania. Her son is currently 4 years old. He will be enrolled in kindergarten in the fall of 2016. When he enrolls in school, he will get healthy meals, but in the next month when he turns 5, he will be cut off from the opportunity to benefit from the WIC Program. This child loves yogurt, fruit and vegetables and whole grains provided by the WIC Program, but he will not benefit from that because of this glitch in the law. So I propose a new bill, the Wise Investment in our Children Act, the WIC Act, to close the nutrition gap by allowing States to increase the age limit for WIC to age 6.

We also have to be concerned, at the same time focusing on making changes to the WIC Program, to focus on another support for our children and families, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, so-called CACFB, as a quality source of nutrition. For many children, the meals they eat in childcare programs are the most nutritious meals they will eat all week. In other words, absent the childcare setting, they will likely not have a nutritious meal in the course of a week. As working families shuttle between home, childcare, and work, little time remains for food shopping, healthy meal planning or sitting down to eat healthy meals. The Child and Adult Care Food Program provides healthy, nutritious meals to more than 3 million children each day who are either in Head Start, Early Head Start or childcare programs in both centers and family childcare homes.

I introduced this bill as well to focus, improve, and strengthen this program. The Child and Adult Care Improvement Act would enhance several aspects of this program, including allowing childcare centers and homes the option of serving a third meal for children who are in care for 8 or more hours a day.

We have a lot to do, but we cannot get to the goal of reducing child poverty by 50 percent or reducing poverty overall in the near term in the next decade, unless we have a strategy, set a goal, and then begin to strengthen what works and improve the existing programs—whether it is WIC, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, the SNAP program—what used to be called food stamps. Whatever the program is, we have to strengthen and invest in it. We can't talk about all those lofty terms—like ''GDP growth, job growth, and growing economy'' and all the wonderful things that get discussed in this Chamber—without a strategy for our kids.

We have a way to go, but I believe this commitment to our children is not just the right thing to do and it is not just something we ought to focus on as something consistent with what our conscience tells us, but it is in fact a great economic strategy for the country. If kids learn more now, they are going to earn more later. They can't learn more now if they don't have access to early learning, if they don't have access to healthy, nutritious foods, if they don't have access to quality health care, and if we don't protect them from people who would do them harm. If we do at least four of those things well—if we have early learning opportunities, opportunities to invest in food security strategies so they get healthy, nutritious foods, and we make sure they have quality health care in addition to early learning, we can move forward in a direction that gets us to the goal of making sure every child in this country has an opportunity to grow and to learn and to move in the future together. We can't do that if all we do in Washington is use phrases like ''job creation'' and ''economic growth'' without a strategy to get our kids there. We should make sure every child in this country has the same opportunity to learn and to grow. They can't do that if we as the adults don't give them that opportunity.

So as we look at some of the real lives depicted in these photographs, I think Shearine gave us a very powerful message today, where she said: ''They,'' meaning the children in the picture of the classroom—''They have hope for a brighter future and faith that the adults in their lives will work together to make change.''

Shearine is right. She has given me an assignment, she has given 99 other Senators an assignment, and a lot of other adults across the country. I believe this is a mission worthy of a great nation, just like every other major undertaking we have confronted and dealt with over many generations of greatness in our country.

When we talk about American exceptionalism and what it means to be an American, part of being an American is making sure every child has the same opportunity to learn and to grow. We can do this. We can do it in a bipartisan fashion. If the United Kingdom can reduce child poverty, the United States can do the same.

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

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

TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I would point out to our colleagues, that we now have now received the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement. It amounts to 5,544 pages, not including the dozens of side-agreements—three times the book I know the Presiding Officer knows, the Bible. It is three times the length of the Bible and several times the length of ObamaCare. It has just been delivered to us with all kinds of promises for good things that might result from its affirmation.

No American has the resources to ensure that his or her interests are being protected in this document. It is so long and the ramifications are so broad that Congress cannot do its job to ensure that the people's interests are safeguarded by such an agreement.

We already have trade deals with all the major TPP countries, except Japan. So I will say with real confidence this is much more than trade. If it was, a bilateral agreement with Japan would fix it. We have agreements with Australia, Chile, Canada, and other countries.

The TPP is about the goal of creating a new global regulatory structure—what I have called a Pacific Union—transferring power from individual Americans and Congress, eroding Congress, to an unaccountable, unelected, international bureaucratic committee.

Because President Obama has been given fast-track powers by this Congress—unwisely I think—Congress cannot amend this deal, we cannot strike one offending provision, apply a filibuster to force a supermajority of 60 votes, as we have to have for most legislation, or to apply a two-thirds treaty vote. Additionally, the White House writes the implementing legislation, which, in turn, necessarily supersedes any existing American law. So this is what we mean by fast-track.

Today I would like to share a few thoughts about one aspect of this agreement, the Trans-Pacific Partnership Commission. There is a particular chapter in this mammoth agreement, chapter 27, titled—innocuously enough—''Administrative and Institutional Provisions,'' which deals with the creation of a Trans-Pacific Partnership Commission.

Section 27.1 outlines the creation of this Commission and who is a member. The agreement states that ''each party shall be responsible for the composition of its delegation.'' In other words, we are empowering the Trans-Pacific Partnership countries to create a new congress of sorts—a group with delegates that goes and meets and decides important issues that can impact everyday lives of Americans. The American representative in this Commission, which will operate in many ways like the U.N., will not be answerable to voters anywhere. How long will their terms be? How will they be chosen? Will there be any restrictions on lobbying, any requirements of transparency? Can they always meet in secret? Are there any ethics rules? The answer is, it will be whatever the TPP countries decide it will be.

The fact that they negotiated this in secret for months—years, really—indicates that transparency is not a quality they value very highly. It is an entity untethered above and outside the Constitution of the United States. All our government agencies in the United States must answer to the Congress and the President, the Chief Executive. These institutions will not. So we need to be cautious.

All I am saying is, why do we have to do this? Why do we have to create a Commission in which Vietnam or the Sultan of Brunei gets the same vote as the President of the United States?

Section 27.2 lists several powers of the Commission which should be expected in any regulatory body. It is granted the power to oversee the implementation of the TPP and the power to supervise the work of relevant working groups under its jurisdiction. However, then the section states this: Under the rules, the Commission shall ''consider any proposal to amend or modify this Agreement,'' to change the agreement. They get to change the agreement. We can ratify this, but they get to change it whenever they deem appropriate. Also, the Commission shall ''seek the advice of non-governmental persons or groups on any matter falling within the Commission's functions'' and ''take such other action as the Parties may agree,'' while considering ''input from non-governmental persons or groups of the Parties.''

It also says it will consider the findings of international fora to help advise them. I guess one of the fora they will not be considering is a group like the National Federation of Independent Business, small businesses.

None of these terms are defined as to what constitutes a nongovernmental person or group. What is that?

Remember, when the Founders of our country negotiated the Constitution, they worried about every word. They thought about what it would mean and could mean decades, centuries later. They talked about creating a new form of government on this entire continent. They actually believed that could be possible, and it certainly has become reality. Have we given that kind of thought to the power we are delegating to this Commission? How will the agreement be amended or modified?

Just last week, the Secretary of State, Secretary Kerry, was in Kazakhstan. He told the television station in Kazakhstan that he is interested in seeing China and Russia be added to the TPP and that they would consider the Philippines a prime candidate to join in the future. That is an interesting thing to announce, particularly in Kazakhstan. Since it impacts the people of the United States, it might be nice for him to be talking more to the people of the United States.

So this would create a situation in which new countries can be added, it appears, most any different way.

The point is, this global governance authority is open-ended. The agreement states that ''the Commission and any subsidiary body established under this Agreement may establish rules of procedures for the conduct of its work.''

It even covers climate regulation—a lot about climate regulation. The agreement states that ''the Parties acknowledge that transition to a low emissions economy requires collective action.'' Having been a proud cold warrior, I have never been happy with people who use the word ''collective.'' It makes me nervous.

The TPP is a living agreement. According to the U.S. Trade Representative's own Web site, the living agreement provision is in the TPP: ''. . . to enable the updating of the agreement as appropriate to address trade issues that emerge in the future as well as new issues that arise with the expansion of the agreement to include new countries.'' It says it is to deal with trade issues and new issues. Are those issues nontrade? Are they environmental issues? Are they labor agreements or other kinds of things that are unrelated directly to trade? I think it is clear this would allow that to happen.

Regardless, after the TPP is passed and Congress has blessed the union, the Senate will have no say in how the

Commission is established or the rules by which it is governed. It is untethered to the Congress.

Second, currency manipulation is a serious issue. It is impacting our ability to trade effectively today in a very large way.

Paul Volcker, Chairman of the Federal Reserve during a time when he and President Reagan transformed the American economy from raging inflation and interest rates to a sound economy, said that currency manipulation could wipe out decades of trade negotiations in a matter of minutes. We have seen that happen.

Currency is huge and impacts so many companies. If you read the financial pages, you will see that companies are worried about their bottom line in large part because it will be harder for them to compete with foreign competitors who devalue their currency deliberately in order to gain an advantage in trade. But there is no enforceable currency mechanism in this agreement, although it was fought for in both Houses of Congress and came close, but it is not in it.

On November 5, the Wall Street Journal wrote: ''Mexico, Canada and other countries signaled they were open to the [currency] deal when they realized it wouldn't include binding currency rules that could lead to trade sanctions through the TPP.'' This caused Ford Motor Company to immediately reject the TPP the day it was released. Their spokesman argued that they could not support a deal in which currency rules ''fell outside of TPP and [failed to] include dispute settlement mechanisms to ensure global rules prohibiting currency manipulation are enforced.''

This is a huge matter. Ford says that when they are selling an American-made automobile or truck in a foreign country, they are losing thousands of dollars as a result of currency manipulation by many of our trading partners. So it is hard to sell an automobile if our foreign competitors have, in effect, a comparative advantage on currency alone of several thousand dollars.

The administration has zero interest in preventing foreign market manipulations and currency manipulations, and thus the TPP will cause massive job losses. It just will. We will be less able to compete.

Let's be frank. I supported the Korean trade agreement. We have great allies in Japan and Korea and others in the Pacific, but they are tough trading partners—competitors, if you want to know the truth. They are competitors. They are mercantilists. They have a goal. Their goal is to sell as much as possible to foreign countries and particularly to the greatest market in the world, the market they lust to gain even more access to—our market. They want to sell to us. Through a whole lot of different mechanisms, they resist purchasing anything from us. Have we made any progress in lessening the trade deficit to Japan or Korea lately? It is not going to happen because these barriers are nontariff, currency being one of the most noteworthy.

Foreign workers and governments under the TPP are not inhibited from illegally undercutting American workers through currency manipulation in order to export their unemployment to the United States.

The way this happens is, if you have a business in a foreign country and the world market has slowed down and your exports are slowing down, if you devalue your currency, your product becomes cheaper and can be sold in the United States or other countries at a cheaper price, and you keep your people working and manufacturing those widgets, whereas the country that imported your product lays off its workers because it can't compete at that price—for the widgets. It is an artificial way to gain market advantage.

In May of this year, I wrote the President and asked him simple questions. This is important, colleagues. I asked him to state whether the TPP would increase or decrease our trade deficit. He refused to answer. I asked him whether the TPP would increase or decrease the number of manufacturing jobs in the United States. He refused to answer. I asked him how the TPP would affect the average hourly wages of the American middle class. He refused to answer. He never wrote back. All that the proponents in the White House have said about this deal is that it would increase production and jobs in the export industries. But exporting is such a small part of American industry production. They don't mention how many jobs would be lost by the increased imports into our country.

Dan DiMicco, the CEO emeritus of Nucor Steel, which operates steel plants all over the Nation, wrote in his recent book:

> The world says one thing about open markets and free trade but does another. Whatever sharp cultural or political or language differences may separate the Japanese from the Chinese, or the Germans from the French, this much they all have in common: they know how to advance and protect their economic interests.

Mr. President, has my time lapsed?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama, there is a 10-minute time limit.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 2 minutes to wrap up.

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

Mr. SESSIONS. They know how to advance their interests, and we have not been effective in advancing ours.

It is time to take TPP off the fast track, take this off the fast track and get busy defending the interests of the American people.

DiMicco writes:

> In principle, any industrial policy would begin by saying the business of creating, making, and building things must be at the heart of any overreaching economic strategy.

This agreement is not just about promoting trade; it is about creating a framework for a transnational union which supersedes the authority of Congress.

Finally, if it were truly about opening markets to U.S. producers, the United States would simply have negotiated bilateral agreements with the countries we need to talk to.

We are the world's greatest market for worldwide products that are made, and right now we give open access, incredibly, to foreign imports. Just look at those containerships on the Pacific coast stacked to the top. It is not working for jobs in America, it is not working for wages in America, and it is not working for manufacturing. We have to make things. Moving to a services economy would be failure.

Of course we want trade. Of course we want to purchase items from abroad. I am not saying we shouldn't. What I am asking is, are we, in negotiating this trade agreement, giving even broader access to our markets without getting enough in return? That is the problem. America must make things. Consumption in America should be for Americans and for export. Our competitors want the opposite, and they have been winning, but they need us more than we need them; thus, we have great power to reverse this course.

Figuratively speaking, some of our politicians will be pushing up daisies if they don't listen to what the American people are saying. They must listen to the sound, common sense of the people who hold the ultimate power. They expect us to make sure their interests are legitimately defended. I don't believe this trade agreement does that, and we will talk more about it as time goes by.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

REMEMBERING DOROTHY ''DOT'' HELMS

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I have the sad duty to report to the Senate the passing of the first lady of North Carolina, Dorothy ''Dot'' Helms. Mrs. Helms was known to many in this body as the ever gracious wife of my illustrious predecessor, Senator Jesse Helms.

In fact, I chose to stand at this desk because it is the desk he stood behind for the many years as he served the United States and the great State of North Carolina in the Senate.

For 66 years Dot Helms was the rock upon which the Helms legacy was built. Long before she met her future husband, Dot Helms was a trailblazer in North Carolina. She was the first woman to graduate from the University of North Carolina school of journalism in 1940, where she rubbed elbows with the likes of fellow Tar Heels, Edward R. Murrow and friend and classmate David Brinkley.

While a reporter for the legendary owner-editor of the Raleigh News and Observer, Joseph Daniels, she met a young man on the sports desk named Jesse Helms, and the rest is history.

Mrs. Helms was a leader in Christian causes, such as her sponsorship of the interdenominational children's camp Willow Run at Lake Gaston. While in Washington, she taught at Gallaudet University and actually wrote a book on great Americans who happened to be deaf.

In the Senate, she was the leader of the Senate Ladies Bible Study, the Congressional Wives Prayer Group, and the U.S. Senate chapter of the Red Cross. She was a confidante and pillar for many friends on both sides of the aisle, including Elizabeth Dole, Erma Byrd, Beryl Bentsen, and Linda Johnson Robb.

Politically, she was a close friend of Ronald and Nancy Reagan. In 1976, she took the unusual step of campaigning tirelessly across the State of North Carolina in support of then-Governor Reagan's insurgent Presidential candidacy. Needless to say, the Governor carried the North Carolina primary against a sitting President in no small part due to the work of Dot Helms.

Two years ago, Gov. Pat McCrory awarded Dorothy Helms the Order of the Long Leaf Pine for her contributions to the civic and religious life of the Tar Heel State. Fittingly, the Governor honored her with the official North Carolina State toast:

Here's to the land of the long leaf pine,
The summer land where the sun doth shine,
Where the weak grow strong and the strong grow great,
Here's to ''Down Home,'' the old North State!

''Where the strong grow great. . . . '' Dot Helms and North Carolina are one and the same. For her family and friends and a grateful nation, we can turn in comfort to the Second Book of Timothy: ''I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have kept the faith.''

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the obituary of Mrs. Helms from the Jesse Helms Center Foundation in Monroe, NC, be printed in the RECORD.

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

DOROTHY COBLE HELMS

1919–2015

Dorothy Coble Helms, wife of former U.S. Senator Jesse Helms, passed away on November 6, 2015. She was the daughter of the late Jacob Lonnie and Coral Beaty Coble. Mrs. Helms was born in Raleigh, N.C. on March 25, 1919. She was graduated from Hugh Morson High School in Raleigh in 1936. She attended Meredith College from 1936 to 1938 before transferring to UNC-Chapel Hill, where she was graduated in 1940 with a degree in journalism. She and her roommate, Doris Goerch Horton, were the first two women graduates to receive degrees in journalism from UNC. Both women were reporters for The Daily Tarheel, the school newspaper. Dot, as she was called by her friends, was the first president of The McIver Dormitory for Women and served on The Women's Council. She loved to write and wrote many short stories beginning when she was a teenager. Later in life, she delighted her family by telling ghost stories, and it was an especially fun time when she shared her stories at night on the porch at the family cottage at Topsail Beach.

After graduating from UNC, Mrs. Helms worked at The Raleigh News and Observer as a city reporter and later as society editor. It was while working at The News and Observer that she met her future husband, a member of the sports department. They were married on October 31, 1942, at the First Baptist Church in Raleigh. One summer during the Second World War, while her husband was on recruiting duty for the Navy in the eastern part of North Carolina, she edited three weekly newspapers which were published in Ahoskie, NC: The Hertford County Herald, The Gates County Index, and The Bertie-Ledger Advance. Mrs. Helms also worked part time at The Star News when her husband was stationed in Wilmington, NC.

Back in Raleigh after her husband's discharge from the U.S. Navy, Mrs. Helms was active in the Women's Missionary Union of Hayes Barton Baptist Church. She was also active in the Colonel Polk Chapter, DAR and served as regent for two years. In the early 1960s, Mrs. Helms and Mrs. Armistead Maupin (Diana) were instrumental in founding the Wake County SPCA.

The Helms moved to Arlington, Virginia after Senator Helms was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1972. While living there, Mrs. Helms was active in The Spouses of the Senate and in the Senate Ladies Bible Study. She was a volunteer at Gallaudet College for the Deaf and wrote a series of stories entitled ''Interesting Deaf Americans''. Some of the stories were used in English classes at Gallaudet and others were used in publications of schools for the deaf The Helms shared a deep interest in Camp Willow Run, a youth camp for Christ on the shores of Lake Gaston in North Carolina, and Mrs. Helms later wrote a history of the camp.

Dot loved politics, and she backed many candidates through the years. She always kept up with what was going on in the world and was never without an opinion on an issue. She was instrumental in the formation of The Jesse Helms Center Foundation in Wingate, N.C. and served on the Board of Directors for many years. She was also involved with The Helms School of Government at Liberty University.

Dorothy was the rock of her family. She will be missed so much, but the family rejoices that they had her for so long. She was predeceased by her husband, U.S. Senator Jesse Helms; her parents; her brother, Jack Coble, and her nephew Jack Coble, Jr. She is survived by her children, Jane Knox (Charlie), Nancy Helms, and Charles Helms (Kathleen). She is also survived by her seven grand-children, Rob Knox (Krystin), Jennifer Knox (Shields Carstarphen), Mike Stuart (Rachel Foster), Ellen Stuart Gaddy (Will), Katie Stuart Power (Andy), Amelia Helms, and Julie Helms; and six great grandchildren, Maggie McGuire, Ryan Knox, Cooper Knox-Carstarphen, Alex Knox-Carstarphen, Beatrix Gaddy, and Conrad Power. Dot also leaves behind many other family members, including the wonderful people who are forever members of the Helms Senate family.

REMEMBERING HOWARD COBLE

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I will close by saying that I hope we all remember another great North Carolinian who was buried just today, Congressman Howard Coble. He served 5 years in the North Carolina House and 30 years in the U.S. House of Representatives. He was a great American, and he will be missed.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and 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. CARPER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

VETERANS DAY AND THE GI BILL

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, tomorrow is Veterans Day, and it is a special day for all of us who serve here and for all of our colleagues down the hall in the House of Representatives. It is a special day for veterans across the country and around the world and their families and for a lot of Americans who value the service and sacrifice of our veterans.

Veterans Day is not Memorial Day. On Memorial Day we mourn and salute those who have given their all in service to our country. Veterans Day is really for all veterans, not just for those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice.

I was privileged to go to college. I won a Navy ROTC scholarship and went to Ohio State. I studied a little economics—my professors would say not enough—graduated and went off to Pensacola and became a naval flight officer in the late 1960s. I ended up with Patrol Squadron 40 out of naval air station, Moffett, CA. I joined my colleagues there for several tours of duty in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War.

When we came back to the States from overseas, I resigned my regular commission and took a reserve commission and moved from California over to Delaware to enroll in the University of Delaware's Business School and earned an MBA.

Literally the first week I was in Delaware, in September of 1973, I got in my Volkswagen Karmann Ghia with a rebuilt engine and drove up Route 2, Kirkwood Highway, to north Delaware to the VA hospital in Elsmere, which is about halfway between Newark and Wilmington in northern Delaware. I took my DD Form 214 in with me to present it to the folks at the hospital to see if I was eligible for any veterans benefits, and as it turned out I was eligible for benefits. Some of the benefits actually have their roots going all the way back to the end of World War II when FDR signed—I think in 1944—legislation creating the original GI bill. Among the things I was eligible for was a home loan in which the VA would guarantee a portion of my loan so I could buy a house sometime later, and I did. I was also eligible for some medical benefits, including dental benefits.

I didn't realize it at the time, but the VA hospital there was a World War II relic of a hospital. The morale was not good and the quality of service was not

good. If people in the central or southern part of our State needed access to a VA medical facility and they didn't have it there, they would have to somehow make their way up to northern Delaware. It is not like driving from one end of California to the other, but it is a hike. We didn't have any community-based, out-patient clinics in Delaware or any other States either at the time.

That fall, those of us who were enrolled in school who were Vietnam War veterans, and in some cases other wars, were eligible for some benefits. The GIs who served in the Vietnam war, including me, were eligible for a GI bill benefit which was about $250 a month. It may not sound like a lot of money today, but I was happy to get every penny of it.

I continued to fly with a new squadron at the naval air station in Willow Grove, PA—the P–3 Squadron—and continued to track Soviet nuclear submarines in oceans all over the world as a ready reservist. I am one of a number of people in my family who have benefited from the GI bill. My father's generation served in World War II. He was a chief petty officer. His brother and my other uncle served in World War II. One of them never made it home. He was 19 years old in 1944 and assigned to the USS *Suwannee*. The aircraft carrier was in the Pacific Ocean when it came under attack by Japanese kamikaze planes, and he lost his life. His body was never recovered and neither were the bodies of a number of other people who I guess were on the deck of the carrier when the attacks occurred.

Other members of my family in my Dad's generation were able to take advantage of the very first GI bill, which was signed into law in 1944 by President Roosevelt. What happened in the wake of World War II was a very generous GI bill. At the time, you could go to Harvard on the GI bill, and it was basically fully paid for, plus you had a housing and living allowance. It was an incredible deal, and a lot of people took advantage of that, which is good. A lot of the folks went to colleges and universities, but others went to trade schools.

I never really talked to my dad about this, but I am told that he learned how to do body work and to repair cars that had been wrecked. He went to some kind of private school or trade school and learned how to do that and ended up working at Burleson Oldsmobile in Beckley, WV, where my sister and I were born. He was able to somehow do a good job there and ended up working as a claims adjuster for Nationwide Insurance and ended up running the national school for claims adjusters for Nationwide Insurance.

He was a guy with a high school degree from Shady Spring High School in Beckley, WV, and ended up, with the help of the Navy and the GI bill, with a wonderful career at Nationwide Insurance. He is sort of a poster child for those who were able to take that benefit and do something positive with it for their lives and for their families.

In the wake of World War II, there was also an emergence of for-profit colleges and universities and for-profit trade schools. They called them proprietary trade schools, and they did not always have the best interests of the GI at heart. They were not always interested in making sure that the GI man or woman got the training and the help they needed to qualify for jobs, to go out there in that day and age and be gainfully employed and provide for themselves and their families. Some of the nonprofits that operated were very good and did a great job, others not so much. They took advantage of the GIs, and ultimately they took advantage of taxpayers.

Over a period of time, back then and in the years since then, on the heels of the Korean and Vietnam wars, there emerged an effort on the part of the Federal Government to try to make sure we put in place some market forces to ensure that the for-profit schools, or proprietary schools, that were offering the benefits of colleges or universities—that that college or university would treat the GI fairly, the way we would want to be treated, and to make sure they got the benefits that they wanted and that the taxpayers deserved.

I think on the heels of World War II, there was an 85–15 rule that said if you happen to be a proprietary school and you were using the GI bill to pay for benefits for somebody—say you had 100 students; out of the 100, no more than 85 of them could be there on the Federal dime. The other 15 GIs, if you will, had to be there on their own or pay for it some way other than through the Federal Government. That was an early way to introduce market forces into the benefits that were being provided so we would end up with schools that were working and providing training certificates or degrees that were worth the paper they were written on.

More recently, something emerged called the 90–10 rule. The GI bill had come and gone. For those who got into wars in Korea and Vietnam and more recently in the Persian Gulf in Iraq and now Afghanistan—the benefits that are offered to folks who literally served and applied for the GI bill I think after 2007 or 2008—that is a very generous GI bill. We sent off about 300 Delaware Guard men and women 2 months ago from Delaware to go serve in some cases in Afghanistan and in other cases maybe in Kuwait and at different duty stations around the world. But I told them when they went off to deploy that when they came back at the end of their 6, 7, 8 months—whatever it will be—that they will come back to the best GI bill in the history of the country.

Here is what they come back to if they have served for, I think, 3 years. If they have served time in those parts of the world, they come back to a GI bill and if they went to a public college or university—the University of Delaware, Delaware State, Wilmington University, Delaware Tech or a community college in my State or public colleges and universities across the country—they can go to those schools for free—pretty good, free. We got 250 bucks a month. They can go for free. Their tuition is paid for, books are paid for, fees are paid for, tutoring is paid for, and they get a $1,500 housing allowance. That is pretty good—very good.

Just to make sure that we have some market forces in place to ensure that these for-profit colleges and universities are really doing a good job and not just taking advantage of the GIs or of the taxpayers, we have in place something called the 90/10 rule. It has been around for a while. The 90/10 rule says that no college or university—for-profit college or university, proprietary school, for-profit proprietary school or training school—can get more than 90 percent of their revenues from the Federal Government. But the 90 percent does not necessarily cover—it can cover Pell grants and things other than the GI bill. But the GI bill—a school can get all of their money from Pell grants, and students who are on the Federal dime and continue—Mr. President, I am not sure what is wrong with the public address system. I will try another mic. That is better. There we go.

Today we have a loophole in the 90/10 rule that allows a college, university or a proprietary for-profit school to get 100 percent of their revenues from the Federal Government. It doesn't count the money they get from the GI bill. It covers Pell grants and other Federal aid but not the GI bill and not something called tuition assistance to Active-Duty personnel. I suggest that is something we need to fix. That is a loophole that needs to be plugged. No college or university should make 100 percent of their revenues off the Federal Government.

The 90/10 rule is well-intentioned to make sure that market forces work, but I am sure that people getting their education from a source other than the Federal Government would ensure that the diploma they are getting—the certificate they are getting—is worth something and they are able to translate that into gainful employment.

Several of us, including myself and Senator BLUMENTHAL, have offered legislation to close the 90/10 rule and to really go back to the original intent—to say that no for-profit college or university or trade school can get more than 90 percent of the revenues from the Federal Government. You can add in the GI bill or you can add in Pell grants, tuition assistance for Active-Duty personnel, but that cannot exceed 90 percent—and educational entities' revenues. We need to restore that market force, that governing, if you will, to better ensure the integrity of these programs.

So I would just say to my colleagues as we approach this Veterans Day, it is

great that we are able to offer a benefit that provides free—I don't care whether a person is from North Carolina or from Utah; they can go to college free and get a housing allowance for $1,500 a month. But I want to make sure that when a GI—I don't care if it is Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines or whatever—gets their certificate or diploma, it is worth the paper it is written on and that they will in some cases be able to go on to graduate school or further their learning, but almost in any case that it enables them to go on to a job that enables them to be self-sufficient.

With that, I am going to yield the floor to the chairman of the Finance Committee, on which I am privileged to serve, and to say to both of my colleagues on the floor here: My best wishes to you and your constituents and have a wonderful Veterans Day. I will see you all next week. Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I appreciate the work of the Senator from Delaware on our committee. He is one of the good people around here.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak once again on the topic of religious liberty. This is the fifth in a series of addresses I have given on this vitally important subject. In my previous remarks, I have discussed why religious liberty matters, why it is important, and why it deserves special protection from government interference. I have also detailed the history of religious liberty in the United States in order to show that the desire for religious freedom was central to our Nation's founding and to the very idea of America. From the beginning, religious liberty has been a preeminent value in American life. Government accommodates religion—not the other way around. Lastly, in my previous remarks, I have sought to explain how religion has always had a robust public role in our society and to rebut the wrongheaded, ahistorical view that religion is a purely private matter that should be kept out of the public domain.

Today I turn to the status of religious liberty in contemporary American life. My argument is straightforward. In ways that are both surprising and unprecedented, religious liberty is under attack here in the United States. I speak not merely of attacks on particular practices but also of attacks on the very idea of religious liberty itself—on the idea that there should be room in society for believers to live and to worship in ways that differ from prevailing orthodoxy.

The campaign against religious liberty has three prongs: the courts, the Obama administration, and State legislatures. My goal today is to explain how each of these institutions is undermining the vitality of religious life in our country and why what they are doing is wrong.

Many Americans are unaware of the substantial threats religious liberty faces here in the United States. They look abroad to the Middle East or to Africa, where Islamist regimes are killing Christians and other dissenters from religious orthodoxy, and suppose that by comparison, things are not so bad here in the United States. While it is true that religious minorities in America do not face death or serious physical harm for choosing to live their faith, we must not blind ourselves to the ways in which our government institutions are undermining religious liberty itself. We must instead come to recognize that powerful forces in our society are working actively to restrict the ability of religious believers to live out their faith and to foist upon them government mandates that are flatly inconsistent with our most deeply held beliefs.

I begin with the courts, which I identified as the first front in the fight against religious liberty. For a number of years now there has been a steady stream of cases in which everyday Americans have been sanctioned—sometimes severely—for adhering to religious tenants that conflict with current political orthodoxy. The examples are myriad. A photographer in New Mexico was fined $7,000 for declining to photograph a same-sex commitment ceremony on the grounds that her religious beliefs teach that marriage is a union between one man and one woman and that she could not in good conscience lend her services to the event. A florist in Washington State was fined $1,000 for declining to provide flower arrangements for a same-sex wedding. And a couple in Oregon who owned a cake shop were ordered to pay $135,000 for telling a same-sex couple that they could not provide a cake for their wedding ceremony because the shop owners adhere to the traditional, biblically based view of marriage.

The message that these court cases send is clear: If you are a religious individual with religiously rooted views that differ from the current policies of the State, you follow your beliefs at your own peril. Even those who don't endorse the view that it is appropriate for businesses to deny service to customers on the basis of deeply held beliefs must concede that the fines and other sanctions in these cases present a direct threat to religious liberty.

Note that there was no suggestion in any of these cases that the defendant's refusal to provide services actually prevented the same-sex couple from obtaining the desired items. In each case, other photographers, florists, and bakers without religious or moral objections stood ready to assist. The State was not stepping in to ensure that the couple had access to needed goods and services. Rather, the injury to the couple in each case was that the defendant would not sanction their ceremony. The State did not like the message the defendant's religious beliefs conveyed and so ordered the defendant to pay a potentially ruinous fine.

The notion that government can override or punish individuals for deeply held religious beliefs merely because those beliefs deviate from prevailing views strikes at the very heart of religious liberty. Religious liberty is the right of an individual to practice his or her beliefs even in the face of government, social or community opposition. If all that is needed for government to override a person's deeply held beliefs is a disagreement over whether the person's beliefs send the right message, then religious liberty is weak indeed. It is no longer a preferred value that government must make room for but rather a common, run-of-the-mill interest that government can override essentially at will.

Recent court cases have undermined religious liberty and threaten the integrity of our religious institutions in other ways as well. One case, decided by the Supreme Court about 5 years ago, held that schools can require student religious groups to accept nonbelievers as leaders, even though doing so could undermine the group's mission and install as leaders individuals who do not share the group's core beliefs. Other cases have sown confusion about students' ability to express religious conviction in school settings. Teachers and school administrators have barred students from wearing religious imagery, from affirming their faith in essays and speeches, and from performing religious music because they fear running afoul of judicial prohibitions on State establishment of religion. Other officials have denied religious groups access to State facilities to worship or to hold meetings, again fearing potential lawsuits.

But courts are not the only places where religious liberty is under attack. I am sorry to say that the current administration has done much to weaken religious freedom and to undermine the rights of conscience.

Certainly, the most notorious instance of the administration's efforts to undermine religious liberty is the ObamaCare contraception mandate. This provision requires employers to provide their employees access to contraceptives and abortion-inducing drugs even when the employer has profound moral objections to such drugs. There is a narrow exemption for houses of worship, but countless other religious employers—including religious schools, hospitals, and charities—must either comply with the mandate in violation of their religious beliefs or pay substantial financial penalties.

The administration has also stripped funding from religious groups that refuse as a matter of conscience to toe the administration's line on abortion and contraception. In a remarkable and shortsighted move, the administration

revoked funding for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' relief program for victims of human trafficking because the conference declined on religious grounds to refer victims for abortion or contraceptives. So not only is the administration using the threat of financial loss to pressure religious groups to violate their beliefs, but it is also harming trafficking victims by hindering the ability of religious groups that differ from the administration on matters of conscience to aid victims.

The administration, too, has put Federal contractors that subscribe to traditional views on marriage and sexuality on the horns of a terrible dilemma. Last year the President issued an Executive order prohibiting contractors from taking into account sexual orientation or gender identity when hiring employees. The order contains no exemptions for contractors with religious affiliations. Under the President's order, a contractor with a religious mission may be forced to hire an individual who holds views that run counter to that mission in order to remain eligible for Federal contracts. The President's order thus creates the very real possibility that religiously affiliated contractors will have to choose between impairing the integrity of their organization and competing for Federal funds.

In addition to pursuing these troubling policies, the administration has also taken extreme and unsupportable positions in court filings that if adopted would undermine religious freedom.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to finish these remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HATCH. Before the Supreme Court, the administration made the remarkable claim that Federal law authorizes the Federal Government to involve itself in the hiring and firing of church ministers. Specifically, the administration said that Federal antidiscrimination laws override the First Amendment right of churches to select whomever they wish as ministers and instead allow the administration to actually sue a church if it believes a particular hiring or firing was improper. This radical position would allow the Federal Government to insert itself into some of the most important decisions churches make regarding religious doctrine and governance.

Thankfully, the Supreme Court rejected the administration's position unanimously. Indeed, in a striking rebuke, the Court called the administration's claim that the First Amendment provides no more protection to a church in selecting its leader than it does to a ''labor union or a social club . . . remarkable.'' The fact that the administration felt comfortable making this argument, and apparently thought it was a correct argument, speaks volumes regarding this administration's dim view of religious liberty.

More recently, the administration has signaled that the forced legalization of same-sex marriage will present religious schools and institutions with significant challenges in reconciling school standards with Federal antidiscrimination laws.

At oral argument in the Obergefell case, one of the Justices asked the Solicitor General whether a religious school that opposed same-sex marriage would lose its tax-exempt status. The Solicitor General responded that ''it's certainly going to be an issue.'' With those seven words, the Solicitor General made clear that religious institutions that adhere to traditional views regarding marriage and sexuality—such as by providing housing only to opposite-sex couples—will face potentially staggering financial consequences for their commitment to their religious convictions.

The third front in the fight against religious liberty happens to be the State legislatures. In many ways what we are seeing at the State level is a mirror of what the administration has been doing at the Federal level. Just as the administration has stripped funding from religious organizations that refused to follow the administration's liberal social policies, States have withdrawn funding and licenses from groups that adhere to traditional religious views. Massachusetts, for example, passed a law requiring State-licensed adoption agencies to place children with same-sex couples. As a result, Catholic Charities, which had operated adoption services in the State for over 100 years, was forced to shut down its adoption program. That is outrageous. Catholic Charities affiliates in Illinois were similarly forced to close after the State announced it would no longer provide funding to adoption agencies that declined to place children with same-sex couples. Other religiously affiliated groups and schools have lost contracts, faced loss of accreditation, and have been denied permission to use public facilities because of their doctrinally based views on family, marriage, and sexuality. The mayor of Houston even went so far as to subpoena internal church communications as part of an intimidation campaign against churches that opposed a city nondiscrimination ordinance. Far from treating religious liberty as a preeminent value, many States and localities have thrust it aside in favor of other goals.

Another disturbing trend at the State level has been the growing opposition to State religious freedom laws. Over 20 years ago I helped lead a broad bipartisan effort in Congress to pass the Religious Freedom Restoration Act or RFRA. RFRA sought to undo a misguided Supreme Court decision that authorized Congress and the States to abridge religious freedom so long as their actions did not specifically target religion. RFRA says that government may not substantially burden a person's exercise of religion unless doing so is necessary to further a compelling government interest.

The coalition that helped pass RFRA included Members as ideologically diverse as Ted Kennedy, PAT LEAHY, Strom Thurmond, and Phil Gramm. Groups from across the political spectrum such as the ACLU, People For the American Way, the Traditional Values Coalition, and the Christian Legal Society strongly supported the bill. Given this broad ideological support, RFRA passed the House without recorded opposition and passed the Senate 97 to 3—nearly unanimous.

For a major piece of legislation like RFRA to pass Congress with only three recorded ''no'' votes was nearly unprecedented and indicated the breadth of support at the time for the view that religious liberty deserves special protection.

Twenty years later, however, the consensus in favor of robust protection for religious liberty has splintered. Whereas the Federal RFRA was able to pass Congress almost without opposition—the whole Congress, that is—recent efforts to enact State level RFRAs have run into substantial resistance. Efforts in Indiana and Arizona are two good examples. They ignited media firestorms and generated strong pushback from groups who mistakenly viewed the measures as discriminatory. It should be emphasized both bills were modeled after the Federal RFRA, but the political dynamics have changed so dramatically over the last 20 years that protecting religious freedom has gone from being the rare issue on which all sides agree to becoming a political hot potato. Some groups that supported the Federal RFRA have even taken the position that future RFRAs must contain carve-outs for particular groups or particular issue areas. Many of these same groups endorsed an effort by Senate Democrats last year to exempt from the Federal RFRA all Federal laws and regulations related to health care. Of course any carve-outs in religious liberty protections undermine those protections because they limit the field on which religious liberty has full effect. For this reason the Federal RFRA contains no such carve-outs. Indeed, opposition to carve-outs was a key element in both assembling and maintaining the RFRA coalition two decades ago. Even if Members had varying views on the merits of certain practices, the one thing all could agree on is that religious liberty is a fundamental universal value that should apply equally to everyone, but the price of admission for many groups today is a willingness to cut back on religious liberty in instances where religious belief conflicts with progressive social goals.

Twenty years ago this sort of hostage-taking was nowhere on the agenda, but religious liberty has now become a secondary goal or worse, an impediment, for many liberal groups that

value what they call progressive social policy over protecting the rights of believers. I hate the use of that word ''progressive'' because it is anything but. This backtracking by many stalwart defenders of religious liberty represents one of the most serious ways religious freedom is under attack in this great country.

I will note one other political sea change that is undermining religious liberty in the United States. For many years, groups on the left have been advocating for laws to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. I am in general agreement with such laws and do not believe that sexual orientation should be grounds for discrimination or mistreatment. Many of the groups advocating for these laws have previously been willing to include exemptions for religious organizations that hold traditional views on marriage and sexuality. I believe such exemptions are appropriate and strike the right balance by protecting rights to nondiscrimination while enabling religious organizations to hold true to their beliefs. Indeed, I believe it is essential for nondiscrimination laws to properly accommodate religious liberty, and I would actively oppose any such law that fails to account for the rights of religious believers.

Unfortunately, many groups that were previously willing to support religious exemptions in nondiscrimination laws have reversed course. For example, many groups that supported last Congress's Federal Employment Nondiscrimination Act or ENDA, which would prohibit discrimination in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation, have withdrawn their support for the act because it contains a robust exemption for religious organizations. This Congress, they are instead supporting the Equality Act, which contains no religious exemption at all.

I supported ENDA because I believed it reflected the right balance between nondiscrimination and religious liberty. I took some criticism for doing so. I still believe it does reflect the right balance, but many groups on the left have indicated they are willing to cast religious liberty aside in furtherance of other goals. For these groups, religious liberty no longer deserves special protection. It is no longer a preeminent value. Rather, it should be accommodated only so far as it is convenient and does not interfere with other objectives. This is a sea change and one that bodes ill for the future vitality of religious freedom.

I said at the outset that religious liberty is under attack in America in ways that are both surprising and unprecedented. Certainly the willingness of former defenders of religious freedom to turn their backs on believers is both.

I would like to close by returning to the New Mexico photographer case I mentioned earlier, for that case contains perhaps the most surprising and unprecedented feature of all. In a concurring opinion, one of the judges in the case called the requirement to violate one's religious beliefs when they conflict with State social policy ''the price of citizenship.'' That statement represents a complete inversion of the relationship between government authority and religious liberty in America. When we are born or become American citizens, we do not surrender our rights of conscience to the government. We do not pledge our allegiance to a secular God. We retain our right to religious liberty. Indeed, not only do we retain our right; our government guarantees our right to freely practice our faith in accordance with the dictates of our own conscience. As the Declaration of Independence instructs, all men—and women—are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, and it is the fundamental purpose of government to secure those rights.

If there is a price we pay as American citizens, it is not that we give up our God-given rights, first and foremost of which is the right of religious liberty, it is that we agree to work together to promote the common good of our country.

Subjugating religious beliefs to government decrees is not the price of citizenship. To the contrary, respecting and honoring the fundamental rights of all Americans is the price our government pays in order to enjoy the continued consent of the American people. Those who attack religious liberty and seek to devalue its place in society fundamentally misunderstands this key point.

Unfortunately, too many in America today, from the courts to the Obama administration, to the State legislatures, undervalue religious freedom and view it at best as a secondary goal. People of good will in Congress and across our Nation need to recognize that religious liberty is under attack and that unless we stand up and vocally support the rights of believers to live their faith, we will find much of what we have fought for and much of what our forebears fought for swept away. We must fortify the rights of believers to follow their conscience even when their fellow citizens or elected officials would prefer a different course.

I will have much more to say on this topic in future remarks, but with that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

SUPPORTING OUR VETERANS

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, this week we honor the men and women who serve our Nation with honor and their families who also sacrifice—whom we do not remember enough—who sacrifice so much for the servicemembers they love and for all of us in our country.

The sacrifice of our veterans demands that we fulfill the promises we have made. This body is always willing to spend more dollars in armaments and on weapons, but when it comes time to fulfill our obligations to veterans, too many in this body are not generous enough.

I am the only Ohioan ever to serve a full term on the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee. I take that duty very seriously. I know the Presiding Officer, Senator TILLIS from North Carolina, does too. That means working to end the VA backlog. It means putting a better system in place. It means ensuring that our veterans have a roof over their heads and a place to call home. It means providing veterans with health care and the educational opportunities they deserve and which they have earned.

Too many veterans face mental health challenges that can end in tragedy. More than 8,000 veterans each year take their own lives—154 a week, 22 a day. Hundreds of thousands of veterans struggle with invisible injuries. Nearly 300,000 have been diagnosed with posttraumatic stress, and 300,000 have faced traumatic brain injuries—all because of the service they gave to us.

Earlier this year we passed the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act. It is a good start yet not enough. We need to make sure that when servicemembers return home, they have the educational and the employment opportunities they need, not only to survive but to thrive.

The GI bill's educational benefits are critical, but veterans, unfortunately, have a limited amount of time before their GI benefits expire. In crowded colleges—whether in North Carolina, Oklahoma or Ohio—general education requirements and prerequisites often fill up quickly. Many colleges and universities in my State offer priority registration to veterans. All of our colleges and universities need to follow Ohio's lead. That is why I worked with Senator TILLIS, the Presiding Officer, on legislation to ensure that all veterans and servicemembers and their qualifying dependents can use their GI benefits to their full potential and be guaranteed priority registration.

The Senator from North Carolina and I also introduced the Fry Scholarship Enhancement Act, which would expand eligibility for the VA's Yellow Ribbon Program to help students avoid out-of-pocket tuition and fees for programs that cost more than the allowance set by the post-9/11 GI bill.

Sadly, for too many veterans, they are far from the goal where they should be. They struggle just to find a place to call home.

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, some 50,000 veterans were homeless during a survey conducted on a single night in January 2014. That is 50,000 too many. It is a disgrace that after serving our country with honor, thousands of veterans are left without a roof over their heads.

Earlier this month I visited the Joseph House in Cincinnati, where Nathan Pelletier and his team of dedicated staff and volunteers provide addiction treatment and traditional housing.

A group of us meeting there, mostly veterans who are homeless or were homeless, listened to Britton Carter, who was formerly homeless. He completed his treatment program in the Joseph House. He now works as a case manager there helping other struggling veterans.

Veterans such as Mr. Carter have served our country with honor. We owe them support, and we owe them counseling when they return home. That is why I joined my colleagues in introducing the Veteran Housing Stability Act of 2015, which would make meaningful improvements to services for homeless veterans that would give veterans more access to permanent housing opportunities.

We know in the Veterans' Affairs Committee a number of things. We know that the unemployment rate of veterans is generally higher than society's unemployment rate. We know that veterans' suicide rate is higher than society's suicide rate. We know that veterans' drug addiction is higher than society's drug addiction rate. We know that veterans have suffered from PTSD and traumatic brain injury in numbers much higher than the general population. That is why we owe them so much. We in this body so rarely think about the cost of war.

We, as I said earlier, are willing to send more money to buy more weapons, to spend more money in armaments. We are not so generous when it comes time to take care of our veterans.

HONOR FLIGHTS

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, the last point I wish to make before turning to the Senator from Oklahoma is something that we call Honor Flights. One of the great things that have come out of the National World War II Memorial is that men and women who have served in World War II are now getting the opportunity to go to visit this National World War II Memorial.

Retired Air Force Capt. Earl Morse, who worked in a VA clinic in Springfield, OH, would often talk with his World War II veteran patriots. He realized that for most of these veterans, their dream of seeing the memorial built on the National Mall would never come true. So one day in 2004, Captain Morse, a pilot and a member of the air club at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, asked one of his patients if he could personally fly him to Washington free of charge. The veteran, Mr. Loy, broke down in tears and accepted Earl's offer. Soon Earl was offering to fly other World War II veterans to visit the memorial and soliciting help from other pilots.

Eleven pilots from Wright-Patterson Air Force Base volunteered. In May 2005, the first Honor Flight took off from Springfield, OH.

A decade later, the Honor Flight Network is a national nonprofit that has flown 100,000 veterans, usually 40 or 50 or 60 at a time in a charter flight—always with a caretaker because these veterans are never young. They are World War II veterans. They have been out of the service now for 70 years at least.

The Honor Flight Program is in 41 States. I have had the honor of meeting a number of them. Toledo, OH, seems to be one which has particularly excelled and is encouraging local people, raising local money and getting every single veteran from northwest Ohio who was able to and wanted to join these Honor Flights.

I will quote one of these volunteers. Jim Salamon works for the Honor Flight Program in Dayton. He told me of a volunteer who goes by Ace and who works at an Arby's in Maryland and provides discounted meals for Honor Flight Program attendees. Jim said:

> Ace is part of Honor Flight Dayton's family. We rely on Ace and he has not let us down. Over the last nine years Ace has saved us more than $30,000 [because of Arby's donating these meals], which pays the cost of transporting 92 veterans.

With an average of 800 World War II veterans dying each day, the mission of the Honor Flight Program is more important now than ever.

I am thankful to those who have helped Honor Flight. I am thankful to those veterans and their families who have done so much.

I remind my colleagues, as they are always eager to vote for more money for weapons, that we should understand and think about the cost of war and take care of our returning servicemembers.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

VETERANS DAY

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, there is a lot of news that is happening this week. There are a lot of things going on—an incredible celebration of veterans and the recognition they are very worthy of. That is the 1 percent in our Nation that actually secures the security of the rest of the 99 percent of our Nation.

We could not be more grateful—members of my own family, myself, and the proud people of Oklahoma who celebrate our veterans every single day of the year. We are very pleased to be able to do that.

OBAMACARE

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, we have a lot of information this week about ObamaCare hearings. They are again back in the news because the administration has filed a lawsuit against the Little Sisters of the Poor to compel them to violate their faith and to be able to put into practice the principles of ObamaCare rather than their own personal faith.

So the Obama administration is taking a group of nuns called the Little Sisters of the Poor all the way to the Supreme Court to compel them to cave on their faith. That case actually includes four universities from my State of Oklahoma as well that are grouped together with this group from the Little Sisters of the Poor that will all have to go before the Supreme Court to validate their faith publicly in front of the Nation while the administration tries to tell them they can't practice their faith in America.

GITMO

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, we also have news this week that the President is trying to push through Gitmo and he is trying to change Gitmo through some sort of Executive action. We don't know exactly what that is.

He seems to have this flippant attitude about what is going to happen at Guantanamo Bay, saying we can move them into the United States more cheaply. Well, I would tell you—as a person who has been to Guantanamo Bay and has seen that facility and am very aware of what is going on there—we are missing one big element. The terrorists do not know who the guards are at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Nor do they have access to their families.

And while they are infuriated about Gitmo, I promise you if those prisoners are moved into Colorado, Oklahoma or Kansas or any other place, the terrorists overseas won't rage about Gitmo anymore, they will then rage about Colorado or they will then rage about Illinois or wherever those prisoners are being held. They are not mad at Gitmo and the treatment there. They are mad that these terrorists, whom they have affection for, are being detained by the United States of America. Right now all of the individuals who are guarding those individuals and keeping them detained will no longer be hidden anymore because terrorists could linger around the outside of these facilities and contact the different guards that are coming in and out. Suddenly, the guards and their family members become exposed and the stakes for those individuals are exposed.

He is not thinking through the real consequences of flippantly moving these individuals into the United States. It is a big issue that we face.

KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, but I have to say this last weekend, as I was going through all the different news and the many things that we track, I was quite surprised last Friday afternoon at the way the President addressed something that this Nation has

discussed for 7 years—a pipeline permit, a permit called the Keystone XL Pipeline.

It is not a revolutionary thing. Quite frankly, I wish to show you something. These are all the pipelines that currently exist in the United States.

Right now, there are 19 international crossings of pipelines already coming into the United States, either from Canada into the northern part of the United States or from Mexico and from the South. There are already 19 of them. This would just be a 20th pipeline. There is nothing different about that.

There are 60,000 miles of crude oil pipelines in the United States right now. There are about 63,000 miles of refined product pipelines. If you want to go to natural gas, there are about 300,000 miles of natural gas pipelines already in the United States. Yet this pipeline is treated like some radical and new invention—as if we have never considered a pipeline before. But what surprised me so much wasn't the 2,600-plus days that this pipeline request sat on the President's desk. What surprised me was his reason for actually deciding not to do then the permits. That was the surprising part.

Quite frankly, last Friday afternoon as I heard the reasons, I went back, read the transcript, and these were the three reasons the President gave. He said: No. 1, ''the pipeline wouldn't make a meaningful long-term contribution to our economy,'' and he encouraged us to pass a highway bill instead because it would provide more jobs. I don't remember ever discussing and saying: This pipeline is going to provide as many jobs as highways. That has never been discussed on this floor. It is apples and oranges. A highway bill is public funding. It is the taxpayers that actually fund transportation, and we should do highways in transportation.

This is a private project that was never intended to have as many jobs as a highway. It is a pipeline. So he said it is not going to provide enough jobs, and so he is not going to permit it.

The second reason he gave is this: ''The pipeline would not lower gas prices for American consumers.'' He said gasoline prices are already low, and so we don't need this pipeline—as if gasoline prices don't rise and fall and we shouldn't plan forward for the future.

Do you want to know why gasoline prices are low right now? It is because over the decades, Americans have done this, and we have an efficient system of moving energy. By the way, the pipeline is the safest and least expensive way to move energy around our country. So what the President is saying is this: What we have is enough. I don't want to plan for the future anymore. I don't want to look for what is going to help our children. Our prices are low enough. I don't care what our children pay in the future days.

Well, that is absurd. But, quite frankly, the third one is the one that was the most jarring to me, so I want to be able to say this statement to you. This is reason No. 3 the President gave: ''Shipping crude oil into our country from unstable countries would not increase America's energy security.'' Let me read that to you again because I was so stunned by it. This is exactly from the President's speech off of the White House site. This is what the President said off this statement. He will not permit the Keystone Pipeline coming from Canada into the United States. He said shipping dirtier crude oil into our country would not increase America's energy security. He said:

> What has increased America's energy security is our strategy over the past several years to reduce our reliance on dirty fossil fuels from unstable parts of the world.

Now, as I heard the President say that, I was a little taken aback because I don't remember any other President referring to Canada as an unstable part of the world from which we don't want to get our energy—an unstable country, and saying Canada was that country.

So I kept reading it and rereading it, thinking maybe he was implying something else, but the problem with that is he either means that Canada is an unstable country and we don't want to be reliant on them to get energy or he is saying the Middle East and other countries are unstable and we don't want to rely on them, so maybe we should buy from Canada instead. Either way it makes absolutely no sense.

But in its context—as I read it and read it and read it—the President stated that we don't need to have a Keystone Pipeline because Canada is unstable and we don't want to buy from unstable countries.

I would tell you that since the War of 1812 we have gotten along with Canada pretty well. We seem to have settled our differences about 1815, and they have been a very stable trading partner for us. It seems nonsensical to hear the President say: Because it doesn't produce enough jobs, I am not going to permit it. Because it won't affect the price of gasoline today, I won't permit it. And because Canada is unstable as a trading partner, I am not going to permit it.

The President can choose to do whatever he chooses to do, but answers like this make no sense to the American people and they make no sense to energy country when we understand full well the actual facts on the ground.

In recent days, we have actually started an energy swap with Mexico. Many people may not even know that. You see, all oil is not the same. Heavier crude oil is preferred by many of our refineries in the United States. Quite frankly, our refineries are capable of separating out more of the different minerals and such that are within heavy crude or what is often called sour crude. Our refineries prefer the heavier crude, much like what Canada produces and many parts of the United States and Mexico produces. Many of the refineries in Mexico actually prefer the light sweet crude. We actually have more light sweet crude in America than we can use and what our refineries would prefer to have.

So in the past couple of months, Mexico and the United States have worked a swap from pipelines, where they are picking up about 75,000 barrels of light sweet and swapping us 75,000 barrels of heavier crude because they have a commodity we want and we have a commodity they want. That is how we could solve some of our energy issues, to actually look for what is the most efficient, whether it is purchasing it from a pipeline from Canada, which makes great economic sense to us, or exporting our oil anywhere else around the world, whether to Mexico or any other country.

This body knows full well the United States cannot sell our oil on the world market because we have a statute in place that would have us believe we are running out of oil rather than having a tremendous amount, which is factually true, and we have particular types of oil that like sweet crude many refineries around the world want. We actually have more of it than we can use. We should sell that. We should put that on the open market. It is cleaner, it is easier to refine, and it is a way to be able to stabilize jobs in the United States.

I have been in front of this body time after time with a simple statement: We can sell unleaded around the world, we can sell diesel around the world, we can sell coal around the world, and we can sell natural gas around the world, but for whatever reason we can't sell crude oil around the world. That makes absolutely no sense and we should fix it.

Tens of thousands of Americans have lost their jobs because this body has not acted on something as simple as being able to sell a product the world wants and we have on the world market. It is fixable. It is not about environmental disaster. The world is going to use oil. Even the administration and quite frankly even the President in his own speech made this statement last week: The truth is the United States will continue to rely on oil and gas. And so will the world. Until some other solution is out there, which no one sees currently on the horizon, we are going to continue to use oil and gas. Why don't we do it the cleanest way possible and why don't we provide American jobs while we are doing it?

It is fixable. It shouldn't be divisive. It is about putting Americans back to work and about helping our economy.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DAINES). The Senator from Massachusetts.

VETERANS DAY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, tomorrow is Veterans Day, and on Veterans

Day it is important that we thank America's veterans and their families for their service to our Nation. Veterans Day is a time to honor all those brave men and women who put themselves in harm's way so we may enjoy the tremendous freedoms and personal liberties that make our Nation the greatest in the world. Such bravery deserves our unending gratitude.

We have an obligation to honor them all year-round by fighting to ensure they have the resources, the support, and the protections which they have earned. They fought for us, and now we need to fight for them. When we send our men and women in uniform abroad, we can be confident they will do their utmost to complete their missions. Our mission, as Senators, is to minimize the need to send our armed services members into harm's way. The root causes of overseas conflict are complex and diverse, from religious divisions to natural resource allocations, to democratic yearnings. Increasingly, in the modern era, climate change is straining the strands of stability until they snap.

When I was chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming, I held a 2007 hearing where one U.S. general told the story of Somalia, how drought in Somalia had caused a famine and how that famine had ultimately then led to and encouraged a conflict. The pattern in Somalia is the same pattern that we see in other countries: drought leading to famine, leading to fights between different tribes or peoples who otherwise had no reason to fight. Aid came in from the United States, warlords started to fight over it, and that is how 18 U.S. service people lost their lives in what we now call ''Black Hawk Down.''

In 2010, terrible droughts in Russia and China and floods in Pakistan decimated wheat harvests and created a global shortage. The price of wheat increased dramatically. The Middle East, home to the world's top nine wheat importers, felt it severely, especially since the region's farmers struggled with their own parched fields. Much of Syria was gripped with the worst drought it had ever experienced. The price of bread skyrocketed across the region and demands for regime change were not far behind.

As we look around the world, we can see, hear, and feel how climate change is a threat multiplier and a catalyst for conflict today. While we have to deal with the consequences of climate change that are already apparent, there is still time to prevent future catastrophes. That is why President Obama has been using the tool he has in the Clean Air Act to reduce carbon pollution. He has used it to increase the fuel efficiency of America's cars and trucks, and now he has released the Clean Power Plan, but Republicans want to undo it with the Congressional Review Act.

Starting next Monday in this Chamber, Senate Republicans can bring the resolution to the Senate floor at any time to dismantle the Clean Power Plan. Undoing it would be bad for our economy, bad for our health, and bad for our national security.

Now, 2014 was the hottest year in global history. Records go back all the way to 1880—the warmest year. The first half of this year is now the hottest January to June in that same record. The Clean Power Plan captures the scientific urgency and the economic opportunity necessary to avoid the worst consequences of climate change. The Clean Power Plan provides flexibility to the States to find the solutions to reducing carbon pollution that works best for their situations, unleashing a clean energy revolution in every single State in the Union. It will create jobs and save consumers billions on their electricity bills. It will avert almost 100,000 asthma attacks and prevent thousands of premature deaths. The climate and health benefits of the rule are estimated to save $34 billion to $54 billion per year by the year 2030.

Using the Clean Air Act to reduce carbon pollution is grounded in the Supreme Court's 2007 decision that confirmed the Environmental Protection Agency's authority to regulate carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases as pollutants under the Act. The Supreme Court has reaffirmed that authority in two subsequent cases, and we have used that authority to set carbon pollution standards for vehicles. These standards, along with increasing the fuel economy of our Nation's cars and trucks, are reducing pollution, saving drivers money, and sparking innovation. We will see similar benefits coming from the Clean Power Plan.

Some of my colleagues in the Senate say it can't be done. Some will say it will raise electricity bills. Some will say it will kill jobs. The problem for them is their claims are just not true. The Clean Power Plan is a plan to create jobs and to grow our economy. It is a signal to the marketplace to invest in clean energy—in wind, in solar, and other renewable energy resources. That is the 21st century. Too many people on the Senate floor keep looking at the future in a rearview mirror. They keep looking backward instead of ahead, unleashing the technologies of the 21st century. The green generation, the young people in our country, they know we can do this. They know renewables are the technologies of the 21st century. If we do it, it will be a signal to the rest of the world that the United States is going to lead the effort to reduce greenhouse gases, while unleashing a job-creating renewable energy revolution not just for our own country but for the entire planet.

Just 2 months ago, in September, Congress had the honor of hearing from Pope Francis, who shared his message of action. He told us the American people can do it. He said:

> I call for a courageous and responsible effort to redirect our steps and to avert the most serious effects of the environmental deterioration caused by human activity. I am convinced we can make a difference and I have no doubt that the United States—and this Congress—have an important role to play. Now is the time for courageous actions and strategies.

He is right. The Pope is right. This is the time for action from Congress—not denial, not obstructionism. Now is the time for the United States, for this Senate, to be the leader in finding the global solutions to this threat of dangerous climate change.

So what the Pope did was take the message of Christ and not deliver a ''Sermon on the Mount,'' he delivered a sermon on the Hill—a sermon on the Hill to the Members of the House and the Senate to do everything they can to reduce dangerous greenhouse gases. In saying that to us, he said it as someone who taught high school chemistry, as someone who knows this issue—a Pope who taught chemistry. The Pope did not believe that science is at odds with religion. The Pope believes science and technology is the answer to our prayers, and he called upon us to unleash a technological revolution to reduce these dangerous greenhouse gases.

Why do we know that we can do this? It is a moral imperative. The Pope basically said three things: No. 1, the planet is dangerously warming and the science confirms that; No. 2, human activity is largely contributing to the warming of the planet and the science confirms that; and, No. 3, since human beings are causing this problem, they have a moral responsibility and a moral imperative to do something about it. We are the United States of America. We are the global leader in technology. We are the revolution. So let's see how far we have come in a very brief period of time.

In 2005, we installed 79 megawatts of solar in the United States. Solar technology had been around for generations. Einstein actually won his Nobel Prize for breakthroughs in solar research. Yet this is where we were in 2005; a tiny 79 megawatts was all we were able to install. Then we began to change policies in the United States. We began to have States across the country, 30 States, which said we are going to have more renewable electricity in our States. We put tax breaks on the books, and look what happened in that very brief period of time. By 2014, nearly 7,000 megawatts in solar were installed in 1 year, up from 79, 100 times more solar, after not doing anything for generations. Policies were put on the books. All the deniers, all those doubters—all of a sudden everything they said about how solar wasn't practical, solar couldn't solve the problem—were confronted with this reality.

This year nearly 8,000 megawatts are going to be installed; next year, 12,000 megawatts of solar. We are going to have 40,000 megawatts of solar installed by the end of next year in the United States—40,000—and we were doing 79

total in 2005. That is how rapidly it is changing. That is how many new jobs are being created in America.

The same thing is happening in wind. Wind is going to be producing 20,000 new megawatts in just 2015 and 2016.

So here is the good news, and it is incredibly great. There will be 300,000 jobs in the wind and solar sector by the end of next year, 300,000 people working. There will only be 65,000 coal miners, but we will have 300,000 people with these incredible jobs in wind and solar. That is a revolution that wasn't on the books just 10 years ago. All the experts said it can't happen, it won't work, and it will never be successful.

So these revolutions are the things on which we have to continue to be the leaders to ensure that we put on the books and keep on the books so that we are successful. There is a technological imperative that we lead, there is an economic imperative that we lead because these jobs get created, and there is a moral responsibility that the United States has because we were the leading polluter for 100 years on the planet. China has now caught up to us, but a lot of that CO_2 is red, white, and blue.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 1 additional minute.

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

Mr. MARKEY. So here is where we are: The President is going to use all of his legal authority to reach a deal in Paris. He will do it pursuant to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change that was signed by President George Herbert Walker Bush and ratified by the Senate in 1992, so everything he is doing in Paris is completely pursuant to a treaty that was agreed to by this body. He is doing the Clean Power Plan to reduce greenhouse gases by 30 percent by the year 2030 in the electric utility sector, by the Clean Air Act of 1990, a law passed by the Senate. He increased the fuel economy standards to 54.5 miles per gallon by the year 2025, still the largest reduction of greenhouse gas in the world's history, pursuant to a law passed in 2007 by the U.S. Senate.

Underlying it all is an authority given to him by the Supreme Court in 2007, in Massachusetts versus the EPA, which mandated the EPA had to act if they found there was an endangerment of an environment. All of this is legal, all of it is authority the President is using, and all of it is working to create a new era of clean energy jobs all across our country so that we are no longer preaching temperance from a barstool to the rest of the world. We can now say to China and to India: You too must put your reductions on the books.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

STRATEGIC PETROLEUM RESERVE

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I come to the floor this evening to talk about two issues that are of particular importance to me. When most look at me now, they think about energy and more typically about Alaskan energy. I am not going to disappoint tonight. I would like to speak to that, but I would also like to speak this evening about the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, the SPR. We have been talking about it a lot of late. It has been viewed as a source of revenue—a pay-for, if you will—with certain measures that we have seen of late, whether it be the transportation measure that we have in front of us, the budget deal that was executed a couple weeks ago, or other measures.

I want to take a few minutes this evening to talk about the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. I will start by first addressing what I will call the flagship SPR. It is the very important stuff, if you will, within the Reserve, and that is the crude oil. I call this the flagship because there are five product petroleum reserve sites in the Northeast. We have product reserve sites for gasoline, distillate, and home heating oil, but these are relatively small reserve sites. There are about 2 million barrels total. I think their effectiveness is probably more controversial. But the flagship SPR is truly—when we think about the impact, the import to our economy and to a level of stability, the flagship Strategic Petroleum Reserve occupies giant underground caverns along the gulf coast.

I had the opportunity to visit the site of one of our Strategic Petroleum Reserves. It holds some 695 million barrels, and they are ready to cover our Nation's net imports for several months if global energy markets should spiral out of control.

The comforting reality about these flagship SPRs is that, through thick and thin, these reserves are rarely ever tapped. They have offered a measure of security and stability that I think is unique in the history of global commerce.

Amid higher levels of domestic production and lower levels of imports, a number of reforms are being considered for the SPR by the Department of Energy now. There has been a lot of discussion. There is a study underway by the DOE, and a discussion about upgrading the distribution capacity of the SPR is underway, and it clearly has merit.

The North American energy landscape has changed so quickly and so dramatically that the volume of oil we can pump out of the Reserve is greater and potentially much greater than the volume of oil we can actually move to refineries. This is something we need to understand and study more, but it is something that—we have congested waterways, we can look at reversed pipelines and so on, ways that we can figure out how we can move this oil more readily if we so need it.

In the measure we have just executed with the budget proposal, there is funding set aside for Strategic Petroleum Reserve maintenance and life extension, hopefully for marine terminals, but effectively recognizing that we need to make sure that our SPR actually functions as it is intended. That study is underway. We will learn more, hopefully in the spring, but the imperative to have a functioning, workable SPR is one that goes to national security, really, from an overall stability argument. I remain opposed to suggestions by some that we should use the Reserve to pay for completely unrelated programs or that we simply sell off the entire stockpile, as some have suggested.

As I wrote in my July report of this year called ''A Turbulent World,'' we have drawn down SPR only on a limited number of occasions. In the entire history of the Reserve itself, only approximately 166 million barrels have ever left the storage sites for any reasons. So 166 barrels have been sold off over the course of the life of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve for exchanges, emergencies, tests, deficit reductions. Everything that we have ever done that has involved a sale of the SPR totals just about 166 million barrels. That is this graph over here.

Over here are the new proposed sales to the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. If we add up the barrels this Congress—the 114th Congress—has already committed to sell for SPR modernization, the Bipartisan Budget Act, the DRIVE Act, the Transportation bill, and then a bill over on the House side, the 21st Century Cures Act, we are looking at a total of 279 million barrels to be sold off. That is 40 million for SPR modernization, 58 million for the Bipartisan Budget Act, 21st Century Cures Act is 80 million, and the highway bill is 101 million. We would be selling off 279 million barrels total. Think about that—in the entire life of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, 166 million barrels sold off. In one Congress, what we are proposing is 279 million barrels. It is quite eye-catching.

These numbers matter. The SPR is designed to provide 90 days of net import protection. It is a pretty simple math equation we are dealing with. If we import more, we need more in storage; if we import less, we need less. Currently, net imports are about 5 million barrels per day. Therefore, the bare minimum we need in storage is 450 million barrels. So if we execute all of the sales the 114th Congress has either approved or is considering, we dip below the bare minimum that is required—the 450 million barrels—by the end of the 10-year window. I am going to be releasing another report on the cumulative impact of all these sales on the integrity of the Reserve, so we should be seeing that in a few days.

PETROLEUM ADMINISTRATION FOR DEFENSE DISTRICT 5

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Now, Mr. President, I would like to turn quickly to a Department of Energy proposal to construct a new petroleum product reserve

on the west coast. We call this PADD 5, short for Petroleum Administration for Defense District 5. PADD 5 is important because it consumes 17 percent of the Nation's gasoline, 13 percent of its diesel fuel, and 30 percent of its jet fuel.

At the same time, PADD 5 is geographically isolated, according to the Energy Information Administration. The approximately 30 refineries operating on the west coast are responsible for supplying nearly all of its petroleum products.

The argument for a product reserve is relatively straightforward. Because PADD 5 is separated from the rest of the country by the Rocky Mountains and from the world by the Pacific Ocean, a stockpile of refined fuel should be established. That is the argument that is out there. I don't oppose a study of this concept, but I can see the pitfalls out there. PADD 5 imports over 1 million barrels of crude oil and petroleum products each day, suggesting that it really is not cut off from the world in the first place. And bear in mind the size of the district that we are talking about. Any stockpile would have to be really enormous to have significant impact.

Finally, would Federal gasoline reserves supplement or replace commercial stocks? That is a question that needs to be asked.

So perhaps the solution is not a refined product reserve at all but instead a return to basics, and that basic is crude oil. After all, there are reasons we chose crude oil instead of the products when we first created the Reserve. By and large, that rationale hasn't changed. First, oil is better suited, chemically and economically, for long-term storage underground, we don't have seasonal specifications on oil as we do on gasoline, and oil can be processed into an array of products while gasoline cannot.

Very quickly, taking this back to Alaska, a gasoline reserve on the west coast of any size would be small potatoes when compared to the incredible resource base we have in Alaska. For decades now, tankers have shipped North Slope crude to the line of refineries that stretch from Anacortes, WA, down to Los Angeles. Drivers up and down the coast fuel their cars with gasoline that is refined from this Alaskan oil every day.

Alaska North Slope crude oil is chemically similar to the kinds of oil stored in the SPR. In fact, according to the Department of Energy, over 30 million barrels of Alaskan oil have been stored in the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. West coast refineries are optimized to run Alaskan crude. The Trans-Alaska Pipeline System is only pumping about 500,000 barrels per day, down from 2 million barrels per day at its peak. So there is plenty of room in our already built, already operating pipeline. The problem is—and you have heard me say this before—the Federal Government controls some 60 percent of the land in our State. More than 10 billion barrels of oil are buried under our onshore Federal lands alone, to say nothing of what is held in our offshore waters but remain almost universally inaccessible to American explorers and producers. That includes about 10 billion barrels in the nonwilderness portion of ANWR, where we are asking for permission to develop 2,000 acres or 0.01 percent of the surface of the refuge. That is all we are asking to access. Beyond our ANWR resources, we have at least another 900 million barrels in our National Petroleum Reserve, which is an area that is specifically reserved for development. The estimate on the 900 million barrels there is that it is likely far too low.

For the record, I would add that Alaskans overwhelmingly support development of both of these areas. More than 70 percent of Alaskans want development, understanding the significant economic benefits it will bring and the strong record of environmental stewardship we have in the State.

We have an opportunity. We have an opportunity to develop our resources in order to create jobs, generate revenues, and bolster our Nation's security and competitiveness. By doing this, we can actually address not just one but two threats: First, the Trans-Alaska Pipeline is just one-third full; in large part because of the anti-energy decisions made by this administration and the west coast is more vulnerable to supply disruptions as a result of falling production.

You think about a crisis situation in the Middle East. The west coast will need more oil. Its refineries are ready to run Alaskan crude and Alaskans are ready to ship it, but there is nothing to ship because the oil is still in the ground and there is no way to transport it from the North Slope to the terminals along the southern coast of the State.

I am not talking about keeping our oil in pristine condition, never to be used. Energy is not fine china that you keep up on a shelf. The Strategic Petroleum Reserve is not a petroleum preserve. Our strategic stocks, barrels ready to go, should rarely be tapped, but Alaskan resources are already part of the daily life of Californians, Hawaiians. The resource must be accessible, though, but first they need to be accessed.

Opening Alaska's resources now would ensure that more oil is transported through TAPS. A healthy pipeline would ensure that oil can be shipped from Alaska to fuel the west coast refineries when they need it and help ensure that energy remains affordable for the west coast.

Instead of constructing an entirely new product reserve, as some are contemplating, perhaps what we should do is preserve the infrastructure we have already built and leverage it to boost our energy security. Why would we want to build a reserve when you can prevent a shortage in the first place by letting a State that wants to produce oil go ahead and produce the oil? To me that is sound, strategic thinking. That would be a policy that benefits us instead of simply costing more money that we don't have. That is the kind of thinking that I believe our Nation and our future generations should have.

INTERNET SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES USAGE RULES

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I wish to inform all Senators that on November 9, 2015, the Committee on Rules and Administration adopted the U.S. Senate Internet Services and Technology Resources Usage Rules which will supersede and replace the U.S. Senate Internet Services Usage Rules and Policies previously adopted in 2008.

Given the many advances in technology since the last regulations were adopted, an update was required to facilitate the use of modern communication tools. The new regulations modernize our rules so Senate offices can utilize new technologies, such as third-party social networking sites and data analytics, to more effectively communicate with constituents.

While in some cases, outmoded restrictions on these technologies have been eased, certain restrictions necessarily remain in place including prohibitions on campaign content or links on official sites, for example. The regulations should be reviewed carefully to see where new methods have been authorized as well as what restrictions remain.

These rules are effective immediately. I hope Senate offices will be able to make use of the new technologies and methods they authorize to enhance constituent communications.

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

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

U.S. SENATE INTERNET SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES USAGE RULES ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION ON NOVEMBER 9, 2015

1.0 DEFINITIONS

For purposes of these Rules, the following terms shall have the meaning specified—

1.1 *Senate Office*. Means—

1.1.1 A Member or Member office;

1.1.2 A Committee Chair, Committee Ranking Member or Committee office;

1.1.3 Senate Officers; and

1.1.4 Leadership Offices.

1.2 *Senate Rules Committee*. Means the U.S. Senate Committee on Rules and Administration.

1.3 *Senate Internet Services*. Include, but are not limited to, the Senate Computer Network, World Wide Web, electronic mail, blogs, Podcasts, and streaming media used for official purposes.

1.4 *Senate Technology Resources*. Include, but are not limited to,—

1.4.1 Hardware such as servers, computers, laptops, telephones, cell phones, wireless devices, and software that are owned, managed, maintained, leased, or otherwise provided by the U.S. Senate or a Senate office; and

1.4.2 Handheld communications devices, including tablet computers, and associated information technology services, including dual use devices that meet the limited exception provided by the Senate Select Committee on Ethics.

1.5 *Official Senate Office Website*. Means a website supported by Senate resources and dedicated to official business of the Senate Office.

1.6 *Official Third-Party Website*. A Third-Party Website means any website or online application, profile, or channel residing outside of the Senate.gov domain and available to the general public, including but not limited to social media (*e.g.*, Facebook, Twitter, etc.). An Official Third-Party Website is a Third-Party Website that a Senate Office uses for official business pursuant to these rules.

1.7 *Official Website*. Means an Official Senate Office Website or Official Third-Party Website.

1.8 *Official Business*. Means activities and duties which directly or indirectly pertain to the legislative process or to any congressional representative functions generally, or to the functioning, working, or operating of the Congress and the performance of official duties in connection therewith, and shall include, but not be limited to, the conveying of information to the public, and the requesting and collection of the views of the public (including through surveys, opinion polls, and web data analytics), or the views and information of other governmental entities, as a guide or a means of assistance in the performance of those functions.

1.9 *Campaign Purposes*. Include, but are not limited to,—

1.9.1 Solicitation of political support for the sender or any other person or political party, or a vote or financial assistance for any candidate for any political office; or

1.9.2 Matter which mentions a Member or a staff member of a Member as a candidate for political office, or which constitutes electioneering, or which advocates the election or defeat of any individuals, or a political party.

1.10 *Commercial Purposes*. Include, but are not limited to, direct or indirect pursuit of private commercial business activities or profit-making ventures or advertising therefor, direct or indirect solicitation of funds or the purchase of goods or services, and identification and solicitation of investors or other sources of capital for for-profit enterprises.

1.11 *Fundraising Purposes*. Include, but are not limited to, direct or indirect solicitation of funds, pledges or other types of contributions, *e.g.*, for political parties or campaigns, nonprofit or charitable organizations, or disaster or humanitarian relief efforts.

1.12 *Promotional Purposes*. Include, but are not limited to, publicizing or advertising a product, organization, institution, or venture so as to increase sales or public awareness.

2.0 SCOPE, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND PROHIBITED USES

2.1 *Official Business Use Only*. Use of Senate Internet Services and Senate technology resources is for activities and duties directly connected with the official business of the Senate.

2.2 *Prohibited Uses*. Use of Senate Internet Services and Senate technology resources for campaign, fundraising, commercial, or promotional purposes is prohibited, except for authorized ''dual use devices'' which, subject to certain restrictions, may be used for both campaign and official business purposes.

2.3 *Use of Official Websites*. Information provided on or through an Official Website must relate to activities and duties directly connected with the official and representational business of the Senate.

2.4 *Oversight of Internet and Information Security*. It is the responsibility of each Senate office to oversee the use of Senate Internet Services and Senate technology resources by that office and to ensure their use is consistent with the requirements of these Rules and applicable laws and regulations. The office has sole responsibility for effectively applying and complying with information security guidelines set out by the Senate Sergeant-At-Arms.

2.5 *Decorum Rule*. Use of Senate Internet Services and Senate technology resources to impute to another Senator or to other Senators any conduct or motive unworthy or unbecoming a Senator, or to refer offensively to any State of the Union, is prohibited.

2.6 *Personal Use*. Senate Internet Services and Senate technology resources are provided for the conduct of official business. Personal use is permitted on a *de minimis* basis only in a manner that does not supersede or contradict these Rules such as the general rule prohibiting the use of Senate Internet Resources and Senate technology resources for campaign, fundraising, commercial and promotional purposes.

3.0 OFFICIAL SENATE OFFICE WEBSITES

3.1 *Host Domain*. An Official Senate Office Website must be located in the ''senate.gov'' host domain.

3.2 *URL Name*. The URL name of an Official Senate Office Website located in the ''senate.gov'' domain is limited to one of the following formulations—

3.2.1 *Member Website*. Must contain the Member's last name.

3.2.2 *Committee or Senate Officer Website, including a Committee website maintained by the Committee Chair or the Committee Ranking Member*. Must contain the name of the Committee or title of the Senate Officer.

3.2.3 *Leadership Offices*. Must contain the name of, or acronym for, the office. For example, the offices of the Senate Majority Leader, Senate Minority Leader, Senate Majority Whip and Senate Minority Whip websites may utilize: Majority Leader, Majority Whip, Minority Leader, Minority Whip, Republican Leader, Republican Whip, Democratic Leader, Democratic Whip, as appropriate, to access the website directly or via a URL redirection. Web domains are to be surrendered in the event of a change in leadership.

3.3 *Task Force, Caucus, and Issue-Oriented Websites*. Use of the ''senate.gov'' host domain for task force, caucus, or other issue-oriented websites is prohibited. However, this does not prohibit a Member from referencing such issues or a task force on an Official Website.

3.4 *Senate Staff*. Senate staff are prohibited from establishing or maintaining an Official Senate Office Website in their own name in the ''senate.gov'' domain.

4.0 OFFICIAL THIRD-PARTY WEBSITES AND OFFICIAL ACCOUNTS

4.1 *In General*. A Senate office may maintain an official account or official public profile for each Official Third-Party Website.

4.2 The Senate Rules Committee maintains a non-exhaustive list of approved sites that have a terms-of-service agreement with the Senate. Use of an Official Third-Party Website not on the approved list may be restricted for security reasons and/or for failure to comply with applicable Senate rules and regulations.

4.3 An Official Third-Party Website shall identify itself as follows—

4.3.1 *Member*. The username, display name, or title of the Member's website must include the title ''U.S. Senator'' or an abbreviation thereof and the Member's last name.

4.3.2 *Committee*. The username, display name, or title of the website, including one maintained by the Committee Chair or the Committee Ranking Member, must include the name of the Committee or an abbreviation thereof, but may not include a Member's name.

4.3.3 *Senate Officer*. The username, display name, or title of a Senate Officer's website must include the name of the Office or an abbreviation thereof, but may not include the Officer's name.

4.3.4 *Leadership Office*. The username, display name, or title of the Leadership Office website must include the name of the Office or an abbreviation thereof.

4.3.5 *Identifying Statement*. The website shall display a statement identifying the account or profile as the ''official account of'' the Member, Committee, Leadership Office, or Senate Officer, as applicable.

4.4 *Use of the Senate Seal*. Use of any likeness of the Seal of the United States Senate on a non-Senate website or application is prohibited.

4.5 *Security*. Use of an Official Third-Party Website determined to pose a possible threat to the security of the Senate computer network shall be discontinued, per the direction of the Senate Rules Committee, until the risk is fully assessed and the risk mitigated to a level acceptable to the Senate Rules Committee.

4.6 *Last Day of a Member's Term*. A Member's official account on an Official Third-Party Website cannot be supported by Senate resources beyond the last day of the Member's term. Official Third-Party Websites must be deactivated or converted at the expiration of the term. Converted third-party websites cannot be supported with Senate resources and may no longer be identified as official.

5.0 LINKS BETWEEN WEBSITES

5.1 The following is prohibited—

5.1.1 Linking or posting from an Official Website to campaign, fundraising, commercial, or promotional sites except as provided for in section 5.3.

5.1.2 Linking or posting from an Official Website to a Member's campaign or personal website.

5.1.3 Linking or posting from a campaign website controlled by or under the direction of a Member or group of Members to an Official Website.

5.2 The following is permitted—

5.2.1 Linking or posting from an Official Website to another Official Website of the same Member.

5.2.2 Linking or posting from an Official Website to another Member, Committee, Leadership Office, or Senate Officer's Official Website.

5.2.3 Linking or posting from a Member's personal website to a Member's Official Website.

5.2.4 Linking or posting from a Member's Official Website to an official government website, including an official federal, state, or local government site.

5.3 Linking or posting from an Official Website to non-governmental sites (including commercial and promotional sites) only for official business purposes is permitted, provided the Senate office does not endorse, direct, control, support or discourage action by the non-governmental organization by means of the post or link. Links to fundraising or campaign sites do not fit within this exception and are prohibited.

6.0 SPECIAL RULES FOR 60-DAY MORATORIUM PERIOD

6.1 For purposes of this section, the following terms shall have the meaning specified—

6.1.1 *Moratorium period*. Means the 60 days immediately preceding the date of any primary or general election (whether regular,

special, or runoff) in which the Member is a candidate.

6.1.2 *Uncontested candidate*. When the Senate Rules Committee receives written certification from the appropriate state official that the Member's candidacy may not be contested under state law, that candidate is uncontested. A Member running for re-election in a state that permits write-in votes for the Member's election shall be considered a contested candidate and is subject to the restrictions in this section.

6.1.3 *Mass communication*. Means an electronic communication including, but not limited to, posting to an Official Website, automated telephone calls for events such as Tele-Town Halls, and electronic mail transmission of substantially identical content to 500 or more recipients.

6.2 During the moratorium period, no Member office may seek constituent input or inquiries (such as online petitions or opinion polls) via a mass communication using Senate Internet Services unless the Member is an uncontested candidate. Nor shall a Member do so on behalf of another Member unless the other Member is an uncontested candidate.

6.3 No Member office may transmit an unsolicited mass communication during the moratorium period unless the Member is an uncontested candidate. A mass communication to a subscriber list or a post on an Official Website available to voluntary followers is deemed to be solicited and is therefore permitted during the moratorium period (subject to the limitations of 6.2).

6.4 Communications in the normal course of Senate official business such as in direct response to a constituent, another Member of Congress, or a federal, state or local government official and a news release to the communications media are permitted during the moratorium period.

6.5 A Member subject to the restrictions in this section shall display the following statement on the Member's Official Senate Website homepage: ''Pursuant to Senate Policy, petitions, opinion polls and unsolicited mass electronic communications cannot be initiated by this office for the 60-day period immediately before the date of a primary or general election. Subscribers currently receiving electronic communications from this office who wish to unsubscribe may do so here (link).'' The words ''Senate Policy'' must be hypertext linked to these rules displayed on the Member's home page.

6.6 A Member may not use another Senate office such as a Senate committee to circumvent these Rules.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, on the eve of Veterans Day and the 240th Birthday of the United States Marine Corps, I rise to speak about the fiscal year 2016 National Defense Authorization Act, NDAA.

This legislation has taken a circuitous route to get to where it is today. The President correctly vetoed the original bill as it was a flawed product. It was flawed in the sense that it unfairly exempted the defense budget from the same draconian budget caps on nondefense programs by utilizing the overseas contingency operations, OCO. While this approach would have funded the defense bill, it neglected our economic security and left unaddressed important national priorities including law enforcement, education, transportation and community development, and medical research. A strong economy and strong communities are the backbone of our national security, and we should not divide our country into two Americas—defense on one side and everyone else on the other. That is not the way Congress should be doing business, and that is why our military leaders, led by Secretary of Defense Carter, opposed the earlier versions of this year's NDAA.

The bill, which we passed 91–3 today, comes after passage of the Bipartisan Budget Act, which provides balanced relief from cuts to ensure we have a strong defense and a strong economy. I supported this revised bill. While it was not a perfect bill, it is the result of a bipartisan compromise by the Congress. The fiscal year 2016 NDAA provides the men and women of our Armed Forces with the resources and equipment they need to defend our Nation and protect its interests.

I commend Chairman MCCAIN and Ranking Member REED for their leadership on the Senate Armed Services Committee in creating and shepherding this vital legislation through this chamber. The outstanding and bipartisan efforts of committee members will allow the defense authorization bill to become law for the 54th consecutive year.

I am proud to serve alongside Chairman WICKER as ranking member of the Seapower Subcommittee and want to thank him for leading the subcommittee which helps ensure that our Navy and Marine Corps forces are trained and equipped to conduct the vital missions they are tasked to complete. A strong and prepared Navy and Marines is absolutely essential to our national security strategies in the Asia-Pacific region, and this bill supports those efforts.

This NDAA includes a number of provisions that reaffirm the importance of the rebalance to the Asia-Pacific; support the men and women who serve in our military and the Hawaii National Guard; invest in Hawaii's military bases, schools, and facilities and those that assess the ballistic missile capabilities of rouge nations and the current capacity to defend Hawaii against missile threats.

Our support of the rebalance to the Asia-Pacific is critical. Maintenance of stability in this region cannot be underestimated. Continued engagement and partnership with our friends and allies in the region is invaluable. By extending the State Partnership Program, we not only hone the capabilities and readiness of our National Guard, but we gain the dual benefit of enhancing our partnerships and the capacity of regional neighbors.

However, I do have some concerns with the final bill that I intend to work on going forward.

While my colleagues and I continue to work to reduce redundancy and increase efficiencies with in our military, I would have serious concerns if across-the-board reductions to headquarters operations were made by the Department of Defense implementing this bill. In talking with military commanders, I know that cuts at command headquarters to include U.S. Pacific Command, U.S. Pacific Fleet, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific, U.S. Army Pacific and Pacific Air Forces, which are all based in Hawaii, would impact our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines.

We need to ensure that any reductions are carefully thought out and take into account the assigned missions and right sizing of headquarters to adequately support the demands we place on our operational forces. I will closely monitor the Pentagon's implementation of these provisions going forward.

In addition, I want to ensure that the men and women of the Department who travel for extended periods of time on official business are reimbursed for food and lodging at appropriate levels. Last year the Department changed how these workers are reimbursed, and the bill passed today directs the Government Accountability Office, GAO, to review the issue and report back to Congress. I will be tracking the GAO report on this important issue, as well as the Department's implementation of their extended Temporary Travel Duty, TDY, policy.

While the passage of this legislation is critical, it still contains misguided provisions I have long disagreed with and that negatively affect our security, as well as the men and women who defend this Nation. An area I strongly disagree with is in regard to the restrictions on transferring prisoners from Guantanamo Bay. These harm our security interests and continue to undermine our leadership on human rights. We need to work towards a solution to close this facility.

Despite these concerns, this legislation is a product of a sincere bipartisan and bicameral effort to provide the men and women of our military the tools and resources it needs to defend our great Nation.

OBSERVING VETERANS DAY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I wish to commemorate Veterans Day and to thank all those who have served our country for their extraordinary bravery and sacrifice.

As many of my colleagues know, President Woodrow Wilson first established this holiday—originally known as Armistice Day—on November 11, 1919, to honor the brave Americans who fought and died in World War I. After the end of World War II, Armistice Day was expanded to honor all veterans of our military services, and the holiday's name was changed to Veterans Day.

My home State of Maryland has a long and proud military tradition dating to the first militiamen who set foot in the Maryland Colony in 1634; to the

War of 1812, where our soldiers famously held Fort McHenry and our national anthem, the ''Star-Spangled Banner,'' was penned; through both world wars; Korea; Vietnam; the Persian Gulf war; and our most recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Maryland's veterans and troops represent the best of our State and our Nation.

Earlier this year, I had an opportunity to help present a Congressional Gold Medal to former Tuskegee Airman William A. Colbert, Jr., a lifelong Marylander. Mr. Colbert enlisted in the Army Air Force in 1943 and achieved the rank of flight officer at the Tuskegee Army Air Field. While Mr. Colbert never saw combat, he learned to fly with the best and became a full-fledged Red Tail. And as part of the first all-Black combat unit in the U.S. Armed Forces, Mr. Colbert and his fellow servicemen broke through racial barriers without any expectation of fame or fanfare. Their distinguished service and enduring courage played a critical role in the later desegregation of our Nation's military. Mr. Colbert always considered his contribution to the Tuskegee Airmen and his service to our country simply as what he was called to do as a citizen. Mr. Colbert passed away in early June but not before we were finally able to thank him for his extraordinary service to our Nation.

While we were able to honor Mr. Colbert, there are thousands of other veterans who remain nameless. That is why on August 5, 2015, I introduced the Korean War Veterans Memorial Wall of Remembrance Act of 2015, S. 1982, along with the senior Senator from Arkansas, Mr. BOOZMAN. Our legislation authorizes the addition of a Wall of Remembrance to the existing Korean War Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC. The Wall of Remembrance would list the names of members of the Armed Forces of the United States who died in theater in the Korean war, as well as the number of servicemembers who were wounded in action, are listed as missing in action, or who were prisoners of war during the Korean war. Authorizing a wall of remembrance here in the United States is just one way we can help ensure that those who gave the ultimate sacrifice while serving our country in the ''forgotten war'' are no longer forgotten.

As America celebrates Veterans Day, we stand united in honoring the acts of selfless service from our Nation's veterans. Our veterans and military men and women and their families need to know that we remember them not just on Veterans Day but every single day of the year. Our veterans have protected our country and defended our values. These Americans are the bravest among us, and we applaud the innumerable sacrifices that they and their loved ones have made for this great country. As we celebrate Veterans Day, our thoughts and prayers are also with ''veterans to be''—the men and women who are currently serving our country, especially those in harm's way.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF KEN SARO-WIWA

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, today marks a dark milestone on the long road to environmental justice. Twenty years ago, Nigerian environmental and human rights activist Ken Saro-Wiwa was hanged, along with eight fellow defendants, following an internationally denounced military tribunal.

Saro-Wiwa was a well-known author and television producer in his native Nigeria before he chose to devote himself full time to the causes of the Ogoni, a minority ethnic group of about 500,000 farmers and fishermen who hail from the Niger Delta. As president of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People—MOSOP—he fought against the exploitation of Ogoni lands and the Ogoni people themselves by the oil drilling operations of Royal Dutch Shell.

As the oil industry grew to represent the main source of revenue for the Nigerian Government, the delta landscape was ravaged by oil spills and acid rain. Fertile farmland turned to oil-soaked wasteland. The region's fish and wildlife were wiped out—along with the livelihood of the Ogoni. Out of the entire 5,000-person workforce employed by Shell in Nigeria, less than 100 were Ogoni.

Under Ken Saro-Wiwa's leadership, MOSOP organized hundreds of thousands of Ogoni to demand environmental remediation, compensation for past damages, and a share in oil revenues. The regime of dictator General Sani Abacha responded with a brutal campaign of occupation, mass arrest, rape, execution, and the burning of Ogoni villages. In May 1994, Saro-Wiwa was abducted from his home and brought up on charges in connection with the murder of four Ogoni leaders. He was tried and convicted by a military tribunal that governments and human rights organizations worldwide condemned as fraudulent.

On November 10, 1995, Ken Saro-Wiwa was put to death.

''The only crime he and his colleagues had committed,'' reads Saro-Wiwa's citation for the prestigious Godman Environmental Prize, ''was to demand sound environmental practices and to ask for compensation for the devastation of Ogoni territories.''

A human rights lawsuit brought by Saro-Wiwa's son and other victims' families in U.S. Federal court alleged that Shell bribed at least two witnesses in the 1995 tribunal and that Shell's manager in Nigeria offered Saro-Wiwa's brother, another jailed activist, release from captivity in exchange for abandoning the movement. That suit was settled by Shell for $15.5 million, just days before going to trial in 2009, following a protracted legal battle.

The Ogoni cause has been taken up by other Ogoni, both within Nigeria and living in exile, including Saro-Wiwa's sons. The struggle and death of Ken Saro-Wiwa serve as a lasting inspiration to people of all nations who seek relief from corporate abuse, government corruption, and environmental ruin. We will remember his noble fight for the basic right of a people to live in harmony with the Earth.

NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. President, for National Disability Employment Awareness Month last month, I congratulate and honor the Palmetto Goodwill in North Charleston, SC, for their outstanding commitment to service and work with the AbilityOne Program.

In 1974, a small group of citizens in the Charleston area wanted to address the lack of opportunity for persons with disabilities. The Palmetto Goodwill of South Carolina has answered the call of service by becoming a part of the United States AbilityOne Commission network with their Champions Program.

The Palmetto Goodwill has successfully implemented the Champions Program which aims to empower citizens of South Carolina that are blind or possessing a disability. Through providing employment opportunities, the Palmetto Goodwill is making strides to continue the mission of National Disability Employment Awareness Month throughout the year. Currently 85 percent of their employed staff is persons with a disability. I applaud the stellar work of the Champions Program and therefore recognize the Palmetto Goodwill.

TRIBUTE TO MELISSA KALTENBACH

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I wish to honor the service and retirement of one of my dear friends and most respected employees, Melissa Kaltenbach. Melissa has served me and the people of Michigan with infinite loyalty and dedication for the past 27 years.

Melissa began working for me in the Michigan House of Representatives and continued her service with me in the State Senate, U.S. House, and now in the U.S. Senate as my director of constituent services.

In so many ways, Melissa's job is one of if not the most important jobs on my staff. That is because her work impacts people where it matters most—in their daily lives. Her compassion toward the people of Michigan and understanding of the problems they face has been instrumental in setting the high standards for constituent services in my office and throughout the State of Michigan.

She has a unique ability to listen and understand the needs of people, and she demonstrates grace and respect for the dignity of others, even in the most stressful times and most difficult circumstances. She has gone above and beyond in so many ways—incredible empathy, unwavering loyalty, and infinite patience.

There really aren't enough words to describe Melissa's contributions to my office and to my success in serving the people of Michigan over these many years. She has been the go-to person on my team to mentor new staff, handle challenging cases, and answer those questions that don't seem to fall into anyone else's job description.

We all wish Melissa continued success and happiness with her family as she begins this new chapter in her life, joining her husband, Tim, in full-time retirement.

Her friendship and commitment to me and to the people of Michigan have been immeasurable, as is my gratitude for her decades of service. While my staff and I will miss her presence in our office, she will forever be an invaluable member and leader of ''Team Stabenow.''

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING HACKETT MAYOR JEFF T. HARPER

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the life and legacy of the mayor of Hackett, AR, Jeff Harper, who passed away on Thursday, November 5, 2015.

Affectionately known as Papa Bear to many, Mayor Harper dedicated his life to serving the citizens of Hackett. Mayor Harper worked for the street department and served as a firefighter for a decade, eventually becoming the fire chief of Hackett. His commitment to the city of Hackett led him to run for mayor. He was elected in 2014 and served Hackett honorably the entirety of his all too short time in office.

I am greatly appreciative for Mayor Harper's noble service to the city of Hackett and the State of Arkansas. My prayers are with his wife Trini, his three children, and all those who are mourning him during this trying time. I hope they find comfort knowing that he made a positive impact on his community.•

TRIBUTE TO LARRY ZIMMER

• Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I wish to honor the voice of CU Buffalo football, Mr. Larry Zimmer, who will be calling his last game and celebrating his 80th birthday on November 13.

Mr. Zimmer joined the University of Colorado broadcasting team in 1971. He has since led a career filled with many awards and distinctions, which highlight his dedication to CU sports. He is a five-time winner of the Colorado Sportscaster of the Year award and recipient of the esteemed Chris Schenkel Award, given to those who dedicate their talents to college football. Even more important than these awards, however, is the respect and admiration he has earned from the students and faculty at the University of Colorado and all those who tune in to Buffalo football.

Over his long and distinguished career, he has truly become a hallmark of CU football games. I thank him for his many years of excellent broadcasting and wish him a very happy birthday.•

WELCOMING RITCHIE COUNTY VETERANS TO THE NATION'S CAPITAL

• Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I wish to recognize with, overwhelming pride, a group of courageous veterans from Ritchie County, WV, who are visiting our Nation's Capital this Thursday. On behalf of our State and Nation, it is a true honor and privilege to recognize these heroic men and women and their families for their brave service and sacrifice as they tour the memorials built in their honor.

I have always said that West Virginia is one of the most patriotic States in this great Nation, and we are so proud of the number of veterans and Active-Duty members who have served our country with honor and distinction. The 20 veterans and their family members who are traveling to Washington, DC, embody our State's history and contributions to the freedom of this Nation. They may represent different generations of warriors, but no matter the war or the era, no matter the rank, each and every one of them courageously answered the call of duty to defend our Nation and protect the freedoms we enjoy as Americans. In our time of need, they stepped forward and said, ''I'll do it—I'll protect this country.''

This trip will be a truly moving and special experience for these veterans, many of whom have never been to the memorials that were built for their service. It will include wreath-laying ceremonies at the monuments that commemorate the wars in which many have served, including the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Korean War Veterans Memorial, and the National World War II Memorial. They will also be touring Arlington National Cemetery and have private time for a wreath-laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Mr. President, it is also tremendously important to recognize that this visit would not have been possible without the hard work and determination of an inspirational young Ritchie County native, Kirsten Seese. Kirsten is a Ritchie County High School senior who aspires to be a nurse one day. She was inspired to coordinate this trip as her prenursing senior project after hearing about a group of veterans that had recently traveled to Washington, DC, to visit the memorials sponsored by their community.

Kirsten wasted no time. She went to businesses in Ritchie County with the goal of organizing a 100 percent free veterans appreciation tour. In just 3 weeks, Kirsten raised enough money for 20 veterans, their family members, and local volunteers to visit to Washington, DC, absolutely free. They will not have to pay for any meals or refreshments and will receive a commemorative shirt and a hat. The funding will also go towards the wreaths for the ceremonies that will be held at each memorial and a group photo at the Capitol to commemorate their special day.

I am so proud of Kirsten. She has truly set an extraordinary example for her generation by giving back to those who have served this country and those who have protected our freedoms. It is the devotion and drive of young people like Kirsten that bring our communities together. I wish her the best of luck in her future endeavors, and I commend her for making an enormous impact on the lives of our veterans through this veterans appreciation tour.

Mr. President, I am filled with pride every time I meet the patriots who have served our country, and I am so pleased to welcome West Virginia's most courageous veterans who are all heroes to Washington, DC. I encourage all of my colleagues to join me in saluting them. They truly inspire us all as we are reminded of their selfless service. It is because of their bravery that all Americans enjoy the greatest liberties and freedoms in the world. We whole heartedly thank them.•

TRIBUTE TO JUDGE GEORGE HEALY

• Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to a Rhode Islander whom I have known and admired for nearly 30 years: George Healy, chief judge of our State's Workers' Compensation Court, who retired in July after 24 years on the bench. A number of George's colleagues will be gathering on November 19 to honor his years of service, and it is indeed my honor to say a few words about him today.

I first came to know George Healy amidst a genuine crisis in Rhode Island: the near-collapse of our State's workers' compensation system in 1991. Here is how a 1991 report by the Rhode Island Department of Economic Development summed up the situation.

> The financial burden borne by employers had simply become too great. Insurers had begun to exit the Rhode Island marketplace. And, most importantly, the financial protection required for our state's injured workers was being placed in jeopardy.

Indeed, when compared with our New England neighbors, our average claim costs were through the roof. In 1990, the average claim in Rhode Island was $12,638, more than three times higher than the average claim in Vermont and significantly higher than Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Hampshire, which collectively had average claim costs in the range of $6,000 to $7,000. This was simply unsustainable.

Enter George Healy who until that time had been a civil litigator and workers' compensation practitioner. Our Governor at the time, Bruce

Sundlun, appointed George and a handful of other stakeholders to a task force that was given a bold directive: Reduce the cost of the system without reducing benefits. As Governor Sundlun's legal counsel at the time, I had the honor of leading the task force, but I relied greatly on George for his expertise on the system. Working together with our colleagues, we were able to develop a plan that protected workers, reduced costs, eliminated pending rate increases, stabilized the workers' compensation market, eliminated fraud, and prevented a collapse of the system.

One of the hallmarks of the reform was the creation of the Workers' Compensation Court, which hears and decides all disputes involving an injured employee and an employer relating to workers' compensation benefits. Governor Sundlun appointed George to be among the inaugural class of the court's judges after its creation in 1991. George was then appointed chief judge by Governor Don Carcieri in 2004.

Now, as George Healy looks back on his career, I hope he will rule it a success. I certainly do. The reforms he helped lead reduced average claim costs in Rhode Island from $12,638 in 1991 to just $5,179 in 2007. The reduction came about not from benefit cuts but from system reforms, quick court action, injury prevention, and getting people quickly back to work. A 2009 report by the International Workers' Compensation Foundation put it this way: ''When both claim frequency and severity are considered (taking into account all employees, whether or not injured) . . . Rhode Island stands out as the state with the lowest average medical cost per employee per year in the entire country.'' Because of George's work, Rhode Island is now a model system for the rest of the country.

In short, thanks in large part to George's hard work and his years of service on the bench, Rhode Island workers can rest assured that, if they get hurt on the job, their State's insurance program will be there for them. That is a proud and meaningful legacy to leave behind. In addition to all of George's accomplishments on the bench, I will always remember him for his humility, gentle demeanor, and respect toward those who appeared before him. I will also be grateful for his friendship through the years, and I hope George enjoys many peaceful years of retirement, knowing that his efforts have improved the lives of countless others. I wish him the best as he enjoys much deserved family time with his lovely wife Ruth, his son Tim and his wife Jewel, his son Paul and his wife Meghan, and George's three grandchildren, Quinn, Jack, and Charlotte. Godspeed, my friend.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, 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 10:52 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the title of the bill (H.R. 22) to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes, further, that the House insists upon its amendment to the amendment of the Senate to the text of the bill, asks a conference with the Senate on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints the following Members as managers of the conference on the part of the House:

From the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for consideration of the House amendment and the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Messrs. SHUSTER, DUNCAN of Tennessee, GRAVES of Missouri, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Messrs. CRAWFORD, BARLETTA, FARENTHOLD, GIBBS, DENHAM, RIBBLE, PERRY, WOODALL, KATKO, BABIN, HARDY, GRAVES of Louisiana, DEFAZIO, Ms. NORTON, Mr. NADLER, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Messrs. CUMMINGS, LARSEN of Washington, CAPUANO, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Messrs. LIPINSKI, COHEN, and SIRES.

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–3480. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Acetamiprid; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9936–12) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 4, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–3481. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Suspension of Community Eligibility'' ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA–2015–0001)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 4, 2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3482. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Energy Efficiency Standards for New Federal Commercial and Multi-Family High-Rise Residential Buildings' Baseline Standards Update'' ((RIN1904–AD39) (Docket No. EERE–2014–BT–STD–0047)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 6, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–3483. A communication from the Secretary of Energy, transmitting proposed legislation; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–3484. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of Missouri; Control of Petroleum Liquid Storage, Loading and Transfer'' (FRL No. 9936–72–Region 7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 4, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3485. 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; North Carolina Infrastructure Requirements for the 2008 8-hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards'' (FRL No. 9936–60–Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 4, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3486. 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; Louisiana; Major Source Permitting State Implementation Plan'' (FRL No. 9936–45–Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 4, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3487. 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; Ohio; Revised Format for Materials Being Incorporated by Reference'' (FRL No. 9933–71–Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 4, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3488. 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; Ohio; Test Methods; Error Correction'' (FRL No. 9936–54–Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 4, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3489. 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; TN; Knox County Emissions Statements'' (FRL No. 9936–57–Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 4, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3490. 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; TN; Reasonably Available Control Measures and Redesignation for the TN Portion of the Chattanooga 1997 Annual PM2.5 Nonattainment Area'' (FRL No. 9936–55–Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 4, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3491. 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 California Air Plan Revisions, Place County Air Pollution Control District'' (FRL No. 9935–65–Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 4, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3492. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a notification of the President's intent to enter into a free trade agreement, known as the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3493. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, the notification of the President's intent to suspend the application of duty-free treatment to all African Growth and Opportunity-eligible goods in the agricultural sector for the Republic of South Africa; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3494. 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 ''General Allocation and Accounting Regulations Under Section 141; Remedial Actions for Tax-Exempt Bonds'' ((RIN1545–BB23; RIN1545–BC07; and RIN1545–BH48) (TD 9741)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 6, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3495. 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 ''Preparer Tax Identification Number (PTIN) User Fee Update'' ((RIN1545–BN03) (TD 9742)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 6, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3496. 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 ''Unpaid Losses Discount Factors and Payment Patterns for 2015'' (Rev. Proc. 2015–52) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 6, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3497. 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 ''Salvage Discount Factors and Payment Patterns for 2015'' (Rev. Proc. 2015–54) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 6, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3498. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–171, ''Fiscal Year 2015 and Fiscal Year 2016 Revised Budget Request Adjustment Temporary Act of 2015''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3499. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–172, ''Higher Education Licensure Commission Temporary Act of 2015''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3500. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–173, ''Sexual Assault Victim Rights Task Force Report Extension Temporary Amendment Act of 2015''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3501. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–174, ''Rent Control Hardship Petition Limitation Temporary Amendment Act of 2015''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3502. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–175, ''ABLE Program Trust Establishment Temporary Act of 2015''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3503. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–192, ''Closing of a Public Alley in Square 369, S.O. 13–07989, Act of 2015''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3504. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–193, ''Testing Integrity Amendment Act of 2015''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3505. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–194, ''Closing of a Public Alley in Square 197, S.O., 15–23895, Act of 2015''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3506. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–195, ''James Bunn Way Designation Act of 2015''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3507. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revitalization of the AM Radio Service'' ((FCC 15–142) (MB Docket No. 13–249)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 4, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3508. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Expanding the Economic and Innovation Opportunities of Spectrum Through Incentive Auctions; Channel Sharing by Full Power and Class A Stations Outside the Broadcast Television Spectrum Incentive Auction Context'' ((FCC 15–139) (GN Docket No. 12–268 and MB Docket No. 15–137)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 4, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3509. A communication from the Director, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Two Decades of Change in Transportation: Reflections from Transportation Statistics Annual Reports, 1994–2014''; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. THUNE, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation:

Report to accompany S. 1334, a bill to strengthen enforcement mechanisms to stop illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, to amend the Tuna Conventions Act of 1950 to implement the Antigua Convention, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–166).

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, without amendment and with a preamble:

S. Res. 302. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate in support of Israel and in condemnation of Palestinian terror attacks.

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. INHOFE (for himself and Mr. NELSON):

S. 2262. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to cover screening computed tomography colonography as a colorectal cancer screening test under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 2263. A bill to encourage effective, voluntary private sector investments to recruit, employ, and retain men and women who have served in the United States military with annual Federal awards to private sector employers recognizing such investments, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BENNET:

S. 2264. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to strengthen the child tax credit; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. UDALL (for himself and Mr. MORAN):

S. 2265. A bill to improve the provision of health care by the Department of Veterans Affairs to veterans in rural and highly rural areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. NELSON, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 2266. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to reform and reduce fraud and abuse in certain visa programs for aliens working temporarily in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Mr. CASEY, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. FRANKEN):

S. 2267. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to improve the financial aid process for homeless children and youths and foster care children and youth; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 2268. A bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the United States Army Dust Off crews of the Vietnam War, collectively, in recognition of their extraordinary heroism and life-saving actions in Vietnam; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. KIRK (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 2269. A bill to establish the Government Transformation Board to make certain recommendations to improve the economy of the United States and the efficiency and effectiveness of Federal programs; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. FRANKEN (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 2270. A bill to address voluntary location tracking of electronic communications devices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. COONS):

S. 2271. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide credits for the production of renewable chemicals and investments in renewable chemical production facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. REED, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 2272. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 regarding proprietary institutions of higher education in order to protect students and taxpayers; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BOOKER:

S. 2273. A bill to require the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to establish an incubator and accelerator grant program for veterans and members of the Armed Forces; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. UDALL, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. DAINES):

S. 2274. A bill to provide for rental assistance for homeless or at-risk Indian veterans; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. COATS, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 2275. A bill to provide for automatic acquisition of United States citizenship for certain internationally adopted individuals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. FISCHER (for herself, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. DAINES, and Mr. PETERS):

S. 2276. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to provide enhanced safety in pipeline transportation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. CASEY:

S. 2277. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a credit for veteran first-time homebuyers and for adaptive housing and mobility improvements for disabled veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. SCHATZ:

S. 2278. A bill to promote the availability of additional unlicensed spectrum for innovation and investment, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. TILLIS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. TESTER):

S. 2279. A bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a program to increase efficiency in the recruitment and hiring by the Department of Veterans Affairs of health care workers that are undergoing separation from the Armed Forces, to create uniform credentialing standards for certain health care professionals of the Department, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. LEAHY):

S. 2280. A bill to promote pro bono legal services as a critical way in which to empower survivors of domestic violence; considered and passed.

By Mr. JOHNSON (for himself and Mr. BARRASSO):

S. 2281. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to reissue final rules relating to listing of the gray wolf in the Western Great Lakes and Wyoming under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. LEE (for himself, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. RISCH, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. HATCH, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. DAINES, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. COATS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. MORAN, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. SASSE, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ENZI, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. CRUZ):

S. Res. 312. A resolution designating the week beginning November 8, 2015, as ''National Pregnancy Center Week'' to recognize the vital role that community-supported pregnancy centers (also known as pregnancy care and pregnancy resource centers) play in saving lives and serving women and men faced with difficult pregnancy decisions; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 122

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 122, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to allow for the personal importation of safe and affordable drugs from approved pharmacies in Canada.

S. 210

At the request of Mr. KAINE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 210, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a credit against income tax for amounts paid by a spouse of a member of the Armed Forces for a new State license or certification required by reason of a permanent change in the duty station of such member to another State.

S. 275

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 275, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coverage of home as a site of care for infusion therapy under the Medicare program.

S. 299

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 299, a bill to allow travel between the United States and Cuba.

S. 417

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 417, a bill to encourage spectrum licensees to make unused spectrum available for use by rural and smaller carriers in order to expand wireless coverage.

S. 429

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 429, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide a standard definition of therapeutic foster care services in Medicaid.

S. 553

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 553, a bill to marshal resources to undertake a concerted, transformative effort that seeks to bring an end to modern slavery, and for other purposes.

S. 602

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 602, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to consider certain time spent by members of reserve components of the Armed Forces while receiving medical care from the Secretary of Defense as active duty for purposes of eligibility for Post-9/11 Educational Assistance, and for other purposes.

S. 640

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 640, a bill to amend the Clean Air Act to delay the review and revision of the national ambient air quality standards for ozone.

S. 746

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of S. 746, a bill to provide for the establishment of a Commission to Accelerate the End of Breast Cancer.

S. 804

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 804, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to specify coverage of continuous glucose monitoring devices, and for other purposes.

S. 885

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 885, a bill to direct the Architect of the Capitol to place in the United States Capitol a chair honoring American Prisoners of War/Missing in Action.

S. 901

At the request of Mr. KAINE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 901, a bill to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a national center for research on the diagnosis and treatment of health conditions of the descendants of veterans exposed to toxic substances during service in the Armed Forces that are related to that exposure, to establish an advisory board on such health conditions, and for other purposes.

S. 979

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 979, a bill to amend title 10,

United States Code, to repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan by veterans' dependency and indemnity compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 1133

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1133, a bill to amend title 9 of the United States Code with respect to arbitration.

S. 1539

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) 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. 1559

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1559, a bill to protect victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence from emotional and psychological trauma caused by acts of violence or threats of violence against their pets.

S. 1562

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1562, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform taxation of alcoholic beverages.

S. 1608

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1608, a bill to protect the safety of the national airspace system from the hazardous operation of consumer drones, and for other purposes.

S. 1742

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1742, a bill to improve the provision of postal services to rural areas of the United States.

S. 1816

At the request of Mr. ROUNDS, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1816, a bill to provide relief to community banks, to promote access to capital for community banks, and for other purposes.

S. 1856

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1856, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for suspension and removal of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs for performance or misconduct that is a threat to public health or safety and to improve accountability of employees of the Department, and for other purposes.

S. 1883

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1883, a bill to maximize discovery, and accelerate development and availability, of promising childhood cancer treatments, and for other purposes.

S. 1886

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1886, a bill to reauthorize the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2009 and for other purposes.

S. 1893

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1893, a bill to reauthorize and improve programs related to mental health and substance use disorders.

S. 1915

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1915, a bill to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to make anthrax vaccines and antimicrobials available to emergency response providers, and for other purposes.

S. 1916

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1916, a bill to include skilled nursing facilities as a type of health care provider under section 254(h) of the Communications Act of 1934.

S. 2021

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2021, a bill to prohibit Federal agencies and Federal contractors from requesting that an applicant for employment disclose criminal history record information before the applicant has received a conditional offer, and for other purposes.

S. 2042

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2042, a bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act to strengthen protections for employees wishing to advocate for improved wages, hours, or other terms or conditions of employment and to provide for stronger remedies for interference with these rights, and for other purposes.

S. 2103

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2103, a bill to modify a provision relating to adjustments of certain State apportionments for Federal highway programs, and for other purposes.

S. 2123

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) were added as cosponsors of S. 2123, a bill to reform sentencing laws and correctional institutions, and for other purposes.

S. 2147

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2147, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 with respect to participant votes on the suspension of benefits under multiemployer plans in critical and declining status.

S. 2151

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2151, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide liability protections for volunteer practitioners at health centers under section 330 of such Act.

S. 2170

At the request of Mrs. ERNST, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2170, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the ability of health care professionals to treat veterans through the use of telemedicine, and for other purposes.

S. 2220

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2220, a bill to amend title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act to provide for a special enrollment period for pregnant women, and for other purposes.

S. 2225

At the request of Mr. TILLIS, the names of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) and the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2225, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to establish an H–2B temporary non-agricultural work visa program and for other purposes.

S. RES. 299

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 299, a resolution honoring the life, legacy, and example of former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on the twentieth anniversary of his death.

S. RES. 302

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE), the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 302, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate in support of Israel and in condemnation of Palestinian terror attacks.

At the request of Mr. NELSON, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 302, supra.

At the request of Mr. BROWN, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 302, supra.

S. RES. 310

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 310, a resolution condemning the ongoing sexual violence against women and children from Yezidi, Christian, Shabak, Turkmen, and other religious communities by Islamic State of Iraq and Syria militants and urging the prosecution of the perpetrators and those complicit in these crimes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2770

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2770 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2029, a bill making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2788

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2788 proposed to H.R. 2029, a bill making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 2268. A bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the United States Army Dust Off crews of the Vietnam War, collectively, in recognition of their extraordinary heroism and life-saving actions in Vietnam; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

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

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

S. 2268

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 ''Dust Off Crews of the Vietnam War Congressional Gold Medal Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds that—

(1) a United States Army Dust Off crewman is a helicopter crew member who served honorably in the Vietnam War aboard a helicopter air ambulance under the radio call sign ''Dust Off'';

(2) Dust Off crews performed aeromedical evacuation for United States, Vietnamese, and allied forces inside South Vietnam from May 1962 through March 1973.

(3) nearing the end of World War II, the United States Army began using helicopters for medical evacuation and years later, during the Korean War, these helicopter air ambulances were responsible for transporting 17,700 United States casualties;

(4) during the Vietnam War, with the use of helicopter air ambulances, United States Army Dust Off crews pioneered the concept of dedicated and rapid medical evacuation and rescued almost 900,000 United States, South Vietnamese, and other allied sick and wounded, as well as wounded enemy forces;

(5) helicopters proved to be a revolutionary tool to assist those injured on the battlefield;

(6) highly skilled and intrepid, Dust Off crews were able to operate the helicopters and land them on almost any terrain in nearly any weather to pick up wounded, after which the Dust Off crews could provide care to these patients while transporting them to ready medical facilities;

(7) the vital work of the Dust Off crews required consistent combat exposure and often proved to be the difference between life and death for wounded personnel;

(8) the revolutionary concept of a dedicated combat life-saving system was cultivated and refined by United States Army Dust Off crews during 11 years of intense conflict in and above the jungles of South Vietnam;

(9) innovative and resourceful Dust Off crews in Vietnam were responsible for taking the new concept of helicopter medical evacuation, born just a few years earlier, and revolutionizing it to meet and surpass the previously unattainable goal of delivering a battlefield casualty to an operating table within the vaunted ''golden hour'';

(10) some Dust Off units in Vietnam operated so efficiently that they were able to deliver a patient to a waiting medical facility on an average of 33 minutes from the receipt of the mission, which saved the lives of countless personnel in Vietnam, and this legacy continues for modern-day Dust Off crews;

(11) the inherent danger of being a member of a Dust Off crew in Vietnam meant that there was a 1 in 3 chance of being wounded or killed;

(12) many battles during the Vietnam War raged at night, and members of the Dust Off crews often found themselves searching for a landing zone in complete darkness, in bad weather, over mountainous terrain, and all while being the target of intense enemy fire as they attempted to rescue the wounded, which caused Dust Off crews to suffer a rate of aircraft loss that was more than 3 times that of all other types of combat helicopter missions in Vietnam;

(13) the 54th Medical Detachment typified the constant heroism displayed by Dust Off crews in Vietnam, over the span of a 10-month tour, with only 3 flyable helicopters and 40 soldiers in the unit, evacuating 21,435 patients in 8,644 missions while being airborne for 4,832 hours;

(14) collectively, the members of the 54th Medical Detachment earned 78 awards for valor, including 1 Medal of Honor, 1 Distinguished Service Cross, 14 Silver Star Medals, 26 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 2 Bronze Star Medals for valor, 4 Air Medals for valor, 4 Soldier's Medals, and 26 Purple Heart Medals;

(15) the 54th Medical Detachment displayed heroism on a daily basis and set the standard for all Dust Off crews in Vietnam;

(16) 5 members of the 54th Medical Detachment are in the Dust Off Hall of Fame, 3 are in the Army Aviation Hall of Fame, and 1 is the only United States Army aviator in the National Aviation Hall of Fame;

(17) Dust Off crew members are among the most highly decorated soldiers in American military history;

(18) in early 1964, Major Charles L. Kelly was the Commanding Officer of the 57th Medical Detachment (Helicopter Ambulance), Provisional, in Soc Trang, South Vietnam;

(19) Major Kelly helped to forge the Dust Off call-sign into history as one of the most welcomed phrases to be heard over the radio by wounded soldiers in perilous and dire situations;

(20) in 1964, Major Kelly was killed in action as he gallantly maneuvered his aircraft to save a wounded American soldier and several Vietnamese soldiers and boldly replied, after being warned to stay away from the landing zone due to the ferocity of enemy fire, ''When I have your wounded.'';

(21) General William Westmoreland, Commander, Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (1964–1968), singled out Major Kelly as an example of ''the greatness of the human spirit'' and highlighted his famous reply as an inspiration to all in combat;

(22) General Creighton Abrams, Westmoreland's successor (1968–1972), and former Chief of Staff of the United States Army, highlighted the heroism of Dust Off crews, ''A special word about the Dust Offs . . . Courage above and beyond the call of duty was sort of routine to them. It was a daily thing, part of the way they lived. That's the great part, and it meant so much to every last man who served there. Whether he ever got hurt or not, he knew Dust Off was there.'';

(23) Dust Off crews possessed unique skills and traits that made them highly successful in aeromedical evacuation in Vietnam, including indomitable courage, extraordinary aviation skill and sound judgment under fire, high-level medical expertise, and an unequaled dedication to the preservation of human life;

(24) members of the United States Armed Forces on the ground in Vietnam had their confidence and battlefield prowess reinforced knowing that there were heroic Dust Off crews just a few minutes from the fight, which was instrumental to their well-being, willingness to fight, and morale;

(25) military families in the United States knew that their loved ones would receive the quickest and best possible care in the event of a war-time injury, thanks to the Dust Off crews;

(26) the willingness of Dust Off crews to also risk their lives to save helpless civilians left an immeasurably positive impression on the people of Vietnam and exemplified the finest American ideals of compassion and humanity; and

(27) Dust Off crews from the Vietnam War hailed from every State in the United States and represented numerous ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds.

SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.

(a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President pro tempore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the presentation, on behalf of Congress, of a single gold medal of appropriate design in honor of the Dust Off crews of the Vietnam War, collectively, in recognition of their heroic military service, which saved countless lives and contributed directly to the defense of our country.

(b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For the purposes of the award referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the Treasury shall strike the gold medal with suitable emblems, devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense.

(c) SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the gold medal in honor of the Dust Off

Crews of the Vietnam War, the gold medal shall be given to the Smithsonian Institution, where it will be available for display as appropriate and available for research.

(2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Smithsonian Institution should also make the gold medal awarded pursuant to this Act available for display elsewhere, particularly at appropriate locations associated with the Vietnam War, and that preference should be given to locations affiliated with the Smithsonian Institution.

SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.

The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in bronze of the gold medal struck pursuant to section 3 under such regulations as the Secretary may prescribe, at a price sufficient to cover the cost thereof, including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses, and the cost of the gold medal.

SEC. 5. NATIONAL MEDALS.

The medal struck pursuant to this Act is a national medal for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States Code.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. REED, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 2272. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 regarding proprietary institutions of higher education in order to protect students and taxpayers; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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

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

S. 2272

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Protecting Our Students and Taxpayers Act of 2015'' or ''POST Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. 85/15 RULE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 102(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in subparagraph (D), by striking ''and'' after the semicolon;

(B) in subparagraph (E), by striking the period and inserting ''; and''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(F) meets the requirements of paragraph (2).'';

(2) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

''(2) REVENUE SOURCES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In order to qualify as a proprietary institution of higher education under this subsection, an institution shall derive not less than 15 percent of the institution's revenues from sources other than Federal funds, as calculated in accordance with subparagraphs (B) and (C).

''(B) FEDERAL FUNDS.—In this paragraph, the term 'Federal funds' means any Federal financial assistance provided, under this Act or any other Federal law, through a grant, contract, subsidy, loan, guarantee, insurance, or other means to a proprietary institution, including Federal financial assistance that is disbursed or delivered to an institution or on behalf of a student or to a student to be used to attend the institution, except that such term shall not include any monthly housing stipend provided under the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Program under chapter 33 of title 38, United States Code.

''(C) IMPLEMENTATION OF NON-FEDERAL REVENUE REQUIREMENT.—In making calculations under subparagraph (A), an institution of higher education shall—

''(i) use the cash basis of accounting;

''(ii) consider as revenue only those funds generated by the institution from—

''(I) tuition, fees, and other institutional charges for students enrolled in programs eligible for assistance under title IV;

''(II) activities conducted by the institution that are necessary for the education and training of the institution's students, if such activities are—

''(aa) conducted on campus or at a facility under the control of the institution;

''(bb) performed under the supervision of a member of the institution's faculty; and

''(cc) required to be performed by all students in a specific educational program at the institution; and

''(III) a contractual arrangement with a Federal agency for the purpose of providing job training to low-income individuals who are in need of such training;

''(iii) presume that any Federal funds that are disbursed or delivered to an institution on behalf of a student or directly to a student will be used to pay the student's tuition, fees, or other institutional charges, regardless of whether the institution credits such funds to the student's account or pays such funds directly to the student, except to the extent that the student's tuition, fees, or other institutional charges are satisfied by—

''(I) grant funds provided by an outside source that—

''(aa) has no affiliation with the institution; and

''(bb) shares no employees with the institution; and

''(II) institutional scholarships described in clause (v);

''(iv) include no loans made by an institution of higher education as revenue to the school, except for payments made by students on such loans;

''(v) include a scholarship provided by the institution—

''(I) only if the scholarship is in the form of monetary aid based upon the academic achievements or financial need of students, disbursed to qualified student recipients during each fiscal year from an established restricted account; and

''(II) only to the extent that funds in that account represent designated funds, or income earned on such funds, from an outside source that—

''(aa) has no affiliation with the institution; and

''(bb) shares no employees with the institution; and

''(vi) exclude from revenues—

''(I) the amount of funds the institution received under part C of title IV, unless the institution used those funds to pay a student's institutional charges;

''(II) the amount of funds the institution received under subpart 4 of part A of title IV;

''(III) the amount of funds provided by the institution as matching funds for any Federal program;

''(IV) the amount of Federal funds provided to the institution to pay institutional charges for a student that were refunded or returned; and

''(V) the amount charged for books, supplies, and equipment, unless the institution includes that amount as tuition, fees, or other institutional charges.

''(D) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than July 1, 2016, and by July 1 of each succeeding year, the Secretary shall submit to the authorizing committees a report that contains, for each proprietary institution of higher education that receives assistance under title IV and as provided in the audited financial statements submitted to the Secretary by each institution pursuant to the requirements of section 487(c)—

''(i) the amount and percentage of such institution's revenues received from Federal funds; and

''(ii) the amount and percentage of such institution's revenues received from other sources.''.

(b) REPEAL OF EXISTING REQUIREMENTS.—Section 487 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1094) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking paragraph (24);

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (25) through (29) as paragraphs (24) through (28), respectively;

(C) in paragraph (24)(A)(ii) (as redesignated by subparagraph (B)), by striking ''subsection (e)'' and inserting ''subsection (d)''; and

(D) in paragraph (26) (as redesignated by subparagraph (B)), by striking ''subsection (h)'' and inserting ''subsection (g)'';

(2) by striking subsection (d);

(3) by redesignating subsections (e) through (j) as subsections (d) through (i), respectively;

(4) in subsection (f)(1) (as redesignated by paragraph (3)), by striking ''subsection (e)(2)'' and inserting ''subsection (d)(2)''; and

(5) in subsection (g)(1) (as redesignated by paragraph (3)), by striking ''subsection (a)(27)'' in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) and inserting ''subsection (a)(26)''.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 152 (20 U.S.C. 1019a)—

(A) in subsection (a)(1)(A), by striking ''subsections (a)(27) and (h) of section 487'' and inserting ''subsections (a)(26) and (g) of section 487''; and

(B) in subsection (b)(1)(B)(i)(I), by striking ''section 487(e)'' and inserting ''section 487(d)'';

(2) in section 153(c)(3) (20 U.S.C. 1019b(c)(3)), by striking ''section 487(a)(25)'' each place the term appears and inserting ''section 487(a)(24)'';

(3) in section 496(c)(3)(A) (20 U.S.C. 1099b(c)(3)(A)), by striking ''section 487(f)'' and inserting ''section 487(e)''; and

(4) in section 498(k)(1) (20 U.S.C. 1099c(k)(1)), by striking ''section 487(f)'' and inserting ''section 487(e)''.

By Mrs. FISCHER (for herself, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. DAINES, and Mr. PETERS):

S. 2276. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to provide enhanced safety in pipeline transportation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I rise today along with my colleagues Senators FISCHER, BOOKER, and PETERS to introduce the Securing America's Future Energy: Protecting our Infrastructure of Pipelines and Enhancing Safety, SAFE PIPES, Act, reauthorizing the Pipeline and Hazardous Material Safety Administration, PHMSA. Safe and secure pipeline infrastructure is critical to our nation, and is especially important to Montanans—for economic opportunity and environmental protection.

We had a great bipartisan group of Senators working on this legislation. I

would like to thank Senator FISCHER for traveling to Billings, Montana to chair the first in a series of hearings on pipeline safety and coordinating efforts to write this important legislation. Additionally, I thank Senators BOOKER and PETERS for their work drafting this legislation.

In Montana, we have some of the country's most pristine wild spaces along with an abundance on natural resources. Montana produces approximately 30 million barrels of crude oil, 63 billion cubic feet of natural gas, and 42 million short tons of coal annually. We export 60 percent of this energy. The oil and gas industries support the employment of over 43,000 Montanans. Likewise, Montana's unspoiled mountains and streams is the main motivator for many visiting Montana. The tourism industry supports the employment of over 53,000 Montanans.

It is needless to say, but it is imperative that both jobs are protected. This legislation does just that, by improving pipeline inspection report turnaround times, increasing focus on pipeline river crossings, helping fill vacant inspector positions, facilitating communications between PHMSA and State agencies, and enabling PHMSA to conduct safety research with industry experts.

I look forward to continue my work, along with my colleagues, on enhancing pipeline safety, protecting our economic and environmental resources, and shepherding this legislation across the finish line.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 312—DESIGNATING THE WEEK BEGINNING NOVEMBER 8, 2015, AS ''NATIONAL PREGNANCY CENTER WEEK'' TO RECOGNIZE THE VITAL ROLE THAT COMMUNITY-SUPPORTED PREGNANCY CENTERS (ALSO KNOWN AS PREGNANCY CARE AND PREGNANCY RESOURCE CENTERS) PLAY IN SAVING LIVES AND SERVING WOMEN AND MEN FACED WITH DIFFICULT PREGNANCY DECISIONS

Mr. LEE (for himself, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. RISCH, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. HATCH, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. DAINES, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. COATS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. MORAN, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. SASSE, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ENZI, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. CRUZ) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 312

Whereas, for more than 100 years, young women facing unplanned pregnancies have found support from charitable organizations ranging from Catholic Charities and Jewish Maternity Homes to the Salvation Army;

Whereas many charitable organizations banded together on November 13, 1971, to form the first United States association of nonprofit organizations dedicated to rescuing as many lives as possible from abortion;

Whereas, as of 2013, there were approximately 2,500 pregnancy centers in the United States;

Whereas women in every part of the United States turn to pregnancy centers for help, hope, and healing;

Whereas pregnancy centers are local, nonprofit organizations that provide vital and compassionate support to women and men faced with difficult pregnancy decisions;

Whereas pregnancy centers reach more than 2,300,000 people each year through a combination of client services, including—

(1) pregnancy tests;

(2) ultrasound and medical services;

(3) options counseling and education; and

(4) parenting and childbirth classes;

Whereas, every day in the United States, pregnancy centers assist an average of 6,500 people, including women and men of all ages and backgrounds;

Whereas some pregnancy centers offer specific medical services, including—

(1) consultation with a licensed medical professional;

(2) limited ultrasound for pregnancy confirmation; and

(3) testing for sexually transmitted infections and diseases;

Whereas the National Institute of Family and Life Advocates—

(1) provides life-affirming pregnancy centers with legal counsel, education, and training;

(2) has assisted hundreds of pregnancy centers in becoming medical clinics; and

(3) represented nearly 1,000 pregnancy centers that operate as medical clinics today;

Whereas approximately 30,000 Americans volunteer at community-supported pregnancy centers each year, offering more than 5,700,000 hours of uncompensated work;

Whereas the approximately 1,000 medical pregnancy centers that provide limited ultrasound deliver limited ultrasound at little or no cost to women;

Whereas, in 2010, close to 230,000 ultrasounds were performed at pregnancy medical centers;

Whereas pregnancy centers understand that each pregnancy decision is an emotional and private choice, and compassionate staff and trained volunteers of pregnancy centers—

(1) provide each patient with educational materials; and

(2) offer each patient emotional support and care to help each patient through difficult situations;

Whereas close to 78 percent of pregnancy centers in the United States offer specialized parenting education—

(1) through direct services on premises; or

(2) in nearby churches, schools, or other locations;

Whereas nearly every pregnancy care and resource center provides clients with material support for pregnancy and infant care, which may include—

(1) maternity clothing;

(2) baby clothes and furniture;

(3) housing assistance; or

(4) nutritional counseling and resources;

Whereas pregnancy centers—

(1) do not discriminate based on age, race, nationality, creed, religious affiliation, disability, or arbitrary circumstances; and

(2) take special care to provide help to underserved minority populations;

Whereas pregnancy centers have committed to engaging fathers so that they can acquire the skills necessary to become involved and responsible fathers;

Whereas Care Net affiliated pregnancy centers—

(1) have saved more than 462,000 babies since 2008; and

(2) saved 73,000 babies in 2014 alone;

Whereas Heartbeat International reports that Heartbeat International affiliated pregnancy centers rescue 160,000 babies from the risk of abortion each year;

Whereas, in the last 7 years, 8 of 10 women considering abortion when they entered a Care Net affiliated pregnancy care and resource center ended up choosing life;

Whereas, in the last 7 years, Care Net affiliated pregnancy centers—

(1) provided 698,649 free ultrasound scans;

(2) provided parenting support and education to 828,190 individuals;

(3) provided material resources to more than 1,200,000 individuals; and

(4) administered 2,100,000 pregnancy tests;

Whereas the 24-hour Option Line of Heartbeat International—

(1) helps carry out a mission of reaching and rescuing as many lives as possible around the world through an effective network of life-affirming pregnancy help centers; and

(2) answers questions by phone, text, email, or chat before connecting an individual with the local pregnancy help organization of the individual where the individual will receive 1-on-1, compassionate, caring support;

Whereas, in 2014 Heartbeat International received their 2,000,000th contact through the Option Line;

Whereas the Care Net Pregnancy Decision Line is the only national hotline that provides immediate pregnancy decision coaching by highly trained coaches;

Whereas Heartbeat International reports the existence of 413 maternity homes in the United States;

Whereas, in 2008, Care Net, Heartbeat International, the National Institute of Family and Life Advocates, and other groups issued a statement entitled ''Our Commitment of Care and Competence'', which—

(1) addresses issues including—

(A) scientific and medical accuracy;

(B) truth in advertising;

(C) compassion;

(D) nondiscrimination;

(E) patient confidentiality;

(F) staff training; and

(G) a consistent life ethic; and

(2) expands the determination of the pregnancy help movement to comply with applicable legal requirements regarding—

(A) employment;

(B) fundraising;

(C) financial management;

(D) taxation;

(E) medical licensure; and

(F) operation standards; and

Whereas less than 10 percent of the income of pregnancy centers in the United States derives from governmental sources, which ensures that pregnancy centers—

(1) minimize burdens on each taxpayer; and

(2) engage local communities to provide sustainable support: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week beginning November 8, 2015, as ''National Pregnancy Center Week'';

(2) supports the important work of pregnancy centers across the United States;

(3) appreciates and recognizes the thousands of volunteers and staff of pregnancy centers in the United States who give millions of hours of service each year to women and men who are faced with difficult pregnancy decisions; and

(4) recognizes the importance of—

(A) protecting life; and

(B) assisting women and men in need as they bring children into the world.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2791. Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. CRUZ) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2763 proposed by Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. MIKULSKI) to the bill H.R. 2029, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2792. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2763 proposed by Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. MIKULSKI) to the bill H.R. 2029, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2793. Ms. BALDWIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2763 proposed by Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. MIKULSKI) to the bill H.R. 2029, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2794. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2763 proposed by Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. MIKULSKI) to the bill H.R. 2029, supra.

SA 2795. Mr. BENNET submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2763 proposed by Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. MIKULSKI) to the bill H.R. 2029, supra.

SA 2796. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution H. Con. Res. 90, directing the Secretary of the Senate to make a technical correction in the enrollment of S. 1356.

SA 2797. Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Mrs. MCCASKILL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2763 proposed by Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. MIKULSKI) to the bill H.R. 2029, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2798. Mr. TESTER (for Mrs. BOXER) proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2763 proposed by Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. MIKULSKI) to the bill H.R. 2029, supra.

SA 2799. Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. ROUNDS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2763 proposed by Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. MIKULSKI) to the bill H.R. 2029, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2800. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2763 proposed by Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. MIKULSKI) to the bill H.R. 2029, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2801. Mr. TESTER (for Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. TILLIS)) proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2763 proposed by Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. MIKULSKI) to the bill H.R. 2029, supra.

SA 2802. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2763 proposed by Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. MIKULSKI) to the bill H.R. 2029, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2803. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2763 proposed by Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. MIKULSKI) to the bill H.R. 2029, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2804. Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. LEAHY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1356, to clarify that certain provisions of the Border Patrol Agent Pay Reform Act of 2014 will not take effect until after the Director of the Office of Personnel Management promulgates and makes effective regulations relating to such provisions; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2805. Mr. THUNE (for Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. NELSON, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. PETERS, Mr. GARDNER, and Mrs. MURRAY)) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. Thune to the bill H.R. 2262, to facilitate a pro-growth environment for the developing commercial space industry by encouraging private sector investment and creating more stable and predictable regulatory conditions, and for other purposes.

SA 2806. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for Mr. ISAKSON) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1203, to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the processing by the Department of Veterans Affairs of claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

SA 2807. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for Mr. BLUMENTHAL) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 302, expressing the sense of the Senate in support of Israel and in condemnation of Palestinian terror attacks.

SA 2808. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for Mr. BLUMENTHAL) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 302, supra.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2791. Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. CRUZ) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2763 proposed by Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. MIKULSKI) to the bill H.R. 2029, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. (a) Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that includes, with respect to the South Texas Veterans Health Care System of the Department of Veterans Affairs, the following:

(1) A description of the nature and scope of any foreseeable increase in wait times for medical appointments.

(2) An assessment of whether a shortage of health care providers is the primary cause of any such increase in wait times.

(3) An identification of any other causes of any such increase in wait times.

(4) A description of any action taken by the Department to correct any such increase in wait times.

(5) An assessment of any issues relating to access to care.

(6) A plan for how the Secretary will remedy any such increase in wait times, including a detailed description of steps to be taken and a timeline for completion.

(b) In this section, the term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means—

(1) the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives.

SA 2792. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2763 proposed by Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. MIKULSKI) to the bill H.R. 2029, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2_____. EXPANSION OF CHOICE PROGRAM OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) ELIMINATION OF SUNSET.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 101 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–146; 38 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended—

(A) by striking subsection (p); and

(B) by redesignating subsections (q), (r), (s), and (t) as subsections (p), (q), (r), and (s), respectively.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Such section is amended—

(A) in subsection (i)(2), by striking ''during the period in which the Secretary is authorized to carry out this section pursuant to subsection (p)''; and

(B) in subsection (p)(2), as redesignated by paragraph (1)(B), by striking subparagraph (F).

(b) EXPANSION OF ELIGIBILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (b) of such section is amended to read as follows:

''(b) ELIGIBLE VETERANS.—A veteran is an eligible veteran for purposes of this section if the veteran is enrolled in the patient enrollment system of the Department of Veterans Affairs established and operated under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code, including any such veteran who has not received hospital care or medical services from the Department and has contacted the Department seeking an initial appointment from the Department for the receipt of such care or services.''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Such section is amended—

(A) in subsection (c)(1)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''In the case of an eligible veteran described in subsection (b)(2)(A), the Secretary shall, at the election of the eligible veteran'' and inserting ''The Secretary shall, at the election of an eligible veteran''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''described in such subsection'' and inserting ''of the Veterans Health Administration'';

(B) in subsection (f)(1), by striking ''subsection (b)(1)'' and inserting ''subsection (b)'';

(C) in subsection (g), by striking paragraph (3); and

(D) in subsection (p)(2)(A), as redesignated by subsection (a)(1)(B), by striking '', disaggregated by—'' and all that follows through ''subsection (b)(2)(D)''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to hospital care and medical services furnished under section 101 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–146; 38 U.S.C. 1701 note) on and after the date that is 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 2793. Ms. BALDWIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2763 proposed by Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. MIKULSKI) to the bill H.R. 2029, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal

year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I, add the following:

SEC. ____. (a) Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall establish a central clearinghouse within the Department of Defense regarding physical security enhancements at military facilities to reduce inefficiency and promote the sharing of best practices among the military services and Department of Defense components.

(b) Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations a report—

(1) describing the establishment and use of the clearinghouse described in subsection (a);

(2) describing completed and planned actions by the Department of Defense, the military services, the combatant commands, and the National Guard Bureau to enhance physical security at their installations, including recruiting centers and reserve component facilities; and

(3) identifying funding requirements for such actions.

SA 2794. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2763 proposed by Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. MIKULSKI) to the bill H.R. 2029, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2____. (a) The amount appropriated or otherwise made available by this title under the heading ''MEDICAL AND PROSTHETIC RESEARCH'' under the heading ''VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION'' is hereby increased by $8,922,462.

(b) The amount appropriated or otherwise made available by this title for fiscal year 2016 under the heading ''MEDICAL SERVICES'' under the heading ''VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION'' is hereby reduced by $8,922,462.

SA 2795. Mr. BENNET submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2763 proposed by Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. MIKULSKI) to the bill H.R. 2029, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2____. (a) Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, enter into a contract with an independent third party described in subsection (b) to carry out a study on the impact of participation in combat during service in the Armed Forces on suicides and other mental health issues among members of the Armed Forces and veterans.

(b) An independent third party described in this subsection is an independent third party that has appropriate credentials to access information in the possession of the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs that is necessary to carry out the study required under subsection (a).

SA 2796. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution H. Con. Res. 90, directing the Secretary of the Senate to make a technical correction in the enrollment of S. 1356; as follows:

Strike the matter following the resolving clause and insert the following:

That in the enrollment of the bill S. 1356, the Secretary of the Senate shall make the following corrections:

(1) Amend the title so as to read: ''An Act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.''.

(2) In the table of contents in section 2, in the item relating to section 1242, amend ''Ukrainian Republic'' so as to read ''Ukraine''.

(3) In the table of contents for title XII before section 1201, in the item relating to section 1242, amend ''Ukrainian Republic'' so as to read ''Ukraine''.

(4) In the section heading of section 1242, amend ''**UKRANIAN REPUBLIC**'' so as to read ''**UKRAINE**''.

(5) In section 1242, amend ''the Ukrainian Republic'' so as to read ''Ukraine'' each place it appears in subsections (a)(1) and (b).

(6) Strike section 4201 and insert the following:

''SEC. 4201. RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST, AND EVALUATION.

''SEC. 4201. RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST, AND EVALUATION
(In Thousands of Dollars)

Line	Program Element	Item	FY 2016 Request	Agreement Authorized
		RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST & EVAL, ARMY		
		BASIC RESEARCH		
001	0601101A	IN-HOUSE LABORATORY INDEPENDENT RESEARCH	13,018	13,018
002	0601102A	DEFENSE RESEARCH SCIENCES	239,118	259,118
		Basic research program increase		[20,000]
003	0601103A	UNIVERSITY RESEARCH INITIATIVES	72,603	72,603
004	0601104A	UNIVERSITY AND INDUSTRY RESEARCH CENTERS	100,340	100,340
		SUBTOTAL BASIC RESEARCH	**425,079**	**445,079**
		APPLIED RESEARCH		
005	0602105A	MATERIALS TECHNOLOGY	28,314	28,314
006	0602120A	SENSORS AND ELECTRONIC SURVIVABILITY	38,374	38,374
007	0602122A	TRACTOR HIP	6,879	6,879
008	0602211A	AVIATION TECHNOLOGY	56,884	56,884
009	0602270A	ELECTRONIC WARFARE TECHNOLOGY	19,243	19,243
010	0602303A	MISSILE TECHNOLOGY	45,053	53,053
		A2/AD Anti-Ship Missile Study		[8,000]
011	0602307A	ADVANCED WEAPONS TECHNOLOGY	29,428	29,428
012	0602308A	ADVANCED CONCEPTS AND SIMULATION	27,862	27,862
013	0602601A	COMBAT VEHICLE AND AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGY	68,839	68,839
014	0602618A	BALLISTICS TECHNOLOGY	92,801	92,801
015	0602622A	CHEMICAL, SMOKE AND EQUIPMENT DEFEATING TECHNOLOGY	3,866	3,866
016	0602623A	JOINT SERVICE SMALL ARMS PROGRAM	5,487	5,487
017	0602624A	WEAPONS AND MUNITIONS TECHNOLOGY	48,340	48,340
018	0602705A	ELECTRONICS AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES	55,301	55,301
019	0602709A	NIGHT VISION TECHNOLOGY	33,807	33,807
020	0602712A	COUNTERMINE SYSTEMS	25,068	25,068
021	0602716A	HUMAN FACTORS ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY	23,681	23,681
022	0602720A	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY TECHNOLOGY	20,850	20,850
023	0602782A	COMMAND, CONTROL, COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY	36,160	36,160
024	0602783A	COMPUTER AND SOFTWARE TECHNOLOGY	12,656	12,656
025	0602784A	MILITARY ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY	63,409	63,409
026	0602785A	MANPOWER/PERSONNEL/TRAINING TECHNOLOGY	24,735	24,735
027	0602786A	WARFIGHTER TECHNOLOGY	35,795	35,795
028	0602787A	MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY	76,853	76,853
		SUBTOTAL APPLIED RESEARCH	**879,685**	**887,685**
		ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT		
029	0603001A	WARFIGHTER ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY	46,973	46,973

"SEC. 4201. RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST, AND EVALUATION
(In Thousands of Dollars)

Line	Program Element	Item	FY 2016 Request	Agreement Authorized
030	0603002A	MEDICAL ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY	69,584	69,584
031	0603003A	AVIATION ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY	89,736	89,736
032	0603004A	WEAPONS AND MUNITIONS ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY	57,663	57,663
033	0603005A	COMBAT VEHICLE AND AUTOMOTIVE ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY	113,071	113,071
034	0603006A	SPACE APPLICATION ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY	5,554	5,554
035	0603007A	MANPOWER, PERSONNEL AND TRAINING ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY	12,636	12,636
037	0603009A	TRACTOR HIKE	7,502	7,502
038	0603015A	NEXT GENERATION TRAINING & SIMULATION SYSTEMS	17,425	17,425
039	0603020A	TRACTOR ROSE	11,912	11,912
040	0603125A	COMBATING TERRORISM—TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT	27,520	27,520
041	0603130A	TRACTOR NAIL	2,381	2,381
042	0603131A	TRACTOR EGGS	2,431	2,431
043	0603270A	ELECTRONIC WARFARE TECHNOLOGY	26,874	26,874
044	0603313A	MISSILE AND ROCKET ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY	49,449	49,449
045	0603322A	TRACTOR CAGE	10,999	10,999
046	0603461A	HIGH PERFORMANCE COMPUTING MODERNIZATION PROGRAM	177,159	177,159
047	0603606A	LANDMINE WARFARE AND BARRIER ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY	13,993	13,993
048	0603607A	JOINT SERVICE SMALL ARMS PROGRAM	5,105	5,105
049	0603710A	NIGHT VISION ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY	40,929	40,929
050	0603728A	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY TECHNOLOGY DEMONSTRATIONS	10,727	10,727
051	0603734A	MILITARY ENGINEERING ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY	20,145	20,145
052	0603772A	ADVANCED TACTICAL COMPUTER SCIENCE AND SENSOR TECHNOLOGY	38,163	38,163
053	0603794A	C3 ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY	37,816	37,816
		SUBTOTAL ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT	**895,747**	**895,747**
		ADVANCED COMPONENT DEVELOPMENT & PROTOTYPES		
054	0603305A	ARMY MISSLE DEFENSE SYSTEMS INTEGRATION	10,347	10,347
055	0603308A	ARMY SPACE SYSTEMS INTEGRATION	25,061	25,061
056	0603619A	LANDMINE WARFARE AND BARRIER—ADV DEV	49,636	49,636
057	0603627A	SMOKE, OBSCURANT AND TARGET DEFEATING SYS-ADV DEV	13,426	13,426
058	0603639A	TANK AND MEDIUM CALIBER AMMUNITION	46,749	46,749
060	0603747A	SOLDIER SUPPORT AND SURVIVABILITY	6,258	6,258
061	0603766A	TACTICAL ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM—ADV DEV	13,472	13,472
062	0603774A	NIGHT VISION SYSTEMS ADVANCED DEVELOPMENT	7,292	7,292
063	0603779A	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY TECHNOLOGY—DEM/VAL	8,813	8,813
065	0603790A	NATO RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT	6,075	6,075
067	0603804A	LOGISTICS AND ENGINEER EQUIPMENT—ADV DEV	21,233	21,233
068	0603807A	MEDICAL SYSTEMS—ADV DEV	31,962	31,962
069	0603827A	SOLDIER SYSTEMS—ADVANCED DEVELOPMENT	22,194	22,194
071	0604100A	ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES	9,805	9,805
072	0604115A	TECHNOLOGY MATURATION INITIATIVES	40,917	40,917
073	0604120A	ASSURED POSITIONING, NAVIGATION AND TIMING (PNT)	30,058	30,058
074	0604319A	INDIRECT FIRE PROTECTION CAPABILITY INCREMENT 2–INTERCEPT (IFPC2)	155,361	155,361
		SUBTOTAL ADVANCED COMPONENT DEVELOPMENT & PROTOTYPES	**498,659**	**498,659**
		SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT & DEMONSTRATION		
076	0604201A	AIRCRAFT AVIONICS	12,939	12,939
078	0604270A	ELECTRONIC WARFARE DEVELOPMENT	18,843	18,843
079	0604280A	JOINT TACTICAL RADIO	9,861	9,861
080	0604290A	MID-TIER NETWORKING VEHICULAR RADIO (MNVR)	8,763	8,763
081	0604321A	ALL SOURCE ANALYSIS SYSTEM	4,309	4,309
082	0604328A	TRACTOR CAGE	15,138	15,138
083	0604601A	INFANTRY SUPPORT WEAPONS	74,128	80,628
		Army requested realignment		[1,500]
		Soldier Enhancement Program		[5,000]
085	0604611A	JAVELIN	3,945	3,945
087	0604633A	AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL	10,076	10,076
088	0604641A	TACTICAL UNMANNED GROUND VEHICLE (TUGV)	40,374	40,374
089	0604710A	NIGHT VISION SYSTEMS—ENG DEV	67,582	67,582
090	0604713A	COMBAT FEEDING, CLOTHING, AND EQUIPMENT	1,763	1,763
091	0604715A	NON-SYSTEM TRAINING DEVICES—ENG DEV	27,155	27,155
092	0604741A	AIR DEFENSE COMMAND, CONTROL AND INTELLIGENCE—ENG DEV	24,569	24,569
093	0604742A	CONSTRUCTIVE SIMULATION SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT	23,364	23,364
094	0604746A	AUTOMATIC TEST EQUIPMENT DEVELOPMENT	8,960	8,960
095	0604760A	DISTRIBUTIVE INTERACTIVE SIMULATIONS (DIS)—ENG DEV	9,138	9,138
096	0604780A	COMBINED ARMS TACTICAL TRAINER (CATT) CORE	21,622	21,622
097	0604798A	BRIGADE ANALYSIS, INTEGRATION AND EVALUATION	99,242	99,242
098	0604802A	WEAPONS AND MUNITIONS—ENG DEV	21,379	21,379
099	0604804A	LOGISTICS AND ENGINEER EQUIPMENT—ENG DEV	48,339	48,339
100	0604805A	COMMAND, CONTROL, COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS—ENG DEV	2,726	2,726
101	0604807A	MEDICAL MATERIEL/MEDICAL BIOLOGICAL DEFENSE EQUIPMENT—ENG DEV	45,412	45,412
102	0604808A	LANDMINE WARFARE/BARRIER—ENG DEV	55,215	55,215
104	0604818A	ARMY TACTICAL COMMAND & CONTROL HARDWARE & SOFTWARE	163,643	163,643
105	0604820A	RADAR DEVELOPMENT	12,309	12,309
106	0604822A	GENERAL FUND ENTERPRISE BUSINESS SYSTEM (GFEBS)	15,700	15,700
107	0604823A	FIREFINDER	6,243	6,243
108	0604827A	SOLDIER SYSTEMS—WARRIOR DEM/VAL	18,776	18,776
109	0604854A	ARTILLERY SYSTEMS—EMD	1,953	1,953
110	0605013A	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT	67,358	67,358
111	0605018A	INTEGRATED PERSONNEL AND PAY SYSTEM-ARMY (IPPS-A)	136,011	121,011
		Restructure program		[–15,000]
112	0605028A	ARMORED MULTI-PURPOSE VEHICLE (AMPV)	230,210	230,210

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113	0605030A	JOINT TACTICAL NETWORK CENTER (JTNC)	13,357	13,357
114	0605031A	JOINT TACTICAL NETWORK (JTN)	18,055	18,055
115	0605032A	TRACTOR TIRE	5,677	5,677
116	0605035A	COMMON INFRARED COUNTERMEASURES (CIRCM)	77,570	101,570
		Apache Survivability Enhancements—Army Unfunded Requirement		[24,000]
117	0605051A	AIRCRAFT SURVIVABILITY DEVELOPMENT	18,112	78,112
		Apache Survivability Enhancements—Army Unfunded Requirement		[60,000]
118	0605350A	WIN-T INCREMENT 3—FULL NETWORKING	39,700	39,700
119	0605380A	AMF JOINT TACTICAL RADIO SYSTEM (JTRS)	12,987	12,987
120	0605450A	JOINT AIR-TO-GROUND MISSILE (JAGM)	88,866	74,966
		EMD contract delays		[–13,900]
121	0605456A	PAC–3/MSE MISSILE	2,272	2,272
122	0605457A	ARMY INTEGRATED AIR AND MISSILE DEFENSE (AIAMD)	214,099	214,099
123	0605625A	MANNED GROUND VEHICLE	49,247	39,247
		Funding ahead of need		[–10,000]
124	0605626A	AERIAL COMMON SENSOR	2	2
125	0605766A	NATIONAL CAPABILITIES INTEGRATION (MIP)	10,599	10,599
126	0605812A	JOINT LIGHT TACTICAL VEHICLE (JLTV) ENGINEERING AND MANUFACTURING DEVELOPMENT PH.	32,486	32,486
127	0605830A	AVIATION GROUND SUPPORT EQUIPMENT	8,880	8,880
128	0210609A	PALADIN INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT (PIM)	152,288	152,288
129	0303032A	TROJAN—RH12	5,022	5,022
130	0304270A	ELECTRONIC WARFARE DEVELOPMENT	12,686	12,686
		SUBTOTAL SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT & DEMONSTRATION	**2,068,950**	**2,120,550**
		RDT&E MANAGEMENT SUPPORT		
131	0604256A	THREAT SIMULATOR DEVELOPMENT	20,035	20,035
132	0604258A	TARGET SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT	16,684	16,684
133	0604759A	MAJOR T&E INVESTMENT	62,580	62,580
134	0605103A	RAND ARROYO CENTER	20,853	20,853
135	0605301A	ARMY KWAJALEIN ATOLL	205,145	205,145
136	0605326A	CONCEPTS EXPERIMENTATION PROGRAM	19,430	19,430
138	0605601A	ARMY TEST RANGES AND FACILITIES	277,646	277,646
139	0605602A	ARMY TECHNICAL TEST INSTRUMENTATION AND TARGETS	51,550	51,550
140	0605604A	SURVIVABILITY/LETHALITY ANALYSIS	33,246	33,246
141	0605606A	AIRCRAFT CERTIFICATION	4,760	4,760
142	0605702A	METEOROLOGICAL SUPPORT TO RDT&E ACTIVITIES	8,303	8,303
143	0605706A	MATERIEL SYSTEMS ANALYSIS	20,403	20,403
144	0605709A	EXPLOITATION OF FOREIGN ITEMS	10,396	10,396
145	0605712A	SUPPORT OF OPERATIONAL TESTING	49,337	49,337
146	0605716A	ARMY EVALUATION CENTER	52,694	52,694
147	0605718A	ARMY MODELING & SIM X-CMD COLLABORATION & INTEG	938	938
148	0605801A	PROGRAMWIDE ACTIVITIES	60,319	60,319
149	0605803A	TECHNICAL INFORMATION ACTIVITIES	28,478	28,478
150	0605805A	MUNITIONS STANDARDIZATION, EFFECTIVENESS AND SAFETY	32,604	24,604
		Program reduction		[–8,000]
151	0605857A	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY TECHNOLOGY MGMT SUPPORT	3,186	3,186
152	0605898A	MANAGEMENT HQ—R&D	48,955	48,955
		SUBTOTAL RDT&E MANAGEMENT SUPPORT	**1,027,542**	**1,019,542**
		OPERATIONAL SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT		
154	0603778A	MLRS PRODUCT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM	18,397	18,397
155	0603813A	TRACTOR PULL	9,461	9,461
156	0607131A	WEAPONS AND MUNITIONS PRODUCT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS	4,945	4,945
157	0607133A	TRACTOR SMOKE	7,569	7,569
158	0607135A	APACHE PRODUCT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM	69,862	69,862
159	0607136A	BLACKHAWK PRODUCT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM	66,653	66,653
160	0607137A	CHINOOK PRODUCT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM	37,407	37,407
161	0607138A	FIXED WING PRODUCT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM	1,151	1,151
162	0607139A	IMPROVED TURBINE ENGINE PROGRAM	51,164	51,164
163	0607140A	EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES FROM NIE	2,481	2,481
164	0607141A	LOGISTICS AUTOMATION	1,673	1,673
166	0607665A	FAMILY OF BIOMETRICS	13,237	13,237
167	0607865A	PATRIOT PRODUCT IMPROVEMENT	105,816	105,816
169	0202429A	AEROSTAT JOINT PROJECT—COCOM EXERCISE	40,565	40,565
171	0203728A	JOINT AUTOMATED DEEP OPERATION COORDINATION SYSTEM (JADOCS)	35,719	35,719
172	0203735A	COMBAT VEHICLE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS	257,167	354,167
		Stryker Lethality Upgrades		[97,000]
173	0203740A	MANEUVER CONTROL SYSTEM	15,445	15,445
175	0203752A	AIRCRAFT ENGINE COMPONENT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM	364	364
176	0203758A	DIGITIZATION	4,361	4,361
177	0203801A	MISSILE/AIR DEFENSE PRODUCT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM	3,154	3,154
178	0203802A	OTHER MISSILE PRODUCT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS	35,951	35,951
179	0203808A	TRACTOR CARD	34,686	34,686
180	0205402A	INTEGRATED BASE DEFENSE—OPERATIONAL SYSTEM DEV	10,750	10,750
181	0205410A	MATERIALS HANDLING EQUIPMENT	402	402
183	0205456A	LOWER TIER AIR AND MISSILE DEFENSE (AMD) SYSTEM	64,159	64,159
184	0205778A	GUIDED MULTIPLE-LAUNCH ROCKET SYSTEM (GMLRS)	17,527	17,527
185	0208053A	JOINT TACTICAL GROUND SYSTEM	20,515	20,515
187	0303028A	SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES	12,368	12,368
188	0303140A	INFORMATION SYSTEMS SECURITY PROGRAM	31,154	31,154
189	0303141A	GLOBAL COMBAT SUPPORT SYSTEM	12,274	12,274

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190	0303142A	SATCOM GROUND ENVIRONMENT (SPACE)	9,355	9,355
191	0303150A	WWMCCS/GLOBAL COMMAND AND CONTROL SYSTEM	7,053	7,053
193	0305179A	INTEGRATED BROADCAST SERVICE (IBS)	750	750
194	0305204A	TACTICAL UNMANNED AERIAL VEHICLES	13,225	13,225
195	0305206A	AIRBORNE RECONNAISSANCE SYSTEMS	22,870	22,870
196	0305208A	DISTRIBUTED COMMON GROUND/SURFACE SYSTEMS	25,592	25,592
199	0305233A	RQ–7 UAV	7,297	7,297
201	0310349A	WIN-T INCREMENT 2—INITIAL NETWORKING	3,800	3,800
202	0708045A	END ITEM INDUSTRIAL PREPAREDNESS ACTIVITIES	48,442	48,442
202A	9999999999	CLASSIFIED PROGRAMS	4,536	4,536
		SUBTOTAL OPERATIONAL SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT	**1,129,297**	**1,226,297**
		TOTAL RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST & EVAL, ARMY	**6,924,959**	**7,093,559**
		RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST & EVAL, NAVY		
		BASIC RESEARCH		
001	0601103N	UNIVERSITY RESEARCH INITIATIVES	116,196	125,196
		Defense University Research Instumentation Program increase		[9,000]
002	0601152N	IN-HOUSE LABORATORY INDEPENDENT RESEARCH	19,126	19,126
003	0601153N	DEFENSE RESEARCH SCIENCES	451,606	479,106
		Basic research program increase		[27,500]
		SUBTOTAL BASIC RESEARCH	**586,928**	**623,428**
		APPLIED RESEARCH		
004	0602114N	POWER PROJECTION APPLIED RESEARCH	68,723	68,723
005	0602123N	FORCE PROTECTION APPLIED RESEARCH	154,963	154,963
006	0602131M	MARINE CORPS LANDING FORCE TECHNOLOGY	49,001	49,001
007	0602235N	COMMON PICTURE APPLIED RESEARCH	42,551	42,551
008	0602236N	WARFIGHTER SUSTAINMENT APPLIED RESEARCH	45,056	45,056
009	0602271N	ELECTROMAGNETIC SYSTEMS APPLIED RESEARCH	115,051	115,051
010	0602435N	OCEAN WARFIGHTING ENVIRONMENT APPLIED RESEARCH	42,252	62,252
		Service Life Extension for the AGOR Ship		[20,000]
011	0602651M	JOINT NON-LETHAL WEAPONS APPLIED RESEARCH	6,119	6,119
012	0602747N	UNDERSEA WARFARE APPLIED RESEARCH	123,750	142,350
		Accelerate undersea warfare research		[18,600]
013	0602750N	FUTURE NAVAL CAPABILITIES APPLIED RESEARCH	179,686	179,686
014	0602782N	MINE AND EXPEDITIONARY WARFARE APPLIED RESEARCH	37,418	37,418
		SUBTOTAL APPLIED RESEARCH	**864,570**	**903,170**
		ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT		
015	0603114N	POWER PROJECTION ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY	37,093	37,093
016	0603123N	FORCE PROTECTION ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY	38,044	38,044
017	0603271N	ELECTROMAGNETIC SYSTEMS ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY	34,899	34,899
018	0603640M	USMC ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY DEMONSTRATION (ATD)	137,562	137,562
019	0603651M	JOINT NON-LETHAL WEAPONS TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT	12,745	12,745
020	0603673N	FUTURE NAVAL CAPABILITIES ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT	258,860	258,860
021	0603680N	MANUFACTURING TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM	57,074	57,074
022	0603729N	WARFIGHTER PROTECTION ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY	4,807	4,807
023	0603747N	UNDERSEA WARFARE ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY	13,748	13,748
024	0603758N	NAVY WARFIGHTING EXPERIMENTS AND DEMONSTRATIONS	66,041	66,041
025	0603782N	MINE AND EXPEDITIONARY WARFARE ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY	1,991	1,991
		SUBTOTAL ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT	**662,864**	**662,864**
		ADVANCED COMPONENT DEVELOPMENT & PROTOTYPES		
026	0603207N	AIR/OCEAN TACTICAL APPLICATIONS	41,832	41,832
027	0603216N	AVIATION SURVIVABILITY	5,404	5,404
028	0603237N	DEPLOYABLE JOINT COMMAND AND CONTROL	3,086	3,086
029	0603251N	AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS	11,643	11,643
030	0603254N	ASW SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT	5,555	5,555
031	0603261N	TACTICAL AIRBORNE RECONNAISSANCE	3,087	3,087
032	0603382N	ADVANCED COMBAT SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGY	1,636	1,636
033	0603502N	SURFACE AND SHALLOW WATER MINE COUNTERMEASURES	118,588	113,588
		LDUUV development growth		[–5,000]
034	0603506N	SURFACE SHIP TORPEDO DEFENSE	77,385	77,385
035	0603512N	CARRIER SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT	8,348	8,348
036	0603525N	PILOT FISH	123,246	123,246
037	0603527N	RETRACT LARCH	28,819	28,819
038	0603536N	RETRACT JUNIPER	112,678	112,678
039	0603542N	RADIOLOGICAL CONTROL	710	710
040	0603553N	SURFACE ASW	1,096	1,096
041	0603561N	ADVANCED SUBMARINE SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT	87,160	93,360
		Accelerate unmanned underwater vehicle development		[10,000]
		Universal launch and recovery module unfunded outyear tail		[–3,800]
042	0603562N	SUBMARINE TACTICAL WARFARE SYSTEMS	10,371	10,371
043	0603563N	SHIP CONCEPT ADVANCED DESIGN	11,888	11,888
044	0603564N	SHIP PRELIMINARY DESIGN & FEASIBILITY STUDIES	4,332	4,332
045	0603570N	ADVANCED NUCLEAR POWER SYSTEMS	482,040	482,040
046	0603573N	ADVANCED SURFACE MACHINERY SYSTEMS	25,904	25,904
047	0603576N	CHALK EAGLE	511,802	511,802
048	0603581N	LITTORAL COMBAT SHIP (LCS)	118,416	118,416
049	0603582N	COMBAT SYSTEM INTEGRATION	35,901	35,901
050	0603595N	OHIO REPLACEMENT	971,393	971,393

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051	0603596N	LCS MISSION MODULES	206,149	206,149
052	0603597N	AUTOMATED TEST AND RE-TEST (ATRT)	8,000	8,000
053	0603609N	CONVENTIONAL MUNITIONS	7,678	7,678
054	0603611M	MARINE CORPS ASSAULT VEHICLES	219,082	219,082
055	0603635M	MARINE CORPS GROUND COMBAT/SUPPORT SYSTEM	623	623
056	0603654N	JOINT SERVICE EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE DEVELOPMENT	18,260	18,260
057	0603658N	COOPERATIVE ENGAGEMENT	76,247	76,247
058	0603713N	OCEAN ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT	4,520	4,520
059	0603721N	ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	20,711	20,711
060	0603724N	NAVY ENERGY PROGRAM	47,761	47,761
061	0603725N	FACILITIES IMPROVEMENT	5,226	5,226
062	0603734N	CHALK CORAL	182,771	182,771
063	0603739N	NAVY LOGISTIC PRODUCTIVITY	3,866	3,866
064	0603746N	RETRACT MAPLE	360,065	360,065
065	0603748N	LINK PLUMERIA	237,416	237,416
066	0603751N	RETRACT ELM	37,944	37,944
067	0603764N	LINK EVERGREEN	47,312	47,312
068	0603787N	SPECIAL PROCESSES	17,408	17,408
069	0603790N	NATO RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT	9,359	9,359
070	0603795N	LAND ATTACK TECHNOLOGY	887	887
071	0603851M	JOINT NON-LETHAL WEAPONS TESTING	29,448	29,448
072	0603860N	JOINT PRECISION APPROACH AND LANDING SYSTEMS—DEM/VAL	91,479	91,479
073	0603925N	DIRECTED ENERGY AND ELECTRIC WEAPON SYSTEMS	67,360	67,360
074	0604112N	GERALD R. FORD CLASS NUCLEAR AIRCRAFT CARRIER (CVN 78—80)	48,105	127,205
		Full ship shock trials for CVN–78		[79,100]
075	0604122N	REMOTE MINEHUNTING SYSTEM (RMS)	20,089	20,089
076	0604272N	TACTICAL AIR DIRECTIONAL INFRARED COUNTERMEASURES (TADIRCM)	18,969	18,969
077	0604279N	ASE SELF-PROTECTION OPTIMIZATION	7,874	7,874
078	0604292N	MH-XX	5,298	5,298
079	0604454N	LX (R)	46,486	75,486
		LX(R) Acceleration		[29,000]
080	0604653N	JOINT COUNTER RADIO CONTROLLED IED ELECTRONIC WARFARE (JCREW)	3,817	3,817
081	0604659N	PRECISION STRIKE WEAPONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM	9,595	9,595
082	0604707N	SPACE AND ELECTRONIC WARFARE (SEW) ARCHITECTURE/ENGINEERING SUPPORT	29,581	25,246
		Maritime concept generation and development growth		[–4,335]
083	0604786N	OFFENSIVE ANTI-SURFACE WARFARE WEAPON DEVELOPMENT	285,849	285,849
084	0605812M	JOINT LIGHT TACTICAL VEHICLE (JLTV) ENGINEERING AND MANUFACTURING DEVELOPMENT PH.	36,656	36,656
085	0303354N	ASW SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT—MIP	9,835	9,835
086	0304270N	ELECTRONIC WARFARE DEVELOPMENT—MIP	580	580
		SUBTOTAL ADVANCED COMPONENT DEVELOPMENT & PROTOTYPES	**5,024,626**	**5,129,591**
		SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT & DEMONSTRATION		
087	0603208N	TRAINING SYSTEM AIRCRAFT	21,708	21,708
088	0604212N	OTHER HELO DEVELOPMENT	11,101	11,101
089	0604214N	AV–8B AIRCRAFT—ENG DEV	39,878	39,878
090	0604215N	STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT	53,059	53,059
091	0604216N	MULTI-MISSION HELICOPTER UPGRADE DEVELOPMENT	21,358	21,358
092	0604218N	AIR/OCEAN EQUIPMENT ENGINEERING	4,515	4,515
093	0604221N	P–3 MODERNIZATION PROGRAM	1,514	1,514
094	0604230N	WARFARE SUPPORT SYSTEM	5,875	5,875
095	0604231N	TACTICAL COMMAND SYSTEM	81,553	81,553
096	0604234N	ADVANCED HAWKEYE	272,149	264,149
		Cost growth		[–8,000]
097	0604245N	H–1 UPGRADES	27,235	27,235
098	0604261N	ACOUSTIC SEARCH SENSORS	35,763	35,763
099	0604262N	V–22A	87,918	87,918
100	0604264N	AIR CREW SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT	12,679	12,679
101	0604269N	EA–18	56,921	56,921
102	0604270N	ELECTRONIC WARFARE DEVELOPMENT	23,685	23,685
103	0604273N	EXECUTIVE HELO DEVELOPMENT	507,093	507,093
104	0604274N	NEXT GENERATION JAMMER (NGJ)	411,767	403,767
		Contract delays		[–8,000]
105	0604280N	JOINT TACTICAL RADIO SYSTEM—NAVY (JTRS-NAVY)	25,071	25,071
106	0604307N	SURFACE COMBATANT COMBAT SYSTEM ENGINEERING	443,433	421,133
		Aegis development support growth		[–22,300]
107	0604311N	LPD–17 CLASS SYSTEMS INTEGRATION	747	747
108	0604329N	SMALL DIAMETER BOMB (SDB)	97,002	84,644
		F–18 integration contract delay		[–12,358]
109	0604366N	STANDARD MISSILE IMPROVEMENTS	129,649	129,649
110	0604373N	AIRBORNE MCM	11,647	11,647
111	0604376M	MARINE AIR GROUND TASK FORCE (MAGTF) ELECTRONIC WARFARE (EW) FOR AVIATION.	2,778	2,778
112	0604378N	NAVAL INTEGRATED FIRE CONTROL—COUNTER AIR SYSTEMS ENGINEERING	23,695	23,695
113	0604404N	UNMANNED CARRIER LAUNCHED AIRBORNE SURVEILLANCE AND STRIKE (UCLASS) SYSTEM.	134,708	484,708
		Competitive air vehicle risk reduction activities		[300,000]
		Government and industry source selection preparation		[50,000]
114	0604501N	ADVANCED ABOVE WATER SENSORS	43,914	43,914
115	0604503N	SSN–688 AND TRIDENT MODERNIZATION	109,908	109,908
116	0604504N	AIR CONTROL	57,928	57,928
117	0604512N	SHIPBOARD AVIATION SYSTEMS	120,217	120,217

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118	0604522N	AIR AND MISSILE DEFENSE RADAR (AMDR) SYSTEM	241,754	241,754
119	0604558N	NEW DESIGN SSN	122,556	122,556
120	0604562N	SUBMARINE TACTICAL WARFARE SYSTEM	48,213	60,213
		Accelerate submarine combat and weapon system modernization		[12,000]
121	0604567N	SHIP CONTRACT DESIGN/ LIVE FIRE T&E	49,712	49,712
122	0604574N	NAVY TACTICAL COMPUTER RESOURCES	4,096	4,096
123	0604580N	VIRGINIA PAYLOAD MODULE (VPM)	167,719	167,719
124	0604601N	MINE DEVELOPMENT	15,122	15,122
125	0604610N	LIGHTWEIGHT TORPEDO DEVELOPMENT	33,738	33,738
126	0604654N	JOINT SERVICE EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE DEVELOPMENT	8,123	8,123
127	0604703N	PERSONNEL, TRAINING, SIMULATION, AND HUMAN FACTORS	7,686	7,686
128	0604727N	JOINT STANDOFF WEAPON SYSTEMS	405	405
129	0604755N	SHIP SELF DEFENSE (DETECT & CONTROL)	153,836	153,836
130	0604756N	SHIP SELF DEFENSE (ENGAGE: HARD KILL)	99,619	99,619
131	0604757N	SHIP SELF DEFENSE (ENGAGE: SOFT KILL/EW)	116,798	116,798
132	0604761N	INTELLIGENCE ENGINEERING	4,353	4,353
133	0604771N	MEDICAL DEVELOPMENT	9,443	9,443
134	0604777N	NAVIGATION/ID SYSTEM	32,469	32,469
135	0604800M	JOINT STRIKE FIGHTER (JSF)—EMD	537,901	537,901
136	0604800N	JOINT STRIKE FIGHTER (JSF)—EMD	504,736	504,736
137	0604810M	JOINT STRIKE FIGHTER FOLLOW ON DEVELOPMENT—MARINE CORPS	59,265	20,800
		Program delay		[–38,465]
138	0604810N	JOINT STRIKE FIGHTER FOLLOW ON DEVELOPMENT—NAVY	47,579	21,244
		Program delay		[–26,335]
139	0605013M	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT	5,914	5,914
140	0605013N	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT	89,711	89,711
141	0605212N	CH–53K RDTE	632,092	632,092
142	0605220N	SHIP TO SHORE CONNECTOR (SSC)	7,778	7,778
143	0605450N	JOINT AIR-TO-GROUND MISSILE (JAGM)	25,898	25,898
144	0605500N	MULTI-MISSION MARITIME AIRCRAFT (MMA)	247,929	247,929
145	0204202N	DDG–1000	103,199	103,199
146	0304231N	TACTICAL COMMAND SYSTEM—MIP	998	998
147	0304785N	TACTICAL CRYPTOLOGIC SYSTEMS	17,785	17,785
148	0305124N	SPECIAL APPLICATIONS PROGRAM	35,905	35,905
		SUBTOTAL SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT & DEMONSTRATION	**6,308,800**	**6,555,342**
		MANAGEMENT SUPPORT		
149	0604256N	THREAT SIMULATOR DEVELOPMENT	30,769	30,769
150	0604258N	TARGET SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT	112,606	112,606
151	0604759N	MAJOR T&E INVESTMENT	61,234	61,234
152	0605126N	JOINT THEATER AIR AND MISSILE DEFENSE ORGANIZATION	6,995	6,995
153	0605152N	STUDIES AND ANALYSIS SUPPORT—NAVY	4,011	4,011
154	0605154N	CENTER FOR NAVAL ANALYSES	48,563	48,563
155	0605285N	NEXT GENERATION FIGHTER	5,000	5,000
157	0605804N	TECHNICAL INFORMATION SERVICES	925	925
158	0605853N	MANAGEMENT, TECHNICAL & INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT	78,143	78,143
159	0605856N	STRATEGIC TECHNICAL SUPPORT	3,258	3,258
160	0605861N	RDT&E SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT	76,948	76,948
161	0605863N	RDT&E SHIP AND AIRCRAFT SUPPORT	132,122	132,122
162	0605864N	TEST AND EVALUATION SUPPORT	351,912	351,912
163	0605865N	OPERATIONAL TEST AND EVALUATION CAPABILITY	17,985	17,985
164	0605866N	NAVY SPACE AND ELECTRONIC WARFARE (SEW) SUPPORT	5,316	5,316
165	0605867N	SEW SURVEILLANCE/RECONNAISSANCE SUPPORT	6,519	6,519
166	0605873M	MARINE CORPS PROGRAM WIDE SUPPORT	13,649	13,649
		SUBTOTAL MANAGEMENT SUPPORT	**955,955**	**955,955**
		OPERATIONAL SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT		
174	0101221N	STRATEGIC SUB & WEAPONS SYSTEM SUPPORT	107,039	107,039
175	0101224N	SSBN SECURITY TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM	46,506	46,506
176	0101226N	SUBMARINE ACOUSTIC WARFARE DEVELOPMENT	3,900	4,700
		Accelerate combat rapid attack weapon		[800]
177	0101402N	NAVY STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS	16,569	16,569
178	0203761N	RAPID TECHNOLOGY TRANSITION (RTT)	18,632	11,132
		TIPS program growth		[–7,500]
179	0204136N	F/A–18 SQUADRONS	133,265	133,265
181	0204163N	FLEET TELECOMMUNICATIONS (TACTICAL)	62,867	51,067
		Joint aerial layer network growth		[–11,800]
182	0204228N	SURFACE SUPPORT	36,045	36,045
183	0204229N	TOMAHAWK AND TOMAHAWK MISSION PLANNING CENTER (TMPC)	25,228	25,228
184	0204311N	INTEGRATED SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM	54,218	54,218
185	0204413N	AMPHIBIOUS TACTICAL SUPPORT UNITS (DISPLACEMENT CRAFT)	11,335	11,335
186	0204460M	GROUND/AIR TASK ORIENTED RADAR (G/ATOR)	80,129	65,629
		Block II test assets early to need		[–14,500]
187	0204571N	CONSOLIDATED TRAINING SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT	39,087	39,087
188	0204574N	CRYPTOLOGIC DIRECT SUPPORT	1,915	1,915
189	0204575N	ELECTRONIC WARFARE (EW) READINESS SUPPORT	46,609	46,609
190	0205601N	HARM IMPROVEMENT	52,708	16,164
		AARGM extended range program growth		[–36,544]
191	0205604N	TACTICAL DATA LINKS	149,997	149,997
192	0205620N	SURFACE ASW COMBAT SYSTEM INTEGRATION	24,460	24,460
193	0205632N	MK–48 ADCAP	42,206	47,706
		Accelerate torpedo upgrades		[5,500]

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194	0205633N	AVIATION IMPROVEMENTS	117,759	117,759
195	0205675N	OPERATIONAL NUCLEAR POWER SYSTEMS	101,323	101,323
196	0206313M	MARINE CORPS COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS	67,763	67,763
197	0206335M	COMMON AVIATION COMMAND AND CONTROL SYSTEM (CAC2S)	13,431	13,431
198	0206623M	MARINE CORPS GROUND COMBAT/SUPPORTING ARMS SYSTEMS	56,769	48,669
		Project delays		[–8,100]
199	0206624M	MARINE CORPS COMBAT SERVICES SUPPORT	20,729	20,729
200	0206625M	USMC INTELLIGENCE/ELECTRONIC WARFARE SYSTEMS (MIP)	13,152	13,152
201	0206629M	AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULT VEHICLE	48,535	48,535
202	0207161N	TACTICAL AIM MISSILES	76,016	76,016
203	0207163N	ADVANCED MEDIUM RANGE AIR-TO-AIR MISSILE (AMRAAM)	32,172	32,172
208	0303109N	SATELLITE COMMUNICATIONS (SPACE)	53,239	53,239
209	0303138N	CONSOLIDATED AFLOAT NETWORK ENTERPRISE SERVICES (CANES)	21,677	21,677
210	0303140N	INFORMATION SYSTEMS SECURITY PROGRAM	28,102	28,102
211	0303150M	WWMCCS/GLOBAL COMMAND AND CONTROL SYSTEM	294	294
213	0305160N	NAVY METEOROLOGICAL AND OCEAN SENSORS-SPACE (METOC)	599	599
214	0305192N	MILITARY INTELLIGENCE PROGRAM (MIP) ACTIVITIES	6,207	6,207
215	0305204N	TACTICAL UNMANNED AERIAL VEHICLES	8,550	8,550
216	0305205N	UAS INTEGRATION AND INTEROPERABILITY	41,831	41,831
217	0305208M	DISTRIBUTED COMMON GROUND/SURFACE SYSTEMS	1,105	1,105
218	0305208N	DISTRIBUTED COMMON GROUND/SURFACE SYSTEMS	33,149	33,149
219	0305220N	RQ–4 UAV	227,188	227,188
220	0305231N	MQ–8 UAV	52,770	52,770
221	0305232M	RQ–11 UAV	635	635
222	0305233N	RQ–7 UAV	688	688
223	0305234N	SMALL (LEVEL 0) TACTICAL UAS (STUASL0)	4,647	4,647
224	0305239M	RQ–21A	6,435	6,435
225	0305241N	MULTI-INTELLIGENCE SENSOR DEVELOPMENT	49,145	49,145
226	0305242M	UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEMS (UAS) PAYLOADS (MIP)	9,246	9,246
227	0305421N	RQ–4 MODERNIZATION	150,854	150,854
228	0308601N	MODELING AND SIMULATION SUPPORT	4,757	4,757
229	0702207N	DEPOT MAINTENANCE (NON-IF)	24,185	24,185
231	0708730N	MARITIME TECHNOLOGY (MARITECH)	4,321	4,321
231A	9999999999	CLASSIFIED PROGRAMS	1,252,185	1,252,185
		SUBTOTAL OPERATIONAL SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT	**3,482,173**	**3,410,029**
		TOTAL RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST & EVAL, NAVY	**17,885,916**	**18,240,379**
		RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST & EVAL, AF		
		BASIC RESEARCH		
001	0601102F	DEFENSE RESEARCH SCIENCES	329,721	352,221
		Basic research program increase		[22,500]
002	0601103F	UNIVERSITY RESEARCH INITIATIVES	141,754	141,754
003	0601108F	HIGH ENERGY LASER RESEARCH INITIATIVES	13,778	13,778
		SUBTOTAL BASIC RESEARCH	**485,253**	**507,753**
		APPLIED RESEARCH		
004	0602102F	MATERIALS	125,234	125,234
005	0602201F	AEROSPACE VEHICLE TECHNOLOGIES	123,438	123,438
006	0602202F	HUMAN EFFECTIVENESS APPLIED RESEARCH	100,530	100,530
007	0602203F	AEROSPACE PROPULSION	182,326	182,326
008	0602204F	AEROSPACE SENSORS	147,291	147,291
009	0602601F	SPACE TECHNOLOGY	116,122	116,122
010	0602602F	CONVENTIONAL MUNITIONS	99,851	99,851
011	0602605F	DIRECTED ENERGY TECHNOLOGY	115,604	115,604
012	0602788F	DOMINANT INFORMATION SCIENCES AND METHODS	164,909	164,909
013	0602890F	HIGH ENERGY LASER RESEARCH	42,037	42,037
		SUBTOTAL APPLIED RESEARCH	**1,217,342**	**1,217,342**
		ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT		
014	0603112F	ADVANCED MATERIALS FOR WEAPON SYSTEMS	37,665	47,665
		Metals Affordability Initiative		[10,000]
015	0603199F	SUSTAINMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (S&T)	18,378	18,378
016	0603203F	ADVANCED AEROSPACE SENSORS	42,183	42,183
017	0603211F	AEROSPACE TECHNOLOGY DEV/DEMO	100,733	100,733
018	0603216F	AEROSPACE PROPULSION AND POWER TECHNOLOGY	168,821	168,821
019	0603270F	ELECTRONIC COMBAT TECHNOLOGY	47,032	47,032
020	0603401F	ADVANCED SPACECRAFT TECHNOLOGY	54,897	54,897
021	0603444F	MAUI SPACE SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM (MSSS)	12,853	12,853
022	0603456F	HUMAN EFFECTIVENESS ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT	25,448	25,448
023	0603601F	CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS TECHNOLOGY	48,536	48,536
024	0603605F	ADVANCED WEAPONS TECHNOLOGY	30,195	30,195
025	0603680F	MANUFACTURING TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM	42,630	52,630
		Maturation of advanced manufacturing for low-cost sustainment		[10,000]
026	0603788F	BATTLESPACE KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT AND DEMONSTRATION	46,414	46,414
		SUBTOTAL ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT	**675,785**	**695,785**
		ADVANCED COMPONENT DEVELOPMENT & PROTOTYPES		
027	0603260F	INTELLIGENCE ADVANCED DEVELOPMENT	5,032	5,032
029	0603438F	SPACE CONTROL TECHNOLOGY	4,070	4,070
030	0603742F	COMBAT IDENTIFICATION TECHNOLOGY	21,790	21,790
031	0603790F	NATO RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT	4,736	4,736

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033	0603830F	SPACE SECURITY AND DEFENSE PROGRAM	30,771	30,771
034	0603851F	INTERCONTINENTAL BALLISTIC MISSILE—DEM/VAL	39,765	39,765
036	0604015F	LONG RANGE STRIKE	1,246,228	556,228
		Delayed EMD contract award		[–690,000]
037	0604317F	TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER	3,512	8,512
		Technology transfer program increase		[5,000]
038	0604327F	HARD AND DEEPLY BURIED TARGET DEFEAT SYSTEM (HDBTDS) PROGRAM	54,637	54,637
040	0604422F	WEATHER SYSTEM FOLLOW-ON	76,108	51,108
		Unjustified increase and analysis of alternatives		[–25,000]
044	0604857F	OPERATIONALLY RESPONSIVE SPACE	6,457	19,957
		SSA, Weather, or Launch Activities		[13,500]
045	0604858F	TECH TRANSITION PROGRAM	246,514	246,514
046	0605230F	GROUND BASED STRATEGIC DETERRENT	75,166	75,166
049	0207110F	NEXT GENERATION AIR DOMINANCE	8,830	8,830
050	0207455F	THREE DIMENSIONAL LONG-RANGE RADAR (3DELRR)	14,939	14,939
051	0305164F	NAVSTAR GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEM (USER EQUIPMENT) (SPACE)	142,288	142,288
052	0306250F	CYBER OPERATIONS TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT	81,732	96,732
		Increase USCC Cyber Operations Technology Development		[15,000]
		SUBTOTAL ADVANCED COMPONENT DEVELOPMENT & PROTOTYPES	**2,062,575**	**1,381,075**
		SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT & DEMONSTRATION		
055	0604270F	ELECTRONIC WARFARE DEVELOPMENT	929	929
056	0604281F	TACTICAL DATA NETWORKS ENTERPRISE	60,256	60,256
057	0604287F	PHYSICAL SECURITY EQUIPMENT	5,973	5,973
058	0604329F	SMALL DIAMETER BOMB (SDB)—EMD	32,624	32,624
059	0604421F	COUNTERSPACE SYSTEMS	24,208	24,208
060	0604425F	SPACE SITUATION AWARENESS SYSTEMS	32,374	32,374
061	0604426F	SPACE FENCE	243,909	243,909
062	0604429F	AIRBORNE ELECTRONIC ATTACK	8,358	8,358
063	0604441F	SPACE BASED INFRARED SYSTEM (SBIRS) HIGH EMD	292,235	292,235
064	0604602F	ARMAMENT/ORDNANCE DEVELOPMENT	40,154	40,154
065	0604604F	SUBMUNITIONS	2,506	2,506
066	0604617F	AGILE COMBAT SUPPORT	57,678	57,678
067	0604706F	LIFE SUPPORT SYSTEMS	8,187	8,187
068	0604735F	COMBAT TRAINING RANGES	15,795	15,795
069	0604800F	F–35—EMD	589,441	589,441
071	0604853F	EVOLVED EXPENDABLE LAUNCH VEHICLE PROGRAM (SPACE)—EMD	84,438	184,438
		EELV Program—Rocket Propulsion System Development		[100,000]
072	0604932F	LONG RANGE STANDOFF WEAPON	36,643	16,143
		Contract delay		[–20,500]
073	0604933F	ICBM FUZE MODERNIZATION	142,551	142,551
074	0605213F	F–22 MODERNIZATION INCREMENT 3.2B	140,640	140,640
075	0605214F	GROUND ATTACK WEAPONS FUZE DEVELOPMENT	3,598	3,598
076	0605221F	KC–46	602,364	402,364
		Program decrease		[–200,000]
077	0605223F	ADVANCED PILOT TRAINING	11,395	11,395
078	0605229F	CSAR HH–60 RECAPITALIZATION	156,085	156,085
080	0605431F	ADVANCED EHF MILSATCOM (SPACE)	228,230	228,230
081	0605432F	POLAR MILSATCOM (SPACE)	72,084	72,084
082	0605433F	WIDEBAND GLOBAL SATCOM (SPACE)	56,343	52,343
		Excess to need		[–4,000]
083	0605458F	AIR & SPACE OPS CENTER 10.2 RDT&E	47,629	47,629
084	0605931F	B–2 DEFENSIVE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM	271,961	271,961
085	0101125F	NUCLEAR WEAPONS MODERNIZATION	212,121	212,121
086	0207171F	F–15 EPAWSS	186,481	186,481
087	0207701F	FULL COMBAT MISSION TRAINING	18,082	18,082
088	0305176F	COMBAT SURVIVOR EVADER LOCATOR	993	993
089	0307581F	NEXTGEN JSTARS	44,343	44,343
091	0401319F	PRESIDENTIAL AIRCRAFT REPLACEMENT (PAR)	102,620	102,620
092	0701212F	AUTOMATED TEST SYSTEMS	14,563	14,563
		SUBTOTAL SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT & DEMONSTRATION	**3,847,791**	**3,723,291**
		MANAGEMENT SUPPORT		
093	0604256F	THREAT SIMULATOR DEVELOPMENT	23,844	23,844
094	0604759F	MAJOR T&E INVESTMENT	68,302	73,302
		Airborne Sensor Data Correlation Project		[5,000]
095	0605101F	RAND PROJECT AIR FORCE	34,918	34,918
097	0605712F	INITIAL OPERATIONAL TEST & EVALUATION	10,476	10,476
098	0605807F	TEST AND EVALUATION SUPPORT	673,908	673,908
099	0605860F	ROCKET SYSTEMS LAUNCH PROGRAM (SPACE)	21,858	21,858
100	0605864F	SPACE TEST PROGRAM (STP)	28,228	28,228
101	0605976F	FACILITIES RESTORATION AND MODERNIZATION—TEST AND EVALUATION SUPPORT	40,518	40,518
102	0605978F	FACILITIES SUSTAINMENT—TEST AND EVALUATION SUPPORT	27,895	27,895
103	0606017F	REQUIREMENTS ANALYSIS AND MATURATION	16,507	16,507
104	0606116F	SPACE TEST AND TRAINING RANGE DEVELOPMENT	18,997	18,997
106	0606392F	SPACE AND MISSILE CENTER (SMC) CIVILIAN WORKFORCE	185,305	176,727
		Excess to need		[–8,578]
107	0308602F	ENTEPRISE INFORMATION SERVICES (EIS)	4,841	4,841
108	0702806F	ACQUISITION AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT	15,357	15,357
109	0804731F	GENERAL SKILL TRAINING	1,315	1,315
111	1001004F	INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES	2,315	2,315
		SUBTOTAL MANAGEMENT SUPPORT	**1,174,584**	**1,171,006**

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		OPERATIONAL SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT		
112	0603423F	GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEM III—OPERATIONAL CONTROL SEGMENT	350,232	350,232
113	0604233F	SPECIALIZED UNDERGRADUATE FLIGHT TRAINING	10,465	10,465
114	0604445F	WIDE AREA SURVEILLANCE	24,577	24,577
117	0605018F	AF INTEGRATED PERSONNEL AND PAY SYSTEM (AF-IPPS)	69,694	10,694
		Forward financing, excluding funding for audit readiness		[–59,000]
118	0605024F	ANTI-TAMPER TECHNOLOGY EXECUTIVE AGENCY	26,718	26,718
119	0605278F	HC/MC–130 RECAP RDT&E	10,807	10,807
121	0101113F	B–52 SQUADRONS	74,520	74,520
122	0101122F	AIR-LAUNCHED CRUISE MISSILE (ALCM)	451	451
123	0101126F	B–1B SQUADRONS	2,245	2,245
124	0101127F	B–2 SQUADRONS	108,183	108,183
125	0101213F	MINUTEMAN SQUADRONS	178,929	178,929
126	0101313F	STRAT WAR PLANNING SYSTEM—USSTRATCOM	28,481	28,481
127	0101314F	NIGHT FIST—USSTRATCOM	87	87
128	0101316F	WORLDWIDE JOINT STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS	5,315	5,315
131	0105921F	SERVICE SUPPORT TO STRATCOM—SPACE ACTIVITIES	8,090	8,090
132	0205219F	MQ–9 UAV	123,439	123,439
134	0207131F	A–10 SQUADRONS		16,200
		A–10 restoration: operational flight program development		[16,200]
135	0207133F	F–16 SQUADRONS	148,297	198,297
		AESA Radar Integration		[50,000]
136	0207134F	F–15E SQUADRONS	179,283	192,079
		Transfer from procurement		[12,796]
137	0207136F	MANNED DESTRUCTIVE SUPPRESSION	14,860	14,860
138	0207138F	F–22A SQUADRONS	262,552	262,552
139	0207142F	F–35 SQUADRONS	115,395	53,921
		Program delay		[–61,474]
140	0207161F	TACTICAL AIM MISSILES	43,360	43,360
141	0207163F	ADVANCED MEDIUM RANGE AIR-TO-AIR MISSILE (AMRAAM)	46,160	46,160
143	0207224F	COMBAT RESCUE AND RECOVERY	412	412
144	0207227F	COMBAT RESCUE—PARARESCUE	657	657
145	0207247F	AF TENCAP	31,428	31,428
146	0207249F	PRECISION ATTACK SYSTEMS PROCUREMENT	1,105	1,105
147	0207253F	COMPASS CALL	14,249	14,249
148	0207268F	AIRCRAFT ENGINE COMPONENT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM	103,942	103,942
149	0207325F	JOINT AIR-TO-SURFACE STANDOFF MISSILE (JASSM)	12,793	12,793
150	0207410F	AIR & SPACE OPERATIONS CENTER (AOC)	21,193	21,193
151	0207412F	CONTROL AND REPORTING CENTER (CRC)	559	559
152	0207417F	AIRBORNE WARNING AND CONTROL SYSTEM (AWACS)	161,812	161,812
153	0207418F	TACTICAL AIRBORNE CONTROL SYSTEMS	6,001	6,001
155	0207431F	COMBAT AIR INTELLIGENCE SYSTEM ACTIVITIES	7,793	7,793
156	0207444F	TACTICAL AIR CONTROL PARTY-MOD	12,465	12,465
157	0207448F	C2ISR TACTICAL DATA LINK	1,681	1,681
159	0207452F	DCAPES	16,796	16,796
161	0207590F	SEEK EAGLE	21,564	21,564
162	0207601F	USAF MODELING AND SIMULATION	24,994	24,994
163	0207605F	WARGAMING AND SIMULATION CENTERS	6,035	6,035
164	0207697F	DISTRIBUTED TRAINING AND EXERCISES	4,358	4,358
165	0208006F	MISSION PLANNING SYSTEMS	55,835	55,835
167	0208087F	AF OFFENSIVE CYBERSPACE OPERATIONS	12,874	12,874
168	0208088F	AF DEFENSIVE CYBERSPACE OPERATIONS	7,681	7,681
171	0301017F	GLOBAL SENSOR INTEGRATED ON NETWORK (GSIN)	5,974	5,974
177	0301400F	SPACE SUPERIORITY INTELLIGENCE	13,815	13,815
178	0302015F	E–4B NATIONAL AIRBORNE OPERATIONS CENTER (NAOC)	80,360	80,360
179	0303001F	FAMILY OF ADVANCED BLOS TERMINALS (FAB-T)	3,907	3,907
180	0303131F	MINIMUM ESSENTIAL EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK (MEECN)	75,062	75,062
181	0303140F	INFORMATION SYSTEMS SECURITY PROGRAM	46,599	46,599
183	0303142F	GLOBAL FORCE MANAGEMENT—DATA INITIATIVE	2,470	2,470
186	0304260F	AIRBORNE SIGINT ENTERPRISE	112,775	112,775
189	0305099F	GLOBAL AIR TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT (GATM)	4,235	4,235
192	0305110F	SATELLITE CONTROL NETWORK (SPACE)	7,879	5,879
		Unjustified increase in systems engineering		[–2,000]
193	0305111F	WEATHER SERVICE	29,955	29,955
194	0305114F	AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL, APPROACH, AND LANDING SYSTEM (ATCALS)	21,485	21,485
195	0305116F	AERIAL TARGETS	2,515	2,515
198	0305128F	SECURITY AND INVESTIGATIVE ACTIVITIES	472	472
199	0305145F	ARMS CONTROL IMPLEMENTATION	12,137	12,137
200	0305146F	DEFENSE JOINT COUNTERINTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES	361	361
203	0305173F	SPACE AND MISSILE TEST AND EVALUATION CENTER	3,162	3,162
204	0305174F	SPACE INNOVATION, INTEGRATION AND RAPID TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT	1,543	1,543
205	0305179F	INTEGRATED BROADCAST SERVICE (IBS)	7,860	7,860
206	0305182F	SPACELIFT RANGE SYSTEM (SPACE)	6,902	6,902
207	0305202F	DRAGON U–2	34,471	34,471
209	0305206F	AIRBORNE RECONNAISSANCE SYSTEMS	50,154	60,154
		Wide Area Surveillance Capability		[10,000]
210	0305207F	MANNED RECONNAISSANCE SYSTEMS	13,245	13,245
211	0305208F	DISTRIBUTED COMMON GROUND/SURFACE SYSTEMS	22,784	22,784
212	0305219F	MQ–1 PREDATOR A UAV	716	716
213	0305220F	RQ–4 UAV	208,053	203,053
		Program delays		[–5,000]

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214	0305221F	NETWORK-CENTRIC COLLABORATIVE TARGETING	21,587	21,587
215	0305236F	COMMON DATA LINK EXECUTIVE AGENT (CDL EA)	43,986	43,986
216	0305238F	NATO AGS	197,486	138,400
		Transfer to Procurement for NATO AWACS		[–59,086]
217	0305240F	SUPPORT TO DCGS ENTERPRISE	28,434	28,434
218	0305265F	GPS III SPACE SEGMENT	180,902	180,902
220	0305614F	JSPOC MISSION SYSTEM	81,911	81,911
221	0305881F	RAPID CYBER ACQUISITION	3,149	3,149
222	0305913F	NUDET DETECTION SYSTEM (SPACE)	14,447	14,447
223	0305940F	SPACE SITUATION AWARENESS OPERATIONS	20,077	20,077
225	0308699F	SHARED EARLY WARNING (SEW)	853	853
226	0401115F	C–130 AIRLIFT SQUADRON	33,962	33,962
227	0401119F	C–5 AIRLIFT SQUADRONS (IF)	42,864	22,864
		Forward financing		[–20,000]
228	0401130F	C–17 AIRCRAFT (IF)	54,807	54,807
229	0401132F	C–130J PROGRAM	31,010	31,010
230	0401134F	LARGE AIRCRAFT IR COUNTERMEASURES (LAIRCM)	6,802	6,802
231	0401219F	KC–10S	1,799	1,799
232	0401314F	OPERATIONAL SUPPORT AIRLIFT	48,453	48,453
233	0401318F	CV–22	36,576	36,576
235	0408011F	SPECIAL TACTICS / COMBAT CONTROL	7,963	7,963
236	0702207F	DEPOT MAINTENANCE (NON-IF)	1,525	1,525
237	0708610F	LOGISTICS INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (LOGIT)	112,676	68,400
		Program growth		[–44,276]
238	0708611F	SUPPORT SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT	12,657	12,657
239	0804743F	OTHER FLIGHT TRAINING	1,836	1,836
240	0808716F	OTHER PERSONNEL ACTIVITIES	121	121
241	0901202F	JOINT PERSONNEL RECOVERY AGENCY	5,911	5,911
242	0901218F	CIVILIAN COMPENSATION PROGRAM	3,604	3,604
243	0901220F	PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION	4,598	4,598
244	0901226F	AIR FORCE STUDIES AND ANALYSIS AGENCY	1,103	1,103
246	0901538F	FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT	101,840	101,840
246A	9999999999	CLASSIFIED PROGRAMS	12,780,142	12,780,142
		SUBTOTAL OPERATIONAL SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT	**17,010,339**	**16,848,499**
		TOTAL RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST & EVAL, AF	**26,473,669**	**25,544,751**
		RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST & EVAL, DW		
		BASIC RESEARCH		
001	0601000BR	DTRA BASIC RESEARCH INITIATIVE	38,436	38,436
002	0601101E	DEFENSE RESEARCH SCIENCES	333,119	333,119
003	0601110D8Z	BASIC RESEARCH INITIATIVES	42,022	42,022
004	0601117E	BASIC OPERATIONAL MEDICAL RESEARCH SCIENCE	56,544	56,544
005	0601120D8Z	NATIONAL DEFENSE EDUCATION PROGRAM	49,453	54,453
		STEM program increase		[5,000]
006	0601228D8Z	HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES/MINORITY INSTITUTIONS	25,834	35,834
		Program increase		[10,000]
007	0601384BP	CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL DEFENSE PROGRAM	46,261	46,261
		SUBTOTAL BASIC RESEARCH	**591,669**	**606,669**
		APPLIED RESEARCH		
008	0602000D8Z	JOINT MUNITIONS TECHNOLOGY	19,352	19,352
009	0602115E	BIOMEDICAL TECHNOLOGY	114,262	114,262
010	0602234D8Z	LINCOLN LABORATORY RESEARCH PROGRAM	51,026	51,026
011	0602251D8Z	APPLIED RESEARCH FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF S&T PRIORITIES	48,226	48,226
012	0602303E	INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY	356,358	356,358
014	0602383E	BIOLOGICAL WARFARE DEFENSE	29,265	29,265
015	0602384BP	CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL DEFENSE PROGRAM	208,111	208,111
016	0602668D8Z	CYBER SECURITY RESEARCH	13,727	13,727
018	0602702E	TACTICAL TECHNOLOGY	314,582	309,582
		Multi-azimuth defense fast intercept round engagement system		[–5,000]
019	0602715E	MATERIALS AND BIOLOGICAL TECHNOLOGY	220,115	201,721
		Program decrease		[–18,394]
020	0602716E	ELECTRONICS TECHNOLOGY	174,798	174,798
021	0602718BR	WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION DEFEAT TECHNOLOGIES	155,415	155,415
022	0602751D8Z	SOFTWARE ENGINEERING INSTITUTE (SEI) APPLIED RESEARCH	8,824	8,824
023	1160401BB	SOF TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT	37,517	37,517
		SUBTOTAL APPLIED RESEARCH	**1,751,578**	**1,728,184**
		ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT		
024	0603000D8Z	JOINT MUNITIONS ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY	25,915	25,915
026	0603122D8Z	COMBATING TERRORISM TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT	71,171	111,171
		Program increase		[40,000]
027	0603133D8Z	FOREIGN COMPARATIVE TESTING	21,782	21,782
028	0603160BR	COUNTERPROLIFERATION INITIATIVES—PROLIFERATION PREVENTION AND DEFEAT	290,654	290,654
030	0603176C	ADVANCED CONCEPTS AND PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT	12,139	12,139
031	0603177C	DISCRIMINATION SENSOR TECHNOLOGY	28,200	28,200
032	0603178C	WEAPONS TECHNOLOGY	45,389	7,367
		High Power Directed Energy—Missile Destruct		[–26,055]
		Move to support Multiple Object Kill Vehicle		[–11,967]
033	0603179C	ADVANCED C4ISR	9,876	9,876
034	0603180C	ADVANCED RESEARCH	17,364	17,364

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035	0603225D8Z	JOINT DOD-DOE MUNITIONS TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT	18,802	18,802
036	0603264S	AGILE TRANSPORTATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY (AT21)—THEATER CAPABILITY	2,679	2,679
037	0603274C	SPECIAL PROGRAM—MDA TECHNOLOGY	64,708	51,458
		Unjustified growth		[–13,250]
038	0603286E	ADVANCED AEROSPACE SYSTEMS	185,043	185,043
039	0603287E	SPACE PROGRAMS AND TECHNOLOGY	126,692	126,692
040	0603288D8Z	ANALYTIC ASSESSMENTS	14,645	14,645
041	0603289D8Z	ADVANCED INNOVATIVE ANALYSIS AND CONCEPTS	59,830	49,830
		Program decrease		[–10,000]
042	0603294C	COMMON KILL VEHICLE TECHNOLOGY	46,753	7,195
		MOKV Concept Development		[–39,558]
043	0603384BP	CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL DEFENSE PROGRAM—ADVANCED DEVELOPMENT	140,094	140,094
044	0603527D8Z	RETRACT LARCH	118,666	108,666
		Program decrease		[–10,000]
045	0603618D8Z	JOINT ELECTRONIC ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY	43,966	23,966
		Program decrease		[–20,000]
046	0603648D8Z	JOINT CAPABILITY TECHNOLOGY DEMONSTRATIONS	141,540	116,540
		Program decrease		[–25,000]
047	0603662D8Z	NETWORKED COMMUNICATIONS CAPABILITIES	6,980	6,980
050	0603680D8Z	DEFENSE-WIDE MANUFACTURING SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM	157,056	142,056
		Unjustified growth		[–15,000]
051	0603699D8Z	EMERGING CAPABILITIES TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT	33,515	41,015
		Efforts to counter-ISIL and Russian aggression		[7,500]
052	0603712S	GENERIC LOGISTICS R&D TECHNOLOGY DEMONSTRATIONS	16,543	16,543
053	0603713S	DEPLOYMENT AND DISTRIBUTION ENTERPRISE TECHNOLOGY	29,888	29,888
054	0603716D8Z	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH PROGRAM	65,836	65,836
055	0603720S	MICROELECTRONICS TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT	79,037	89,037
		Trusted Source Implementation for Field Programmable Gate Arrays Study		[10,000]
056	0603727D8Z	JOINT WARFIGHTING PROGRAM	9,626	5,000
		Program decrease		[–4,626]
057	0603739E	ADVANCED ELECTRONICS TECHNOLOGIES	79,021	79,021
058	0603760E	COMMAND, CONTROL AND COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS	201,335	201,335
059	0603766E	NETWORK-CENTRIC WARFARE TECHNOLOGY	452,861	432,861
		Excessive program growth		[–20,000]
060	0603767E	SENSOR TECHNOLOGY	257,127	257,127
061	0603769SE	DISTRIBUTED LEARNING ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT	10,771	10,771
062	0603781D8Z	SOFTWARE ENGINEERING INSTITUTE	15,202	15,202
063	0603826D8Z	QUICK REACTION SPECIAL PROJECTS	90,500	65,500
		Unjustified growth		[–25,000]
066	0603833D8Z	ENGINEERING SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY	18,377	18,377
067	0603941D8Z	TEST & EVALUATION SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY	82,589	82,589
068	0604055D8Z	OPERATIONAL ENERGY CAPABILITY IMPROVEMENT	37,420	37,420
069	0303310D8Z	CWMD SYSTEMS	42,488	42,488
070	1160402BB	SOF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT	57,741	57,741
		SUBTOTAL ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT	**3,229,821**	**3,066,865**
		ADVANCED COMPONENT DEVELOPMENT AND PROTOTYPES		
071	0603161D8Z	NUCLEAR AND CONVENTIONAL PHYSICAL SECURITY EQUIPMENT RDT&E ADC&P	31,710	31,710
073	0603600D8Z	WALKOFF	90,567	90,567
074	0603714D8Z	ADVANCED SENSORS APPLICATION PROGRAM	15,900	15,900
075	0603851D8Z	ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY TECHNICAL CERTIFICATION PROGRAM	52,758	52,758
076	0603881C	BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE TERMINAL DEFENSE SEGMENT	228,021	228,021
077	0603882C	BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE MIDCOURSE DEFENSE SEGMENT	1,284,891	1,284,891
077A	0603XXXX	MULTIPLE-OBJECT KILL VEHICLE		81,525
		Divert attitude control systems technology to support Multi-Object Kill Vehicle		[10,000]
		Establish MOKV Program of Record		[71,525]
078	0603884BP	CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL DEFENSE PROGRAM—DEM/VAL	172,754	172,754
079	0603884C	BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE SENSORS	233,588	233,588
080	0603890C	BMD ENABLING PROGRAMS	409,088	409,088
080A	0603XXXC	WEAPONS TECHNOLOGY—HIGH POWER DE		26,055
		High Power Directed Energy—Missile Destruct		[26,055]
081	0603891C	SPECIAL PROGRAMS—MDA	400,387	400,387
082	0603892C	AEGIS BMD	843,355	843,355
083	0603893C	SPACE TRACKING & SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM	31,632	31,632
084	0603895C	BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE SYSTEM SPACE PROGRAMS	23,289	23,289
085	0603896C	BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE COMMAND AND CONTROL, BATTLE MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATI.	450,085	437,785
		Future Spirals concurrency with multiple ongoing efforts and excess growth		[–12,300]
086	0603898C	BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE JOINT WARFIGHTER SUPPORT	49,570	49,570
087	0603904C	MISSILE DEFENSE INTEGRATION & OPERATIONS CENTER (MDIOC)	49,211	49,211
088	0603906C	REGARDING TRENCH	9,583	9,583
089	0603907C	SEA BASED X-BAND RADAR (SBX)	72,866	72,866
090	0603913C	ISRAELI COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS	102,795	267,595
		Arrow 3		[19,500]
		Arrow System Improvement Program		[45,500]
		David's Sling		[99,800]
091	0603914C	BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE TEST	274,323	274,323
092	0603915C	BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE TARGETS	513,256	513,256
093	0603920D8Z	HUMANITARIAN DEMINING	10,129	10,129
094	0603923D8Z	COALITION WARFARE	10,350	10,350
095	0604016D8Z	DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE CORROSION PROGRAM	1,518	11,518
		Program Increase		[10,000]

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096	0604115C	TECHNOLOGY MATURATION INITIATIVES	96,300	96,300
097	0604250D8Z	ADVANCED INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES	469,798	469,798
098	0604400D8Z	DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (DOD) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM (UAS) COMMON DEVELOPMENT.	3,129	3,129
103	0604826J	JOINT C5 CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT, INTEGRATION AND INTEROPERABILITY ASSESSMENTS.	25,200	25,200
105	0604873C	LONG RANGE DISCRIMINATION RADAR (LRDR)	137,564	137,564
106	0604874C	IMPROVED HOMELAND DEFENSE INTERCEPTORS	278,944	298,944
		Redesigned kill vehicle development		[20,000]
107	0604876C	BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE TERMINAL DEFENSE SEGMENT TEST	26,225	26,225
108	0604878C	AEGIS BMD TEST	55,148	55,148
109	0604879C	BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE SENSOR TEST	86,764	86,764
110	0604880C	LAND-BASED SM–3 (LBSM3)	34,970	34,970
111	0604881C	AEGIS SM–3 BLOCK IIA CO-DEVELOPMENT	172,645	172,645
112	0604887C	BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE MIDCOURSE SEGMENT TEST	64,618	64,618
114	0303191D8Z	JOINT ELECTROMAGNETIC TECHNOLOGY (JET) PROGRAM	2,660	2,660
115	0305103C	CYBER SECURITY INITIATIVE	963	963
		SUBTOTAL ADVANCED COMPONENT DEVELOPMENT AND PROTOTYPES	**6,816,554**	**7,106,634**
		SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT AND DEMONSTRATION		
116	0604161D8Z	NUCLEAR AND CONVENTIONAL PHYSICAL SECURITY EQUIPMENT RDT&E SDD	8,800	8,800
117	0604165D8Z	PROMPT GLOBAL STRIKE CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT	78,817	88,817
		Concept development by the Army of a CPGS option		[5,000]
		Concept development by the Navy of a CPGS option		[5,000]
118	0604384BP	CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL DEFENSE PROGRAM—EMD	303,647	303,647
119	0604764K	ADVANCED IT SERVICES JOINT PROGRAM OFFICE (AITS-JPO)	23,424	23,424
120	0604771D8Z	JOINT TACTICAL INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM (JTIDS)	14,285	14,285
121	0605000BR	WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION DEFEAT CAPABILITIES	7,156	7,156
122	0605013BL	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT	12,542	42
		DCMA program decrease		[–12,500]
123	0605021SE	HOMELAND PERSONNEL SECURITY INITIATIVE	191	191
124	0605022D8Z	DEFENSE EXPORTABILITY PROGRAM	3,273	3,273
125	0605027D8Z	OUSD(C) IT DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES	5,962	5,962
126	0605070S	DOD ENTERPRISE SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT AND DEMONSTRATION	13,412	13,412
127	0605075D8Z	DCMO POLICY AND INTEGRATION	2,223	2,223
128	0605080S	DEFENSE AGENCY INTIATIVES (DAI)—FINANCIAL SYSTEM	31,660	31,660
129	0605090S	DEFENSE RETIRED AND ANNUITANT PAY SYSTEM (DRAS)	13,085	13,085
130	0605210D8Z	DEFENSE-WIDE ELECTRONIC PROCUREMENT CAPABILITIES	7,209	7,209
131	0303141K	GLOBAL COMBAT SUPPORT SYSTEM	15,158	13,794
		Early to need		[–1,364]
132	0305304D8Z	DOD ENTERPRISE ENERGY INFORMATION MANAGEMENT (EEIM)	4,414	4,414
		SUBTOTAL SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT AND DEMONSTRATION	**545,258**	**541,394**
		MANAGEMENT SUPPORT		
133	0604774D8Z	DEFENSE READINESS REPORTING SYSTEM (DRRS)	5,581	5,581
134	0604875D8Z	JOINT SYSTEMS ARCHITECTURE DEVELOPMENT	3,081	3,081
135	0604940D8Z	CENTRAL TEST AND EVALUATION INVESTMENT DEVELOPMENT (CTEIP)	229,125	229,125
136	0604942D8Z	ASSESSMENTS AND EVALUATIONS	28,674	21,674
		Program decrease		[–7,000]
138	0605100D8Z	JOINT MISSION ENVIRONMENT TEST CAPABILITY (JMETC)	45,235	45,235
139	0605104D8Z	TECHNICAL STUDIES, SUPPORT AND ANALYSIS	24,936	24,936
141	0605126J	JOINT INTEGRATED AIR AND MISSILE DEFENSE ORGANIZATION (JIAMDO)	35,471	35,471
144	0605142D8Z	SYSTEMS ENGINEERING	37,655	37,655
145	0605151D8Z	STUDIES AND ANALYSIS SUPPORT—OSD	3,015	3,015
146	0605161D8Z	NUCLEAR MATTERS-PHYSICAL SECURITY	5,287	5,287
147	0605170D8Z	SUPPORT TO NETWORKS AND INFORMATION INTEGRATION	5,289	5,289
148	0605200D8Z	GENERAL SUPPORT TO USD (INTELLIGENCE)	2,120	2,120
149	0605384BP	CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL DEFENSE PROGRAM	102,264	102,264
158	0605790D8Z	SMALL BUSINESS INNOVATION RESEARCH (SBIR)/ SMALL BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER.	2,169	2,169
159	0605798D8Z	DEFENSE TECHNOLOGY ANALYSIS	13,960	13,960
160	0605801KA	DEFENSE TECHNICAL INFORMATION CENTER (DTIC)	51,775	51,775
161	0605803SE	R&D IN SUPPORT OF DOD ENLISTMENT, TESTING AND EVALUATION	9,533	9,533
162	0605804D8Z	DEVELOPMENT TEST AND EVALUATION	17,371	21,371
		Program increase		[4,000]
163	0605898E	MANAGEMENT HQ—R&D	71,571	71,571
164	0606100D8Z	BUDGET AND PROGRAM ASSESSMENTS	4,123	4,123
165	0203345D8Z	DEFENSE OPERATIONS SECURITY INITIATIVE (DOSI)	1,946	1,946
166	0204571J	JOINT STAFF ANALYTICAL SUPPORT	7,673	7,673
169	0303166J	SUPPORT TO INFORMATION OPERATIONS (IO) CAPABILITIES	10,413	10,413
170	0303260D8Z	DEFENSE MILITARY DECEPTION PROGRAM OFFICE (DMDPO)	971	971
171	0305193D8Z	CYBER INTELLIGENCE	6,579	6,579
173	0804767D8Z	COCOM EXERCISE ENGAGEMENT AND TRAINING TRANSFORMATION (CE2T2)—MHA	43,811	43,811
174	0901598C	MANAGEMENT HQ—MDA	35,871	35,871
176	0903230D8W	WHS—MISSION OPERATIONS SUPPORT—IT	1,072	1,072
177A	9999999999	CLASSIFIED PROGRAMS	49,500	49,500
		SUBTOTAL MANAGEMENT SUPPORT	**856,071**	**853,071**
		OPERATIONAL SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT		
178	0604130V	ENTERPRISE SECURITY SYSTEM (ESS)	7,929	7,929
179	0605127T	REGIONAL INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH (RIO) AND PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE INFORMATION MANA.	1,750	1,750

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180	0605147T	OVERSEAS HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE SHARED INFORMATION SYSTEM (OHASIS)	294	294
181	0607210D8Z	INDUSTRIAL BASE ANALYSIS AND SUSTAINMENT SUPPORT	22,576	22,576
182	0607310D8Z	CWMD SYSTEMS: OPERATIONAL SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT	1,901	1,901
183	0607327T	GLOBAL THEATER SECURITY COOPERATION MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS (G-TSCMIS).	8,474	8,474
184	0607384BP	CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL DEFENSE (OPERATIONAL SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT)	33,561	33,561
186	0208043J	PLANNING AND DECISION AID SYSTEM (PDAS)	3,061	3,061
187	0208045K	C4I INTEROPERABILITY	64,921	64,921
189	0301144K	JOINT/ALLIED COALITION INFORMATION SHARING	3,645	3,645
193	0302016K	NATIONAL MILITARY COMMAND SYSTEM-WIDE SUPPORT	963	963
194	0302019K	DEFENSE INFO INFRASTRUCTURE ENGINEERING AND INTEGRATION	10,186	10,186
195	0303126K	LONG-HAUL COMMUNICATIONS—DCS	36,883	36,883
196	0303131K	MINIMUM ESSENTIAL EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK (MEECN)	13,735	13,735
197	0303135G	PUBLIC KEY INFRASTRUCTURE (PKI)	6,101	6,101
198	0303136G	KEY MANAGEMENT INFRASTRUCTURE (KMI)	43,867	43,867
199	0303140D8Z	INFORMATION SYSTEMS SECURITY PROGRAM	8,957	8,957
200	0303140G	INFORMATION SYSTEMS SECURITY PROGRAM	146,890	146,890
201	0303150K	GLOBAL COMMAND AND CONTROL SYSTEM	21,503	21,503
202	0303153K	DEFENSE SPECTRUM ORGANIZATION	20,342	20,342
203	0303170K	NET-CENTRIC ENTERPRISE SERVICES (NCES)	444	444
205	0303610K	TELEPORT PROGRAM	1,736	1,736
206	0304210BB	SPECIAL APPLICATIONS FOR CONTINGENCIES	65,060	65,060
210	0305103K	CYBER SECURITY INITIATIVE	2,976	2,976
215	0305186D8Z	POLICY R&D PROGRAMS	4,182	4,182
216	0305199D8Z	NET CENTRICITY	18,130	18,130
218	0305208BB	DISTRIBUTED COMMON GROUND/SURFACE SYSTEMS	5,302	5,302
221	0305208K	DISTRIBUTED COMMON GROUND/SURFACE SYSTEMS	3,239	3,239
225	0305327V	INSIDER THREAT	11,733	11,733
226	0305387D8Z	HOMELAND DEFENSE TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER PROGRAM	2,119	2,119
234	0708011S	INDUSTRIAL PREPAREDNESS	24,605	19,245
		DLA Uniform Research		[–5,360]
235	0708012S	LOGISTICS SUPPORT ACTIVITIES	1,770	1,770
236	0902298J	MANAGEMENT HQ—OJCS	2,978	2,978
237	1105219BB	MQ–9 UAV	18,151	23,151
		Medium Altitude Long Endurance Tactical (MALET) MQ–9 Unmanned Aerial Vehicle		[5,000]
238	1105232BB	RQ–11 UAV	758	758
240	1160403BB	AVIATION SYSTEMS	173,934	189,134
		MC–130 Terrain Following/Terrain Avoidance Radar Program		[15,200]
241	1160405BB	INTELLIGENCE SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT	6,866	6,866
242	1160408BB	OPERATIONAL ENHANCEMENTS	63,008	63,008
243	1160431BB	WARRIOR SYSTEMS	25,342	25,342
244	1160432BB	SPECIAL PROGRAMS	3,401	3,401
245	1160480BB	SOF TACTICAL VEHICLES	3,212	3,212
246	1160483BB	MARITIME SYSTEMS	63,597	63,597
247	1160489BB	GLOBAL VIDEO SURVEILLANCE ACTIVITIES	3,933	3,933
248	1160490BB	OPERATIONAL ENHANCEMENTS INTELLIGENCE	10,623	10,623
248A	9999999999	CLASSIFIED PROGRAMS	3,564,272	3,564,272
		SUBTOTAL OPERATIONAL SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT	**4,538,910**	**4,553,750**
		UNDISTRIBUTED		
249	XXXXXXX	DEFENSE WIDE CYBER VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT		200,000
		Assess all major weapon systems for cyber vulnerability		[200,000]
251	XXXXXXX	TECHNOLOGY OFFSET INITIATIVE		300,000
		Supports innovative technology development		[300,000]
		SUBTOTAL UNDISTRIBUTED		**500,000**
		TOTAL RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST & EVAL, DW	**18,329,861**	**18,956,567**
		OPERATIONAL TEST & EVAL, DEFENSE		
		MANAGEMENT SUPPORT		
001	0605118OTE	OPERATIONAL TEST AND EVALUATION	76,838	76,838
002	0605131OTE	LIVE FIRE TEST AND EVALUATION	46,882	46,882
003	0605814OTE	OPERATIONAL TEST ACTIVITIES AND ANALYSES	46,838	46,838
		SUBTOTAL MANAGEMENT SUPPORT	**170,558**	**170,558**
		TOTAL OPERATIONAL TEST & EVAL, DEFENSE	**170,558**	**170,558**
		TOTAL RDT&E	**69,784,963**	**70,005,814**''.

SA 2797. Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Mrs. MCCASKILL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2763 proposed by Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. MIKULSKI) to the bill H.R. 2029, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2____. Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on leadership at medical centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs that includes, with respect to each medical center of the Department that has not had a permanent Director for a period of more than 30 days as of the date of submittal of the report, the following:

(1) A description of the nature and scope of the lack of permanent leadership at the medical center.

(2) An assessment of whether the lack of permanent leadership at the medical center

is related to an increase in wait times for medical appointments at the medical center.

(3) An assessment of whether the lack of permanent leadership at the medical center is related to inconsistencies in the quality of health care delivered and the environment in which health care is delivered.

(4) A description of any action taken by the Department to correct the lack of permanent leadership at the medical center.

(5) A plan for how the Secretary will remedy the lack of permanent leadership at the medical center, including a detailed description of steps to be taken and a timeline for completion.

SA 2798. Mr. TESTER (for Mrs. BOXER) proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2763 proposed by Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. MIKULSKI) to the bill H.R. 2029, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end of title II, add the following:

SEC. 247. Of the amounts appropriated or otherwise made available by this title for ''MEDICAL SERVICES'', not more than $5,000,000 shall be available to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to assess the feasibility and advisability of awarding grants to veterans service agencies, veterans service organizations, and nongovernmental organizations to provide furniture, household items, and other assistance to formerly homeless veterans who are moving into permanent housing to facilitate the settlement of such veterans in such housing.

SA 2799. Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. ROUNDS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2763 proposed by Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. MIKULSKI) to the bill H.R. 2029, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2____. (a) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may not carry out any action described in subsection (b) at a medical facility of the Department of Veterans Affairs located in Veterans Integrated Service Network 23 as part of a planned realignment of services from the Department until the Secretary has submitted to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that includes the following:

(1) A national realignment strategy for the Veterans Health Administration that includes a detailed description of realignment plans within each Veterans Integrated Service Network.

(2) An explanation of the process by which such realignment plans were developed and coordinated within each Veterans Integrated Service Network.

(3) An analysis of the cost versus the benefit of each realignment included in such realignment plans, including the cost of replacing services furnished directly by the Department of Veterans Affairs with services provided under a contract with a non-Department entity.

(4) An analysis of how each realignment will impact health care within each Veterans Integrated Service Network for the following veterans:

(A) Veterans who are members of Indian tribes.

(B) Veterans who live in rural or highly rural areas.

(5) An analysis of how each realignment will impact access to and enrollment in posttraumatic stress disorder programs and residential rehabilitation treatment programs of the Department and the capacity of such programs to provide services within each Veterans Integrated Service Network and nationally.

(b) The actions described in this subsection are the following:

(1) The closure of a medical facility of the Department.

(2) The use of any funds of the Department to prepare any environment impact statement that is related to the closure of a medical facility of the Department.

(3) Any action that—

(A) diminishes the ability of veterans to receive health care from the Department, or diminishes the quality of such health care; and

(B) is related to the closure of a medical facility of the Department.

(c) In this section—

(1) the term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means—

(A) the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives; and

(2) the term ''Indian tribe'' has the meaning given that term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

SA 2800. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2763 proposed by Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. MIKULSKI) to the bill H.R. 2029, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title II, add the following:

SEC. 2____. (a)(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of law and except as provided in paragraph (3), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Director of the Indian Health Service shall enter into a memorandum of understanding, in consultation with Indian tribes that are impacted by the memorandum of understanding, on a national or regional basis, that authorizes the Indian Health Service to pay to the Department of Veterans Affairs copayments owed to the Department by veterans who are beneficiaries of the Indian Health Service for services rendered by the Department, including services rendered under a contract with a non-Department health care provider, to such veterans pursuant to a referral from a facility of the Indian Health Service under the purchased and referred care program of the Indian Health Service.

(2) In entering into a memorandum of understanding under paragraph (1), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Director of the Indian Health Service shall take into account any findings from the report required under subsection (b).

(3) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Director of the Indian Health Service are not required to enter into a memorandum of understanding under paragraph (1) if the Secretary and the Director jointly certify to the appropriate committees of Congress that such a memorandum of understanding would—

(A)(i) decrease the quality of health care provided to veterans who are beneficiaries of the Indian Health Service; and

(ii) impede the access of such veterans to health care; or

(B) substantially decrease the quality of or access to health care by individuals receiving health care from the Department of Veterans Affairs or beneficiaries of the Indian Health Service.

(b) Not later than 45 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report that contains—

(1) the number, disaggregated by State, of veterans who are beneficiaries of the Indian Health Service and have received health care at a medical facility of the Department of Veterans Affairs;

(2) the number, disaggregated by State and calendar year, of veterans who are beneficiaries of the Indian Health Service and were referred to a medical facility of the Department from a facility of the Indian Health Service during the period beginning on January 1, 2010, and ending on December 31, 2015; and

(3) an update on efforts of the Department to streamline health care for veterans who are beneficiaries of the Indian Health Service and have received health care at a medical facility of the Department and at a facility of the Indian Health Service, including—

(A) any changes to the provision of health care required under the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.); and

(B) any barriers to efficiently streamlining the provision of health care to veterans who are beneficiaries of the Indian Health Service.

(c) In this section—

(1) the term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means—

(A) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives;

(2) the term ''beneficiaries of the Indian Health Service'' means individuals eligible for assistance from the Indian Health Service; and

(3) the term ''Indian tribe'' has the meaning given that term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

SA 2801. Mr. TESTER (for Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. TILLIS)) proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2763 proposed by Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. MIKULSKI) to the bill H.R. 2029, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end of title II, add the following:

SEC. 247. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS ACTION PLAN TO IMPROVE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND EDUCATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall develop and publish an action plan for improving the services and assistance provided under chapter 31 of title 38, United States Code.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The plan required by subsection (a) shall include each of the following:

(1) A comprehensive analysis of, and recommendations and a proposed implementation plan for remedying workload management challenges at regional offices of the Department of Veterans Affairs, including steps to reduce counselor caseloads of veterans participating in a rehabilitation program under such chapter, particularly for counselors who are assisting veterans with traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder and counselors with educational and vocational counseling workloads.

(2) A comprehensive analysis of the reasons for the disproportionately low percentage of veterans with service-connected disabilities who served in the Armed Forces after September 11, 2001, who opt to participate in a rehabilitation program under such chapter relative to the percentage of such veterans who use their entitlement to educational assistance under chapter 33 of title 38, United States Code, including an analysis of barriers to timely enrollment in rehabilitation programs under chapter 31 of such title and of any barriers to a veteran enrolling in the program of that veteran's choice.

(3) Recommendations and a proposed implementation plan for encouraging more veterans with service-connected disabilities who served in the Armed Forces after September 11, 2001, to participate in rehabilitation programs under chapter 31 of such title.

(4) A national staff training program for vocational rehabilitation counselors of the Department that includes the provision of—

(A) training to assist counselors in understanding the very profound disorientation experienced by veterans with service-connected disabilities whose lives and life-plans have been upended and out of their control because of such disabilities;

(B) training to assist counselors in working in partnership with veterans on individual rehabilitation plans; and

(C) training on post-traumatic stress disorder and other mental health conditions and on moderate to severe traumatic brain injury that is designed to improve the ability of such counselors to assist veterans with these conditions, including by providing information on the broad spectrum of such conditions and the effect of such conditions on an individual's abilities and functional limitations.

SA 2802. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2763 proposed by Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. MIKULSKI) to the bill H.R. 2029, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the amounts appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act (or an amendment made by this Act) shall be used to implement, administer, or enforce any wage requirement under subchapter IV of chapter 31 of title 40, United States Code, except with respect to any contract that is in existence on or prior to the date that is 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act or made pursuant to an invitation for bids outstanding on the date that is 30 days after such date of enactment.

SA 2803. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2763 proposed by Mr. KIRK (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. MIKULSKI) to the bill H.R. 2029, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by title II may be used to pay any award or bonus under chapter 45 or 53 of title 5, United States Code, to any employee of the Office of Construction and Facilities Management of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

SA 2804. Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. LEAHY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1356, to clarify that certain provisions of the Border Patrol Agent Pay Reform Act of 2014 will not take effect until after the Director of the Office of Personnel Management promulgates and makes effective regulations relating to such provisions; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike sections 1031 through 1034.

SA 2805. Mr. THUNE (for Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. NELSON, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. PETERS, Mr. GARDNER, and Mrs. MURRAY)) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. THUNE to the bill H.R. 2262, to facilitate a progrowth environment for the developing commercial space industry by encouraging private sector investment and creating more stable and predictable regulatory conditions, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS; REFERENCES.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''U.S. Commercial Space Launch Competitiveness Act''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents; references.

TITLE I—SPURRING PRIVATE AEROSPACE COMPETITIVENESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Sec. 101. Short title.
Sec. 102. International launch competitiveness.
Sec. 103. Indemnification for space flight participants.
Sec. 104. Launch license flexibility.
Sec. 105. Licensing report.
Sec. 106. Federal jurisdiction.
Sec. 107. Cross waivers.
Sec. 108. Space authority.
Sec. 109. Orbital traffic management.
Sec. 110. Space surveillance and situational awareness data.
Sec. 111. Consensus standards and extension of certain safety regulation requirements.
Sec. 112. Government astronauts.
Sec. 113. Streamline commercial space launch activities.
Sec. 114. Operation and utilization of the ISS.
Sec. 115. State commercial launch facilities.
Sec. 116. Space support vehicles study.
Sec. 117. Space launch system update.

TITLE II—COMMERCIAL REMOTE SENSING

Sec. 201. Annual reports.
Sec. 202. Statutory update report.

TITLE III—OFFICE OF SPACE COMMERCE

Sec. 301. Renaming of office of space commercialization.
Sec. 302. Functions of the office of space commerce.

TITLE IV—SPACE RESOURCE EXPLORATION AND UTILIZATION

Sec. 401. Short title.
Sec. 402. Title 51 amendment.
Sec. 403. Disclaimer of extraterritorial sovereignty.

(c) REFERENCES TO TITLE 51, UNITED STATES CODE.—Except as otherwise expressly provided, wherever in this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of title 51, United States Code.

TITLE I—SPURRING PRIVATE AEROSPACE COMPETITIVENESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Spurring Private Aerospace Competitiveness and Entrepreneurship Act of 2015'' or ''SPACE Act of 2015''.

SEC. 102. INTERNATIONAL LAUNCH COMPETITIVENESS.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that it is in the public interest to update the methodology used to calculate the maximum probable loss from claims under section 50914 of title 51, United States Code, with a validated risk profile approach in order to consistently compute valid and reasonable maximum probable loss values.

(b) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation, in consultation with the commercial space sector and insurance providers, shall—

(1) evaluate the methodology used to calculate the maximum probable loss from claims under section 50914 of title 51, United States Code, and, if necessary, develop a plan to update that methodology;

(2) in evaluating or developing a plan under paragraph (1)—

(A) ensure that the Federal Government is not exposed to greater costs than intended and that launch companies are not required to purchase more insurance coverage than necessary; and

(B) consider the impact of the cost to both the industry and the Government of implementing an updated methodology; and

(3) submit the evaluation, and any plan, to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives.

(c) INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 270 days after the date the evaluation is submitted under subsection (b)(3), the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives an assessment of—

(1) the analysis and conclusions provided by the Secretary of Transportation in the evaluation, and any plan, under subsection (b);

(2) the implementation schedule proposed by the Secretary in the plan described in paragraph (1);

(3) the suitability of the plan described in paragraph (1) for implementation; and

(4) any further actions needed to implement the plan described in paragraph (1) or otherwise accomplish the purpose of this section.

(d) LAUNCH LIABILITY EXTENSION.—Section 50915(f) is amended by striking ''December 31, 2016'' and inserting ''September 30, 2025''.

SEC. 103. INDEMNIFICATION FOR SPACE FLIGHT PARTICIPANTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 509 is amended—

(1) in section 50914(a)—

(A) in paragraph (4), by adding at the end the following:

''(E) space flight participants.''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(5) Subparagraph (E) of paragraph (4) ceases to be effective September 30, 2025.''; and

(2) in section 50915(a)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''a licensee or transferee under this chapter, a contractor, subcontractor, or customer of the licensee or transferee, or a contractor or subcontractor of a customer, but not against a space flight participant,'' and inserting ''a person described in paragraph (3)(A)''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(3)(A) A person described in this subparagraph is—

''(i) a licensee or transferee under this chapter;

''(ii) a contractor, subcontractor, or customer of the licensee or transferee;

''(iii) a contractor or subcontractor of a customer; or

''(iv) a space flight participant.

''(B) Clause (iv) of subparagraph (A) ceases to be effective September 30, 2025.''.

SEC. 104. LAUNCH LICENSE FLEXIBILITY.

Section 50906 is amended—

(1) in subsection (d)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''that will be launched or reentered'' and inserting ''or reusable launch vehicles that will be launched into a suborbital trajectory or reentered under that permit'';

(B) by amending paragraph (1) to read as follows:

''(1) research and development to test design concepts, equipment, or operating techniques;''; and

(C) in paragraph (3)—

(i) by striking ''prior to obtaining a license''; and

(ii) by inserting ''or vehicle'' after ''design of the rocket'';

(2) in subsection (e)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''suborbital rocket design'' and inserting ''suborbital rocket or suborbital rocket design, or for a particular reusable launch vehicle or reusable launch vehicle design,''; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by inserting ''or launch vehicle'' after ''the suborbital rocket'';

(3) by amending subsection (g) to read as follows:

''(g) The Secretary may issue a permit under this section notwithstanding any license issued under this chapter. The issuance of a license under this chapter may not invalidate a permit issued under this section.''; and

(4) in subsection (h), by inserting ''or reusable launch vehicle'' after ''suborbital rocket''.

SEC. 105. LICENSING REPORT.

Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report on approaches for streamlining the licensing and permitting process of launch vehicles, reentry vehicles, or components of launch or reentry vehicles, to enable non-launch flight operations related to space transportation. The report shall include approaches to improve efficiency, reduce unnecessary costs, resolve inconsistencies, remove duplication, and minimize unwarranted constraints. The report shall also include an assessment of existing private and government infrastructure, as appropriate, in future licensing activities.

SEC. 106. FEDERAL JURISDICTION.

Section 50914 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(g) FEDERAL JURISDICTION.—Any claim by a third party or space flight participant for death, bodily injury, or property damage or loss resulting from an activity carried out under the license shall be the exclusive jurisdiction of the Federal courts.''.

SEC. 107. CROSS WAIVERS.

Section 50914(b)(1) is amended to read as follows:

''(1)(A) A launch or reentry license issued or transferred under this chapter shall contain a provision requiring the licensee or transferee to make a reciprocal waiver of claims with applicable parties involved in launch services or reentry services under which each party to the waiver agrees to be responsible for personal injury to, death of, or property damage or loss sustained by it or its own employees resulting from an activity carried out under the applicable license.

''(B) In this paragraph, the term 'applicable parties' means—

''(i) contractors, subcontractors, and customers of the licensee or transferee;

''(ii) contractors and subcontractors of the customers; and

''(iii) space flight participants.

''(C) Clause (iii) of subparagraph (B) ceases to be effective September 30, 2025.''.

SEC. 108. SPACE AUTHORITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, in consultation with the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Transportation, the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, and the commercial space sector, shall—

(1) assess current, and proposed near-term, commercial non-governmental activities conducted in space;

(2) identify appropriate authorization and supervision authorities for the activities described in paragraph (1);

(3) recommend an authorization and supervision approach that would prioritize safety, utilize existing authorities, minimize burdens to the industry, promote the U.S. commercial space sector, and meet the United States obligations under international treaties; and

(4) submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report on the activities described in paragraphs (1), (2), and (3).

(b) EXCEPTION.—Nothing in this section shall apply to the activities of the ISS national laboratory as described in section 504 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18354), including any research or development projects utilizing the ISS national laboratory.

SEC. 109. ORBITAL TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of the Congress that an improved framework may be necessary for space traffic management of United States Government assets and United States private sector assets in outer space and orbital debris mitigation.

(b) STUDY.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, in consultation with the Secretary of Transportation, the Chair of the Federal Communications Commission, the Secretary of Commerce, and the Secretary of Defense, shall enter into an arrangement with an independent systems engineering and technical assistance organization to study alternate frameworks for the management of space traffic and orbital activities.

(c) CONTENTS.—The study shall include the following:

(1) An assessment of current regulations, best practices, and industry standards that apply to space traffic management and orbital debris mitigation.

(2) An assessment of current statutory authorities granted to the Federal Communications Commission, the Department of Transportation, and the Department of Commerce that apply to space traffic management and orbital debris mitigation and how those agencies utilize and coordinate those authorities.

(3) A review of all space traffic management and orbital debris requirements under treaties and other international agreements to which the United States is a signatory, and other nonbinding international arrangements in which the United States participates, and the manner and extent to which the Federal Government complies with those requirements and arrangements.

(4) An assessment of existing Federal Government assets used to conduct space traffic management and space situational awareness.

(5) An assessment of the risk to space traffic management associated with smallsats and any necessary Government coordination for their launch and utilization to avoid congestion of the orbital environment and improve space situational awareness.

(6) An assessment of existing private sector information sharing activities associated with space situational awareness and space traffic management.

(7) Recommendations related to the appropriate framework for the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of the public and economic vitality of the space industry.

(d) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives the study required in subsection (b).

(e) DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AUTHORITIES.—

(1) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Department of Defense plays a vital and unique role in protecting national security assets in space.

(2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed to affect the authority of the Secretary of Defense as it relates to safeguarding the national security.

SEC. 110. SPACE SURVEILLANCE AND SITUATIONAL AWARENESS DATA.

Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation in concurrence with the Secretary of Defense shall—

(1) in consultation with the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, study the feasibility of processing and releasing safety-related space situational awareness data and information to any entity consistent with national security interests and public safety obligations of the United States; and

(2) submit a report on the feasibility study to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 111. CONSENSUS STANDARDS AND EXTENSION OF CERTAIN SAFETY REGULATION REQUIREMENTS.

Section 50905(c) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by inserting ''IN GENERAL.—'' before ''The Secretary'';

(2) in paragraph (2), by inserting ''REGULATIONS.—'' before ''Regulations'';

(3) by striking paragraph (3);

(4) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (10);

(5) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

''(3) FACILITATION OF STANDARDS.—The Secretary shall continue to work with the commercial space sector, including the Commercial Space Transportation Advisory Committee, or its successor organization, to facilitate the development of voluntary industry consensus standards based on recommended best practices to improve the safety of crew, government astronauts, and space flight participants as the commercial space sector continues to mature.

''(4) COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPARENCY.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to limit the authority of the Secretary to discuss potential regulatory approaches, potential performance standards, or any other topic related to this subsection with the commercial space industry, including observations, findings, and recommendations from the Commercial Space Transportation Advisory Committee, or its successor organization, prior to the issuance of a notice of proposed rulemaking. Such discussions shall not be construed to permit the Secretary to promulgate industry regulations except as otherwise provided in this section.

''(5) INTERIM VOLUNTARY INDUSTRY CONSENSUS STANDARDS REPORTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than December 31, 2016, and every 30 months thereafter until December 31, 2021, the Secretary, in consultation and coordination with the commercial space sector, including the Commercial Space Transportation Advisory Committee, or its successor organization, shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report on the progress of the commercial space transportation industry in developing voluntary industry consensus standards that promote best practices to improve industry safety.

''(B) CONTENTS.—The report shall include, at a minimum—

''(i) any voluntary industry consensus standards that have been accepted by the industry at large;

''(ii) the identification of areas that have the potential to become voluntary industry consensus standards that are currently under consideration by the industry at large;

''(iii) an assessment from the Secretary on the general progress of the industry in adopting voluntary industry consensus standards;

''(iv) any lessons learned about voluntary industry consensus standards, best practices, and commercial space launch operations;

''(v) any lessons learned associated with the development, potential application, and acceptance of voluntary industry consensus standards, best practices, and commercial space launch operations; and

''(vi) recommendations, findings, or observations from the Commercial Space Transportation Advisory Committee, or its successor organization, on the progress of the industry in developing voluntary industry consensus standards that promote best practices to improve industry safety.

''(6) REPORT.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of the SPACE Act of 2015, the Secretary, in consultation and coordination with the commercial space sector, including the Commercial Space Transportation Advisory Committee, or its successor organization, shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report specifying key industry metrics that might indicate readiness of the commercial space sector and the Department of Transportation to transition to a safety framework that may include regulations under paragraph (9) that considers space flight participant, government astronaut, and crew safety.

''(7) REPORTS.—Not later than March 31 of each of 2018 and 2022, the Secretary, in consultation and coordination with the commercial space sector, including the Commercial Space Transportation Advisory Committee, or its successor organization, shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report that identifies the activities, described in this subsection and subsection (d) most appropriate for a new safety framework that may include regulatory action, if any, and a proposed transition plan for such safety framework.

''(8) INDEPENDENT REVIEW.—Not later than December 31, 2022, an independent systems engineering and technical assistance organization or standards development organization contracted by the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives an assessment of the readiness of the commercial space industry and the Federal Government to transition to a safety framework that may include regulations. As part of the review, the contracted organization shall evaluate—

''(A) the progress of the commercial space industry in adopting voluntary industry consensus standards as reported by the Secretary in the interim assessments included in the reports under paragraph (5);

''(B) the progress of the commercial space industry toward meeting the key industry metrics identified by the report under paragraph (6), including the knowledge and operational experience obtained by the commercial space industry while providing services for compensation or hire; and

''(C) whether the areas identified in the reports under paragraph (5) are appropriate for regulatory action, or further development of voluntary industry consensus standards, considering the progress evaluated in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of this paragraph.

''(9) LEARNING PERIOD.—Beginning on October 1, 2023, the Secretary may propose regulations under this subsection without regard to subparagraphs (C) and (D) of paragraph (2). The development of any such regulations shall take into consideration the evolving standards of the commercial space flight industry as identified in the reports published under paragraphs (5), (6), and (7).''; and

(6) in paragraph (10), as redesignated, by inserting ''RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—'' before ''Nothing''.

SEC. 112. GOVERNMENT ASTRONAUTS.

(a) FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.—Section 50901(15) is amended by inserting '', government astronauts,'' after ''crew'' each place it appears.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—The National Aeronautics and Space Administration has a need to fly government astronauts (as defined in section 50902 of title 51, United States Code, as amended) within commercial launch vehicles and reentry vehicles under chapter 509 of that title. This need was identified by the Secretary of Transportation and the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration due to the intended use of commercial launch vehicles and reentry vehicles developed under the Commercial Crew Development Program, authorized in section 402 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (124 Stat. 2820; Public Law 111–267). It is the sense of Congress that the authority delegated to the Administration by the amendment made by subsection (d) of this section should be used for that purpose.

(c) DEFINITION OF GOVERNMENT ASTRONAUT.—Section 50902 is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (4) through (22) as paragraphs (7) through (25), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

''(4) 'government astronaut' means an individual who—

''(A) is designated by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration under section 20113(n);

''(B) is carried within a launch vehicle or reentry vehicle in the course of his or her employment, which may include performance of activities directly relating to the launch, reentry, or other operation of the launch vehicle or reentry vehicle; and

''(C) is either—

''(i) an employee of the United States Government, including the uniformed services, engaged in the performance of a Federal function under authority of law or an Executive act; or

''(ii) an international partner astronaut.

''(5) 'international partner astronaut' means an individual designated under Article 11 of the International Space Station Intergovernmental Agreement, by a partner to that agreement other than the United States, as qualified to serve as an International Space Station crew member.

''(6) 'International Space Station Intergovernmental Agreement' means the Agreement Concerning Cooperation on the International Space Station, signed at Washington January 29, 1998 (TIAS 12927).''.

(d) POWERS OF THE NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION IN PERFORMANCE OF FUNCTIONS.—Section 20113 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(n) IDENTIFICATION OF GOVERNMENT ASTRONAUTS.—For purposes of a license issued or transferred by the Secretary of Transportation under chapter 509 to launch a launch vehicle or to reenter a reentry vehicle carrying a government astronaut (as defined in section 50902), the Administration shall designate a government astronaut in accordance with requirements prescribed by the Administration.''.

(e) DEFINITION OF LAUNCH.—Paragraph (7) of section 50902, as redesignated, is amended by striking ''and any payload, crew, or space flight participant'' and inserting ''and any payload or human being''.

(f) DEFINITION OF LAUNCH SERVICES.—Paragraph (9) of section 50902, as redesignated, is amended by striking ''payload, crew (including crew training), or space flight participant'' and inserting ''payload, crew (including crew training), government astronaut, or space flight participant''.

(g) DEFINITION OF REENTER AND REENTRY.—Paragraph (16) of section 50902, as redesignated, is amended by striking ''and its payload, crew, or space flight participants, if any,'' and inserting ''and its payload or human beings, if any,''.

(h) DEFINITION OF REENTRY SERVICES.—Paragraph (17) of section 50902, as redesignated, is amended by striking ''payload, crew (including crew training), or space flight participant, if any,'' and inserting ''payload, crew (including crew training), government astronaut, or space flight participant, if any,''.

(i) DEFINITION OF SPACE FLIGHT PARTICIPANT.—Paragraph (20) of section 50902, as redesignated, is amended to read as follows:

''(20) 'space flight participant' means an individual, who is not crew or a government astronaut, carried within a launch vehicle or reentry vehicle.''.

(j) DEFINITION OF THIRD PARTY.—Paragraph (24)(E) of section 50902, as redesignated, is amended by inserting '', government astronauts,'' after ''crew''.

(k) RESTRICTIONS ON LAUNCHES, OPERATIONS, AND REENTRIES; SINGLE LICENSE OR PERMIT.—Section 50904(d) is amended by striking ''activities involving crew or space flight participants'' and inserting ''activities involving crew, government astronauts, or space flight participants''.

(l) LICENSE APPLICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS; APPLICATIONS.—Section 50905 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(2), by striking ''crews and space flight participants'' and inserting ''crew, government astronauts, and space flight participants'';

(2) in subsection (b)(2)(D), by striking ''crew or space flight participants'' and inserting ''crew, government astronauts, or space flight participants''; and

(3) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''crew and space flight participants'' and inserting ''crew, government astronauts, and space flight participants''; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking ''to crew or space flight participants'' each place it appears and inserting ''to crew, government astronauts, or space flight participants''.

(m) MONITORING ACTIVITIES.—Section 50907(a) is amended by striking ''at a site used for crew or space flight participant training'' and inserting ''at a site not owned or operated by the Federal Government or a foreign government used for crew, government astronaut, or space flight participant training''.

(n) ADDITIONAL SUSPENSIONS.—Section 50908(d)(1) is amended by striking ''to crew or space flight participants'' each place it appears and inserting ''to any human being''.

(o) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER EXECUTIVE AGENCIES, LAWS, AND INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS; NONAPPLICATION.—Section 50919(g) is amended to read as follows:

''(g) NONAPPLICATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—This chapter does not apply to—

''(A) a launch, reentry, operation of a launch vehicle or reentry vehicle, operation of a launch site or reentry site, or other space activity the Government carries out for the Government; or

''(B) planning or policies related to the launch, reentry, operation, or activity under subparagraph (A).

''(2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—The following activities are not space activities the Government carries out for the Government under paragraph (1):

''(A) A government astronaut being carried within a launch vehicle or reentry vehicle under this chapter.

''(B) A government astronaut performing activities directly relating to the launch, reentry, or other operation of the launch vehicle or reentry vehicle under this chapter.''.

SEC. 113. STREAMLINE COMMERCIAL SPACE LAUNCH ACTIVITIES.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that eliminating duplicative requirements and approvals for commercial launch and reentry operations will promote and encourage the development of the commercial space sector.

(b) REAFFIRMATION OF POLICY.—Congress reaffirms that the Secretary of Transportation, in overseeing and coordinating commercial launch and reentry operations, should—

(1) promote commercial space launches and reentries by the private sector;

(2) facilitate Government, State, and private sector involvement in enhancing U.S. launch sites and facilities;

(3) protect public health and safety, safety of property, national security interests, and foreign policy interests of the United States; and

(4) consult with the head of another executive agency, including the Secretary of Defense or the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, as necessary to provide consistent application of licensing requirements under chapter 509 of title 51, United States Code.

(c) REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Transportation under section 50918 of title 51, United States Code, and subject to section 50905(b)(2)(C) of that title, shall consult with the Secretary of Defense, the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and the heads of other executive agencies, as appropriate—

(A) to identify all requirements that are imposed to protect the public health and safety, safety of property, national security interests, and foreign policy interests of the United States relevant to any commercial launch of a launch vehicle or commercial reentry of a reentry vehicle; and

(B) to evaluate the requirements identified in subparagraph (A) and, in coordination with the licensee or transferee and the heads of the relevant executive agencies—

(i) determine whether the satisfaction of a requirement of one agency could result in the satisfaction of a requirement of another agency; and

(ii) resolve any inconsistencies and remove any outmoded or duplicative requirements or approvals of the Federal Government relevant to any commercial launch of a launch vehicle or commercial reentry of a reentry vehicle.

(2) REPORTS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter until the Secretary of Transportation determines no outmoded or duplicative requirements or approvals of the Federal Government exist, the Secretary of Transportation, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the commercial space sector, and the heads of other executive agencies, as appropriate, shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives, and the congressional defense committees a report that includes the following:

(A) A description of the process for the application for and approval of a permit or license under chapter 509 of title 51, United States Code, for the commercial launch of a launch vehicle or commercial reentry of a reentry vehicle, including the identification of—

(i) any unique requirements for operating on a United States Government launch site, reentry site, or launch property; and

(ii) any inconsistent, outmoded, or duplicative requirements or approvals.

(B) A description of current efforts, if any, to coordinate and work across executive agencies to define interagency processes and procedures for sharing information, avoiding duplication of effort, and resolving common agency requirements.

(C) Recommendations for legislation that may further—

(i) streamline requirements in order to improve efficiency, reduce unnecessary costs, resolve inconsistencies, remove duplication, and minimize unwarranted constraints; and

(ii) consolidate or modify requirements across affected agencies into a single application set that satisfies the requirements identified in paragraph (1)(A).

(3) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this subsection—

(A) any applicable definitions set forth in section 50902 of title 51, United States Code, shall apply;

(B) the terms ''launch'', ''reenter'', and ''reentry'' include landing of a launch vehicle or reentry vehicle; and

(C) the terms ''United States Government launch site'' and ''United States Government reentry site'' include any necessary facility, at that location, that is commercially operated on United States Government property.

SEC. 114. OPERATION AND UTILIZATION OF THE ISS.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) maximum utilization of partnerships, scientific research, commercial applications, and exploration test bed capabilities of the ISS is essential to ensuring the greatest return on investments made by the United States and its international partners in the development, assembly, and operations of that unique facility; and

(2) every effort should be made to ensure that decisions regarding the service life of the ISS are based on the station's projected capability to continue providing effective and productive research and exploration test bed capabilities.

(b) CONTINUATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 501 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18351) is amended—

(A) in the heading, by striking ''**THROUGH 2020**''; and

(B) in subsection (a), by striking ''through at least 2020'' and inserting ''through at least 2024''.

(2) MAINTENANCE OF THE UNITED STATES SEGMENT AND ASSURANCE OF CONTINUED OPERATIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION.—Section 503 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18353) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a), by striking ''through at least September 30, 2020'' and inserting ''through at least September 30, 2024''; and

(B) in subsection (b)(1), by striking ''In carrying out subsection (a), the Administrator'' and inserting ''The Administrator''.

(3) RESEARCH CAPACITY ALLOCATION AND INTEGRATION OF RESEARCH PAYLOADS.—Section 504(d) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18354(d)) is amended by striking ''September 30, 2020'' each place it appears and inserting ''at least September 30, 2024''.

(4) MAINTAINING USE THROUGH AT LEAST 2024.—Section 70907 is amended to read as follows:

''§ 70907. Maintaining use through at least 2024

''(a) POLICY.—The Administrator shall take all necessary steps to ensure that the International Space Station remains a viable and productive facility capable of potential United States utilization through at least September 30, 2024.

''(b) NASA ACTIONS.—In furtherance of the policy under subsection (a), the Administrator shall ensure, to the extent practicable, that the International Space Station, as a designated national laboratory—

''(1) remains viable as an element of overall exploration and partnership strategies and approaches;

''(2) is considered for use by all NASA mission directorates, as appropriate, for technically appropriate scientific data gathering or technology risk reduction demonstrations; and

''(3) remains an effective, functional vehicle providing research and test bed capabilities for the United States through at least September 30, 2024.''.

(5) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(A) TABLE OF CONTENTS OF 2010 ACT.—The item relating to section 501 in the table of contents in section 1(b) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (124 Stat. 2806) is amended by striking ''through 2020''.

(B) TABLE OF CONTENTS OF CHAPTER 709.—The table of contents for chapter 709 is amended by amending the item relating to section 70907 to read as follows:

''70907. Maintaining use through at least 2024.''.

SEC. 115. STATE COMMERCIAL LAUNCH FACILITIES.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) State involvement, development, ownership, and operation of launch facilities can enable growth of the Nation's commercial suborbital and orbital space endeavors and support both commercial and Government space programs;

(2) State launch facilities and the people and property in the affected launch areas of those facilities may be subject to risks resulting from an activity carried out under a license under chapter 509 of title 51, United States Code; and

(3) to ensure the success of the commercial launch industry and the safety of the people and property in the affected launch areas of those facilities, States and State launch facilities should seek to take proper measures to protect themselves, to the extent of their potential liability for involvement in launch services or reentry services, and compensate third parties for possible death, bodily injury, or property damage or loss resulting from an activity carried out under a license under chapter 509 of title 51, United States Code, to which the State or State launch facility is involved in the launch services or reentry services.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report on the potential inclusion of all government property, including State and municipal property, in the existing indemnification regime established under section 50914 of title 51, United States Code.

SEC. 116. SPACE SUPPORT VEHICLES STUDY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report on the use of space support vehicle services in the commercial space industry.

(b) CONTENTS.—This report shall include—

(1) the extent to which launch providers rely on such services as part of their business models;

(2) the statutory, regulatory, and market barriers to the use of such services; and

(3) recommendations for legislative or regulatory action that may be needed to ensure reduced barriers to the use of such services if such use is a requirement of the industry.

SEC. 117. SPACE LAUNCH SYSTEM UPDATE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 701 is amended—

(1) in the heading by striking ''**SPACE SHUTTLE**'' and inserting ''**SPACE LAUNCH SYSTEM**'';

(2) in section 70101—

(A) in the heading, by striking ''**space shuttle**'' and inserting ''**space launch system**''; and

(B) by striking ''space shuttle'' and inserting ''space launch system'';

(3) by amending section 70102 to read as follows:

''§ 70102. Space launch system use policy

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Space Launch System may be used for the following circumstances:

''(1) Payloads and missions that contribute to extending human presence beyond low-Earth orbit and substantially benefit from the unique capabilities of the Space Launch System.

''(2) Other payloads and missions that substantially benefit from the unique capabilities of the Space Launch System.

''(3) On a space available basis, Federal Government or educational payloads that are consistent with NASA's mission for exploration beyond low-Earth orbit.

''(4) Compelling circumstances, as determined by the Administrator.

''(b) AGREEMENTS WITH FOREIGN ENTITIES.—The Administrator may plan, negotiate, or implement agreements with foreign entities for the launch of payloads for international collaborative efforts relating to science and technology using the Space Launch System.

''(c) COMPELLING CIRCUMSTANCES.—Not later than 30 days after the date the Administrator makes a determination under subsection (a)(4), the Administrator shall transmit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science of the House of Representatives written notification of the Administrator's intent to select the Space Launch System for a specific mission under that subsection, including justification for the determination.'';

(4) in section 70103—

(A) in the heading, by striking ''**SPACE SHUTTLE**'' and inserting ''**SPACE LAUNCH SYSTEM**''; and

(B) in subsection (b), by striking ''space shuttle'' each place it appears and inserting ''space launch system''; and

(5) by adding at the end the following:

''§ 70104. Definition of Space Launch System

''In this chapter, the term 'Space Launch System' means the Space Launch System authorized under section 302 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18322).''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) TABLE OF CHAPTERS.—The table of chapters of title 51 is amended by amending the item relating to chapter 701 to read as follows:

''701. Use of space launch system or alternatives ..... 70101''.

(2) TABLE OF CONTENTS OF CHAPTER 701.—The table of contents of chapter 701 is amended—

(A) in the item relating to section 70101, by striking ''space shuttle'' and inserting ''space launch system'';

(B) in the item relating to section 70102, by striking ''Space shuttle'' and inserting ''Space launch system'';

(C) in the item relating to section 70103, by striking ''space shuttle'' and inserting ''space launch system''; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

''70104. Definition of Space Launch System.''.

(3) REQUIREMENT TO PROCURE COMMERCIAL SPACE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES.—Section 50131(a) of chapter 51 is amended by inserting ''or in section 70102'' after ''in this section''.

TITLE II—COMMERCIAL REMOTE SENSING

SEC. 201. ANNUAL REPORTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter III of chapter 601 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 60126. Annual reports

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall submit a report to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the U.S. Commercial Space Launch Competitiveness Act, and annually thereafter, on—

''(1) the Secretary's implementation of section 60121, including—

''(A) a list of all applications received in the previous calendar year;

''(B) a list of all applications that resulted in a license under section 60121;

''(C) a list of all applications denied and an explanation of why each application was denied, including any information relevant to the interagency adjudication process of a licensing request;

''(D) a list of all applications that required additional information; and

''(E) a list of all applications whose disposition exceeded the 120 day deadline established in section 60121(c), the total days overdue for each application that exceeded such deadline, and an explanation for the delay;

''(2) all notifications and information provided to the Secretary under section 60122; and

''(3) a description of all actions taken by the Secretary under the administrative authority granted by paragraphs (4), (5), and (6) of section 60123(a).

''(b) CLASSIFIED ANNEXES.—Each report under subsection (a) may include classified annexes as necessary to protect the disclosure of sensitive or classified information.

''(c) SUNSET.—The reporting requirement under this section terminates effective September 30, 2020.''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of chapter 601 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 60125 the following:

''60126. Annual reports.''.

SEC. 202. STATUTORY UPDATE REPORT.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Commerce, in consultation with the heads of other appropriate Federal agencies and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Advisory Committee on Commercial Remote Sensing, shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report on statutory updates necessary to license private remote sensing space systems. In preparing the report, the Secretary shall take into account the need to protect national security while maintaining United States private sector leadership in the field, and reflect the current state of the art of remote sensing systems, instruments, or technologies.

TITLE III—OFFICE OF SPACE COMMERCE

SEC. 301. RENAMING OF OFFICE OF SPACE COMMERCIALIZATION.

(a) CHAPTER HEADING.—

(1) AMENDMENT.—The heading for chapter 507 is amended by striking ''**COMMERCIALIZATION**'' and inserting ''**COMMERCE**''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The item relating to chapter 507 in the table of chapters for title 51 is amended by striking ''Commercialization'' and inserting ''Commerce''.

(b) DEFINITION OF OFFICE.—Section 50701 is amended by striking ''Commercialization'' and inserting ''Commerce''.

(c) RENAMING.—Section 50702(a) is amended by striking ''Commercialization'' and inserting ''Commerce''.

SEC. 302. FUNCTIONS OF THE OFFICE OF SPACE COMMERCE.

Section 50702(c) is amended by striking ''Commerce.'' and inserting ''Commerce, including—

''(1) to foster the conditions for the economic growth and technological advancement of the United States space commerce industry;

''(2) to coordinate space commerce policy issues and actions within the Department of Commerce;

''(3) to represent the Department of Commerce in the development of United States policies and in negotiations with foreign countries to promote United States space commerce;

''(4) to promote the advancement of United States geospatial technologies related to space commerce, in cooperation with relevant interagency working groups; and

''(5) to provide support to Federal Government organizations working on Space-Based Positioning Navigation, and Timing policy, including the National Coordination Office for Space-Based Position, Navigation, and Timing.''.

TITLE IV—SPACE RESOURCE EXPLORATION AND UTILIZATION

SEC. 401. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Space Resource Exploration and Utilization Act of 2015''.

SEC. 402. TITLE 51 AMENDMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle V is amended by adding at the end the following:

''CHAPTER 513—SPACE RESOURCE COMMERCIAL EXPLORATION AND UTILIZATION

''Sec.
''51301. Definitions.
''51302. Commercial exploration and commercial recovery.
''51303. Asteroid resource and space resource rights.

''§ 51301. Definitions

''In this chapter:

''(1) ASTEROID RESOURCE.—The term 'asteroid resource' means a space resource found on or within a single asteroid.

''(2) SPACE RESOURCE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'space resource' means an abiotic resource in situ in outer space.

''(B) INCLUSIONS.—The term 'space resource' includes water and minerals.

''(3) UNITED STATES CITIZEN.—The term 'United States citizen' has the meaning given the term 'citizen of the United States' in section 50902.

''§ 51302. Commercial exploration and commercial recovery

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The President, acting through appropriate Federal agencies, shall—

''(1) facilitate commercial exploration for and commercial recovery of space resources by United States citizens;

''(2) discourage government barriers to the development in the United States of economically viable, safe, and stable industries for commercial exploration for and commercial recovery of space resources in manners consistent with the international obligations of the United States; and

''(3) promote the right of United States citizens to engage in commercial exploration for and commercial recovery of space resources free from harmful interference, in accordance with the international obligations of the United States and subject to authorization and continuing supervision by the Federal Government.

''(b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, the President shall submit to Congress a report on commercial exploration for and commercial recovery of space resources by United States citizens that specifies—

''(1) the authorities necessary to meet the international obligations of the United States, including authorization and continuing supervision by the Federal Government; and

''(2) recommendations for the allocation of responsibilities among Federal agencies for the activities described in paragraph (1).

''§ 51303. Asteroid resource and space resource rights

''A United States citizen engaged in commercial recovery of an asteroid resource or a space resource under this chapter shall be entitled to any asteroid resource or space resource obtained, including to possess, own, transport, use, and sell the asteroid resource or space resource obtained in accordance with applicable law, including the international obligations of the United States.''.

(b) TABLE OF CHAPTERS.—The table of chapters for title 51 is amended by adding at the end of the items for subtitle V the following:

''513. Space resource commercial exploration and utilization ..... 51301''.

SEC. 403. DISCLAIMER OF EXTRATERRITORIAL SOVEREIGNTY.

It is the sense of Congress that by the enactment of this Act, the United States does not thereby assert sovereignty or sovereign or exclusive rights or jurisdiction over, or the ownership of, any celestial body.

SA 2806. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for Mr. ISAKSON) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1203, to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the processing by the Department of Veterans Affairs of claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; as follows:

Beginning on page 29, strike line 1 and all that follows through page 32, line 20, and insert the following:

SEC. 112. REPORTS ON PUBLIC ACCESS TO DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS RESEARCH.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on increasing public access to scientific publications and digital data from research funded by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(b) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) Identification of where on the Internet website of the Department the public will be able to access results of research funded by the Department or be referred to other sources to access the results of research funded by the Department.

(2) A description of the progress made by the Department in meeting public access requirements set forth in the Federal Register notice entitled ''Policy and Implementation Plan for Public Access to Scientific Publications and Digital Data from Research Funded by the Department of Veterans Affairs'' (80 Fed. Reg. 60751), including the following:

(A) Compliance of Department investigators with requirements relating to ensuring that research funded by the Department is accessible by the public.

(B) Ensuring data management plans of the Department include provisions for long-term preservation of the scientific data resulting from research funded by the Department.

(3) An explanation of the factors used to evaluate the merit of data management plans of research funded by the Veterans Health Administration.

(4) An explanation of the process of the Department in effect that enables stakeholders to petition a change to the embargo period for a specific field and the factors considered during such process.

On page 33, line 6, strike ''45'' and insert ''72''.

On page 43, strike lines 7 through 11 and insert the following:

(a) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the education and training program required under section 7302(a)(1) of title 38, United States Code, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall include education and training of marriage and family therapists and licensed professional mental health counselors.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Beginning on page 43, strike line 19 and all that follows through page 44, line 9.

Beginning on page 65, strike line 3 and all that follows through page 70, line 8.

Beginning on page 91, strike line 22 and all that follows through page 92, line 1, and insert the following:

(a) IN GENERAL.—During the 10-year period beginning on September 26, 2015, the second sentence of subsection (c) of section 3684 of title 38, United States Code, shall be applied—

(1) by substituting ''$8'' for ''$12''; and

(2) by substituting ''$12'' for ''$15''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 406 of the Department of Veterans Affairs Expiring Authorities Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–175; 38 U.S.C. 3684 note), as amended by section 410 of the Department of Veterans Affairs Expiring Authorities Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–58), is hereby repealed.

SA 2807. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for Mr. BLUMENTHAL) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 302, expressing the sense of the Senate in support of Israel and in condemnation of Palestinian terror attacks; as follows:

On page 5, line 1, strike ''the President and''.

SA 2808. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for Mr. BLUMENTHAL) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 302, expressing the sense of the Senate in support of Israel and in condemnation of Palestinian terror attacks; as follows:

Insert after the eleventh whereas clause of the preamble the following:

Whereas President Barack Obama condemned in the strongest terms Palestinian violence against innocent Israeli citizens and expressed his ''strong belief that Israel has not just the right, but the obligation to protect itself'';

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on November 10, 2015, at 9 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on November 10, 2015, at 9:45 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on November 10, 2015, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Update on the Campaign against ISIS in Syria.''

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on November 10, 2015, at 2:30 p.m.

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

21ST CENTURY VETERANS BENEFITS DELIVERY ACT

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 267, S. 1203.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1203) to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the processing by the Department of Veterans Affairs of claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''21st Century Veterans Benefits Delivery and Other Improvements Act''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—HEALTH CARE MATTERS

Subtitle A—Expansion and Improvement of Health Care Benefits

Sec. 101. Improved access to appropriate immunizations for veterans.

Sec. 102. Expansion of provision of chiropractic care and services to veterans.

Subtitle B—Health Care Administration

Sec. 111. Expansion of availability of prosthetic and orthotic care for veterans.

Sec. 112. Public access to Department of Veterans Affairs research and data sharing between Departments.

Sec. 113. Revival of Intermediate Care Technician Pilot Program of Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 114. Transfer of health care provider credentialing data from Secretary of Defense to Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 115. Examination and treatment by Department of Veterans Affairs for emergency medical conditions and women in labor.

Subtitle C—Improvement of Medical Workforce

Sec. 121. Inclusion of mental health professionals in education and training program for health personnel of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 122. Expansion of qualifications for licensed mental health counselors of the Department of Veterans Affairs to include doctoral degrees.

Sec. 123. Requirement that physician assistants employed by the Department of Veterans Affairs receive competitive pay.

Sec. 124. Report on medical workforce of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

TITLE II—COMPENSATION AND OTHER BENEFITS MATTERS

Subtitle A—Benefits Claims Submission

Sec. 201. Participation of veterans service organizations in Transition Assistance Program.

Sec. 202. Requirement that Secretary of Veterans Affairs publish the average time required to adjudicate timely and untimely appeals.

Sec. 203. Determination of manner of appearance for hearings before Board of Veterans' Appeals.

Subtitle B—Practices of Regional Offices Relating to Benefits Claims

Sec. 211. Comptroller General review of claims processing performance of regional offices of Veterans Benefits Administration.

Sec. 212. Inclusion in annual budget submission of information on capacity of Veterans Benefits Administration to process benefits claims.

Sec. 213. Report on staffing levels at regional offices of Department of Veterans Affairs after transition to National Work Queue.

Sec. 214. Annual report on progress in implementing Veterans Benefits Management System.

Sec. 215. Report on plans of Secretary of Veterans Affairs to reduce inventory of non-rating workload.

Sec. 216. Sense of Congress on increased transparency relating to claims for benefits and appeals of decisions relating to benefits in Monday Morning Workload Report.

Subtitle C—Other Benefits Matters

Sec. 221. Modification of pilot program for use of contract physicians for disability examinations.

Sec. 222. Development of procedures to increase cooperation with National Guard Bureau.

Sec. 223. Review of determination of certain service in Philippines during World War II.

Sec. 224. Reports on Department disability medical examinations and prevention of unnecessary medical examinations.

Sec. 225. Sense of Congress on submittal of information relating to claims for disabilities incurred or aggravated by military sexual trauma.

TITLE III—EDUCATION MATTERS

Sec. 301. Retention of entitlement to educational assistance during certain additional periods of active duty.

Sec. 302. Reports on progress of students receiving Post-9/11 Educational Assistance.

Sec. 303. Secretary of Defense report on level of education attained by those who transfer entitlement to Post-9/11 educational assistance.

Sec. 304. Reports on educational levels attained by certain members of the Armed Forces at time of separation from the Armed Forces.

TITLE IV—EMPLOYMENT AND TRANSITION MATTERS

Sec. 401. Required coordination between Directors for Veterans' Employment and Training with State departments of labor and veterans affairs.

Sec. 402. Report on job fairs attended by one-stop career center employees at which such employees encounter veterans.

Sec. 403. Review of challenges faced by employers seeking to hire veterans and sharing of information among Federal agencies that serve veterans.

Sec. 404. Review of Transition GPS Program Core Curriculum.

Sec. 405. Modification of requirement for provision of preseparation counseling.

TITLE V—VETERAN SMALL BUSINESS MATTERS

Sec. 501. Modification of treatment under contracting goals and preferences of Department of Veterans Affairs for small businesses owned by veterans of small businesses after death of disabled veteran owners.

Sec. 502. Treatment of businesses after deaths of servicemember-owners for purposes of Department of Veterans Affairs contracting goals and preferences.

TITLE VI—BURIAL MATTERS

Sec. 601. Department of Veterans Affairs study on matters relating to burial of unclaimed remains of veterans in national cemeteries.

TITLE VII—OTHER MATTERS

Sec. 701. Honoring as veterans certain persons who performed service in the reserve components of the Armed Forces.

Sec. 702. Report on Laotian military support of Armed Forces of the United States during Vietnam War.

Sec. 703. Restoration of prior reporting fee multipliers.

TITLE I—HEALTH CARE MATTERS

Subtitle A—Expansion and Improvement of Health Care Benefits

SEC. 101. IMPROVED ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE IMMUNIZATIONS FOR VETERANS.

(a) INCLUSION OF RECOMMENDED ADULT IMMUNIZATIONS AS MEDICAL SERVICES.—

(1) COVERED BENEFIT.—Subparagraph (F) of section 1701(9) of title 38, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(F) immunizations against infectious diseases, including each immunization on the recommended adult immunization schedule at the time such immunization is indicated on that schedule;''.

(2) RECOMMENDED ADULT IMMUNIZATION SCHEDULE DEFINED.—Section 1701 of such title is amended by adding after paragraph (9) the following new paragraph:

''(10) The term 'recommended adult immunization schedule' means the schedule established (and periodically reviewed and, as appropriate, revised) by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices established by the Secretary of Health and Human Services and delegated to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.''.

(b) INCLUSION OF RECOMMENDED ADULT IMMUNIZATIONS IN ANNUAL REPORT.—Section 1704(1)(A) of such title is amended—

(1) in clause (i), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in clause (ii), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by inserting after clause (ii) the following new clause:

''(iii) to provide veterans each immunization on the recommended adult immunization schedule at the time such immunization is indicated on that schedule.''.

(c) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the development and implementation by the Department of Veterans Affairs of quality measures and metrics, including targets for compliance, to ensure that veterans receiving medical services under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, receive each immunization on the recommended adult immunization schedule at the time such immunization is indicated on that schedule.

(2) RECOMMENDED ADULT IMMUNIZATION SCHEDULE DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ''recommended adult immunization schedule'' has the meaning given that term in section 1701(10) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a)(2).

SEC. 102. EXPANSION OF PROVISION OF CHIROPRACTIC CARE AND SERVICES TO VETERANS.

(a) PROGRAM FOR PROVISION OF CHIROPRACTIC CARE AND SERVICES TO VETERANS.—Section 204(c) of the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care Programs Enhancement Act of 2001 (Public Law 107–135; 115 Stat. 2459; 38 U.S.C. 1710 note) is amended—

(1) by inserting ''(1)'' before ''The program''; and

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

''(2) The program shall be carried out at not fewer than two medical centers or clinics in each Veterans Integrated Service Network by not later than two years after the date of the enactment of the 21st Century Veterans Benefits Delivery and Other Improvements Act, and at not fewer than 50 percent of all medical centers in each Veterans Integrated Service Network by not later than three years after such date of enactment.''.

(b) EXPANDED CHIROPRACTOR SERVICES AVAILABLE TO VETERANS.—

(1) MEDICAL SERVICES.—Paragraph (6) of section 1701 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(H) Chiropractic services.''.

(2) REHABILITATIVE SERVICES.—Paragraph (8) of such section is amended by inserting ''chiropractic,'' after ''counseling,''.

(3) PREVENTIVE HEALTH SERVICES.—Paragraph (9) of such section is amended—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (F) through (K) as subparagraphs (G) through (L), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after subparagraph (E) the following new subparagraph (F):

''(F) periodic and preventive chiropractic examinations and services;''.

Subtitle B—Health Care Administration

SEC. 111. EXPANSION OF AVAILABILITY OF PROSTHETIC AND ORTHOTIC CARE FOR VETERANS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OR EXPANSION OF ADVANCED DEGREE PROGRAMS TO EXPAND AVAILABILITY OF PROVISION OF CARE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall work with institutions of higher education to develop partnerships for the establishment or expansion of programs of advanced degrees in prosthetics and orthotics in order to improve and enhance the availability of high quality prosthetic and orthotic care for veterans.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the effective date specified in subsection (d), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report setting forth a plan for carrying out subsection (a). The Secretary shall develop the plan in consultation with veterans service organizations, institutions of higher education with accredited degree programs in prosthetics and orthotics, and representatives of the prosthetics and orthotics field.

(c) FUNDING.—

(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is hereby authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Veterans Affairs, $5,000,000 to carry out this section.

(2) AVAILABILITY.—The amount authorized to be appropriated by paragraph (1) shall remain available for expenditure until September 30, 2019.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 112. PUBLIC ACCESS TO DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS RESEARCH AND DATA SHARING BETWEEN DEPARTMENTS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERNET WEBSITE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall make available on an Internet website of the Department of Veterans Affairs available to the public the following:

(1) Data files that contain information on research of the Department.

(2) A data dictionary on each data file.

(3) Instructions for how to obtain access to each data file for use in research.

(b) PUBLIC ACCESS TO MANUSCRIPTS ON DEPARTMENT FUNDED RESEARCH.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Beginning not later than 18 months after the effective date specified in subsection (e), the Secretary shall require, as a condition on the use of any data gathered or formulated from research funded by the Department, that any final, peer-reviewed manuscript prepared for publication that uses such data be submitted to the Secretary for deposit in the digital archive under paragraph (2) and publication under paragraph (3).

(2) DIGITAL ARCHIVE.—Not later than 18 months after the effective date specified in subsection (e), the Secretary shall—

(A) establish a digital archive consisting of manuscripts described in paragraph (1); or

(B) partner with another executive agency to compile such manuscripts in a digital archive.

(3) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—

(A) AVAILABILITY OF ARCHIVE.—The Secretary shall ensure that the digital archive under paragraph (2) and the contents of such archive are available to the public via a publicly accessible Internet website at no cost to the public.

(B) AVAILABILITY OF MANUSCRIPTS.—The Secretary shall ensure that each manuscript submitted to the Secretary under paragraph (1) is available to the public under subparagraph (A) not later than one year after the official date on which the manuscript is otherwise published.

(4) CONSISTENT WITH COPYRIGHT LAW.—The Secretary shall carry out this subsection in a manner consistent with applicable copyright law.

(5) ANNUAL REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date the Secretary begins making manuscripts available to the public under this subsection and not less frequently than once each year thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the implementation of this subsection during the most recent one-year period.

(B) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include for the period of the report:

(i) The number of manuscripts submitted under paragraph (1).

(ii) The titles of such manuscripts.

(iii) The authors of such manuscripts.

(iv) For each such manuscript, the name and issue number or volume number, as the case may be, of the journal or other publication in which such manuscript was published.

(c) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DATA SHARING BETWEEN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—Not later than one year after the effective date specified in subsection (e), the Department of Veterans Affairs-Department of Defense Joint Executive Committee established by section 320(a) of title 38, United States Code, shall submit to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Defense options and recommendations for the establishment of a program for long-term cooperation and data sharing between and within the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense to facilitate research on outcomes of military service, readjustment after combat deployment, and other topics of importance to the following:

(1) Veterans.

(2) Members of the Armed Forces.

(3) Family members of veterans.

(4) Family members of members of the Armed Forces.

(5) Members of communities that have a significant population of veterans or members of the Armed Forces.

(d) EXECUTIVE AGENCY DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''executive agency'' has the meaning given that term in section 133 of title 41, United States Code.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 113. REVIVAL OF INTERMEDIATE CARE TECHNICIAN PILOT PROGRAM OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) REVIVAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall revive the Intermediate Care Technician Pilot Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs that was carried out by the Secretary between January 2013 and February 2014.

(b) TECHNICIANS.—

(1) SELECTION.—The Secretary shall select not less than 45 intermediate care technicians to participate in the pilot program.

(2) FACILITIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Any intermediate care technician hired pursuant to paragraph (1) may be assigned to a medical facility of the Department as determined by the Secretary for purposes of this section.

(B) PRIORITY.—In assigning intermediate care technicians under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall give priority to facilities at which veterans have the longest wait times for appointments for the receipt of hospital care or medical services from the Department, as determined by the Secretary for purposes of this section.

(c) TERMINATION.—The Secretary shall carry out the pilot program under subsection (a) during the three-year period beginning on the effective date specified in subsection (e).

(d) HOSPITAL CARE AND MEDICAL SERVICES DEFINED.—In this section, the terms ''hospital care'' and ''medical services'' have the meanings given such terms in section 1701 of title 38, United States Code.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 114. TRANSFER OF HEALTH CARE PROVIDER CREDENTIALING DATA FROM SECRETARY OF DEFENSE TO SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In a case in which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs hires a covered health care provider, the Secretary of Defense shall, after receiving a request from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for the credentialing data of the Secretary of Defense relating to such health care provider, transfer to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs such credentialing data.

(b) COVERED HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS.—For purposes of this section, a covered provider is a health care provider who—

(1) is or was employed by the Secretary of Defense;

(2) provides or provided health care related services as part of such employment; and

(3) was credentialed by the Secretary of Defense.

(c) POLICIES AND REGULATIONS.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Defense shall establish such policies and promulgate such regulations as may be necessary to carry out this section.

(d) CREDENTIALING DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''credentialing'' means the systematic process of screening and evaluating qualifications and other credentials, including licensure, required education, relevant training and experience, and current competence and health status.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 115. EXAMINATION AND TREATMENT BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL CONDITIONS AND WOMEN IN LABOR.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter VIII of chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 1784 the following new section:

''§ 1784A. Examination and treatment for emergency medical conditions and women in labor

''(a) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a hospital of the Department that has an emergency department, if any individual comes to the hospital or the campus of the hospital and a request is made on behalf of the individual for examination or treatment for a medical condition, the hospital must provide for an appropriate medical screening examination within the capability of the emergency department, including ancillary services routinely available to the emergency department, to determine whether or not an emergency medical condition exists.

''(b) NECESSARY STABILIZING TREATMENT FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL CONDITIONS AND LABOR.—(1) If any individual comes to a hospital of the Department that has an emergency department or the campus of such a hospital and the hospital determines that the individual has an emergency medical condition, the hospital must provide either—

''(A) within the staff and facilities available at the hospital, for such further medical examination and such treatment as may be required to stabilize the medical condition; or

''(B) for transfer of the individual to another medical facility in accordance with subsection (c).

''(2) A hospital is deemed to meet the requirement of paragraph (1)(A) with respect to an individual if the hospital offers the individual the further medical examination and treatment described in that paragraph and informs the individual (or a person acting on behalf of the individual) of the risks and benefits to the individual of such examination and treatment, but the individual (or a person acting on behalf of the individual) refuses to consent to the examination and treatment. The hospital shall take all reasonable steps to secure the written informed consent of the individual (or person) to refuse such examination and treatment.

''(3) A hospital is deemed to meet the requirement of paragraph (1) with respect to an individual if the hospital offers to transfer the individual to another medical facility in accordance with subsection (c) and informs the individual (or a person acting on behalf of the individual) of the risks and benefits to the individual of such transfer, but the individual (or a person acting on behalf of the individual) refuses to consent to the transfer. The hospital shall take all reasonable steps to secure the written informed consent of the individual (or person) to refuse such transfer.

''(c) RESTRICTING TRANSFERS UNTIL INDIVIDUAL STABILIZED.—(1) If an individual at a hospital of the Department has an emergency medical condition that has not been stabilized, the hospital may not transfer the individual unless—

''(A)(i) the individual (or a legally responsible person acting on behalf of the individual), after being informed of the obligations of the hospital under this section and of the risk of transfer, requests, in writing, transfer to another medical facility;

''(ii) a physician of the Department has signed a certification that, based upon the information available at the time of transfer, the medical benefits reasonably expected from the provision of appropriate medical treatment at another medical facility outweigh the increased risks to the individual and, in the case of labor, to the unborn child from effecting the transfer; or

''(iii) if a physician of the Department is not physically present in the emergency department at the time an individual is transferred, a qualified medical person (as defined by the Secretary for purposes of this section) has signed a certification described in clause (ii) after a physician of the Department, in consultation with the person, has made the determination described in such clause, and subsequently countersigns the certification; and

''(B) the transfer is an appropriate transfer to that facility.

''(2) A certification described in clause (ii) or (iii) of paragraph (1)(A) shall include a summary of the risks and benefits upon which the certification is based.

''(3) For purposes of paragraph (1)(B), an appropriate transfer to a medical facility is a transfer—

''(A) in which the transferring hospital provides the medical treatment within its capacity that minimizes the risks to the health of the individual and, in the case of a woman in labor, the health of the unborn child;

''(B) in which the receiving facility—

''(i) has available space and qualified personnel for the treatment of the individual; and

''(ii) has agreed to accept transfer of the individual and to provide appropriate medical treatment;

''(C) in which the transferring hospital sends to the receiving facility all medical records (or copies thereof) available at the time of the transfer relating to the emergency medical condition for which the individual has presented, including—

''(i) observations of signs or symptoms;

''(ii) preliminary diagnosis;

''(iii) treatment provided;

''(iv) the results of any tests; and

''(v) the informed written consent or certification (or copy thereof) provided under paragraph (1)(A);

''(D) in which the transfer is effected through qualified personnel and transportation equipment, including the use of necessary and medically appropriate life support measures during the transfer; and

''(E) that meets such other requirements as the Secretary considers necessary in the interest of the health and safety of individuals transferred.

''(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) The term 'campus' means, with respect to a hospital of the Department—

''(A) the physical area immediately adjacent to the main buildings of the hospital;

''(B) other areas and structures that are not strictly contiguous to the main buildings but are located not less than 250 yards from the main buildings; and

''(C) any other areas determined by the Secretary to be part of the campus of the hospital.

''(2) The term 'emergency medical condition' means—

''(A) a medical condition manifesting itself by acute symptoms of sufficient severity (including severe pain) such that the absence of immediate medical attention could reasonably be expected to result in—

''(i) placing the health of the individual (or, with respect to a pregnant woman, the health of the woman or her unborn child) in serious jeopardy;

''(ii) serious impairment to bodily functions; or

''(iii) serious dysfunction of any bodily organ or part; or

''(B) with respect to a pregnant woman who is having contractions—

''(i) that there is inadequate time to effect a safe transfer to another hospital before delivery; or

''(ii) that transfer may pose a threat to the health or safety of the woman or the unborn child.

''(3)(A) The term 'to stabilize' means, with respect to an emergency medical condition described in paragraph (2)(A), to provide such medical treatment of the condition as may be necessary to assure, within reasonable medical probability, that no material deterioration of the condition is likely to result from or occur during the transfer of the individual from a facility, or, with respect to an emergency medical condition described in paragraph (2)(B), to deliver (including the placenta).

''(B) The term 'stabilized' means, with respect to an emergency medical condition described in paragraph (2)(A), that no material deterioration of the condition is likely, within reasonable medical probability, to result from or occur during the transfer of the individual from a facility, or, with respect to an emergency medical condition described in paragraph (2)(B), that the woman has delivered (including the placenta).

''(4) The term 'transfer' means the movement (including the discharge) of an individual outside the facilities of a hospital of the Department at the direction of any person employed by (or affiliated or associated, directly or indirectly, with) the hospital, but does not include such a movement of an individual who—

''(A) has been declared dead; or

''(B) leaves the facility without the permission of any such person.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 17 of such title is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1784 the following new item:

''Sec. 1784A. Examination and treatment for emergency medical conditions and women in labor.''.

Subtitle C—Improvement of Medical Workforce

SEC. 121. INCLUSION OF MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAM FOR HEALTH PERSONNEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

In carrying out the education and training program required under section 7302(a)(1) of title 38, United States Code, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall include education and training of marriage and family therapists and licensed professional mental health counselors.

SEC. 122. EXPANSION OF QUALIFICATIONS FOR LICENSED MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO INCLUDE DOCTORAL DEGREES.

Section 7402(b)(11)(A) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting ''or doctoral degree'' after ''master's degree''.

SEC. 123. REQUIREMENT THAT PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS EMPLOYED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS RECEIVE COMPETITIVE PAY.

Section 7451(a)(2) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as subparagraph (C);

(2) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following new subparagraph (B):

''(B) Physician assistant.''; and

(3) in subparagraph (C), as redesignated by paragraph (1), by striking ''and registered nurse'' and inserting ''registered nurse, and physician assistant''.

SEC. 124. REPORT ON MEDICAL WORKFORCE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the medical workforce of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) With respect to licensed professional mental health counselors and marriage and family therapists of the Department—

(A) how many such counselors and therapists are currently enrolled in the mental health professionals trainee program of the Department;

(B) how many such counselors and therapists are expected to enroll in the mental health professionals trainee program of the Department during the 180-day period beginning on the date of the submittal of the report;

(C) a description of the eligibility criteria for such counselors and therapists as compared to other behavioral health professions in the Department;

(D) a description of the objectives, goals, and timing of the Department with respect to increasing the representation of such counselors and therapists in the behavioral health workforce of the Department; and

(E) a description of the actions taken by the Secretary, in consultation with the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, to create an occupational series for such counselors and therapists and a timeline for the creation of such an occupational series.

(2) A breakdown of spending by the Department in connection with the education debt reduction program of the Department under subchapter VII of chapter 76 of title 38, United States Code, including—

(A) the amount spent by the Department in debt reduction payments during the three-year period preceding the submittal of the report disaggregated by the medical profession of the individual receiving the payments;

(B) a description of how the Department prioritizes such spending by medical profession, including an assessment of whether such priority reflects the five occupations identified in the most recent determination by the Inspector General of the Department of Veterans Affairs as having the largest staffing shortages in the Veterans Health Administration; and

(C) a description of the actions taken by the Secretary to increase the effectiveness of such spending for purposes of recruitment of health care providers to the Department, including efforts to more consistently include eligibility for the education debt reduction program in vacancy announcements of positions for health care providers at the Department.

(3) A description of any impediments to the delivery by the Department of telemedicine services to veterans and any actions taken by the Department to address such impediments, including with respect to—

(A) restrictions under Federal or State laws;

(B) licensing or credentialing issues for health care providers, including non-Department health care providers, practicing telemedicine with a veteran located in a different State;

(C) the effect of limited broadband access or limited information technology capabilities on the delivery of health care;

(D) the distance a veteran is required to travel to access a facility or clinic with telemedicine capabilities;

(E) the effect on the provision of telemedicine services to veterans of policies of and limited liability protection for certain entities; and

(F) issues relating to reimbursement and travel limitations for veterans that affect the participation of non-Department health care providers in the telemedicine program.

(4) An update on the efforts of the Secretary to offer training opportunities in telemedicine to medical residents in medical facilities of the Department that use telemedicine, consistent with medical residency program requirements established by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, as required in section 108(b) of the Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–154; 38 U.S.C. 7406 note).

(5) An assessment of the development and implementation by the Secretary of succession planning policies to address the prevalence of vacancies in positions in the Veterans Health Administration of more than 180 days, including the development of an enterprise position management system to more effectively identify, track, and resolve such vacancies.

(6) A description of the actions taken by the Secretary, in consultation with the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, to address any impediments to the timely appointment and determination of qualifications for Directors of Veterans Integrated Service Networks and Medical Directors of the Department.

TITLE II—COMPENSATION AND OTHER BENEFITS MATTERS

Subtitle A—Benefits Claims Submission

SEC. 201. PARTICIPATION OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS IN TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Defense, in collaboration with the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, should establish a process by which a representative of a veterans service organization may be present at any portion of the program carried out under section 1144 of title 10, United States Code, relating to the submittal of claims to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for compensation under chapter 11 or 13 of title 38, United States Code.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to Congress a report on participation of veterans service organizations in the program carried out under section 1144 of title 10, United States Code.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) An assessment of the compliance of facilities of the Department of Defense with the directives included in the memorandum of the Secretary of Defense entitled ''Installation Access and Support Services for Nonprofit Non-Federal Entities'' and dated December 23, 2014.

(B) The number of military bases that have complied with such directives.

(C) How many veterans service organizations have been present at a portion of a program as described in subsection (a).

(c) VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''veterans service organization'' means any organization recognized by the Secretary for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38.

SEC. 202. REQUIREMENT THAT SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PUBLISH THE AVERAGE TIME REQUIRED TO ADJUDICATE TIMELY AND UNTIMELY APPEALS.

(a) PUBLICATION REQUIREMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—On an ongoing basis, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall make available to the public the following:

(A) The average length of time to adjudicate a timely appeal.

(B) The average length of time to adjudicate an untimely appeal.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Paragraph (1) shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply until the date that is three years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 39 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on whether publication pursuant to subsection (a)(1) has had an effect on the number of timely appeals filed.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) The number of appeals and timely appeals that were filed during the one-year period ending on the effective date specified in subsection (a)(2).

(B) The number of appeals and timely appeals that were filed during the one-year period ending on the date that is two years after the effective date specified in subsection (a)(2).

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPEAL.—The term ''appeal'' means a notice of disagreement filed pursuant to section 7105(a) of title 38, United States Code, in response to notice of the result of an initial review or determination regarding a claim for a benefit under a law administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(2) TIMELY.—The term ''timely'' with respect to an appeal means that the notice of disagreement was filed not more than 180 days after the date of mailing of the notice of the result of the initial review or determination described in paragraph (1).

(3) UNTIMELY.—The term ''untimely'' with respect to an appeal means the notice of disagreement was filed more than 180 days after the date of mailing of the notice of the result of the initial review or determination described in paragraph (1).

SEC. 203. DETERMINATION OF MANNER OF APPEARANCE FOR HEARINGS BEFORE BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7107 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (e);

(2) by redesignating subsections (d) and (f) as subsections (f) and (g), respectively;

(3) by inserting after subsection (c) the following new subsections (d) and (e):

''(d)(1) Subject to paragraph (2), a hearing before the Board shall be conducted, as the Board considers appropriate—

''(A) in person; or

''(B) through picture and voice transmission, by electronic or other means, in such manner that the appellant is not present in the same location as the member or members of the Board during the hearing.

''(2) Upon request by an appellant, a hearing before the Board shall be conducted, as the appellant considers appropriate—

''(A) in person; or

''(B) through picture and voice transmission as described in paragraph (1)(B).

''(e)(1) In a case in which a hearing before the Board is to be conducted through picture and voice transmission as described in subsection (d)(1)(B), the Secretary shall provide suitable facilities and equipment to the Board or other components of the Department to enable an appellant located at an appropriate facility within the area served by a regional office to participate as so described.

''(2) Any hearing conducted through picture and voice transmission as described in subsection (d)(1)(B) shall be conducted in the same manner as, and shall be considered the equivalent of, a personal hearing.''; and

(4) in subsection (f)(1), as redesignated by paragraph (2), by striking ''An appellant may request'' and all that follows through ''office of the Department'' and inserting ''In a case in which a hearing before the Board is to be conducted in person, the hearing shall be held at the principal location of the Board or at a facility of the Department located within the area served by a regional office of the Department''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Subsection (a)(1) of such section is amended by striking ''in

subsection (f)'' and inserting ''in subsection (g)''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to cases received by the Board of Veterans' Appeals pursuant to notices of disagreement submitted on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Subtitle B—Practices of Regional Offices Relating to Benefits Claims

SEC. 211. COMPTROLLER GENERAL REVIEW OF CLAIMS PROCESSING PERFORMANCE OF REGIONAL OFFICES OF VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION.

(a) REVIEW REQUIRED.—Not later than 15 months after the effective date specified in subsection (e), the Comptroller General of the United States shall complete a review of the regional offices of the Veterans Benefits Administration to help the Veterans Benefits Administration achieve more consistent performance in the processing of claims for disability compensation.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The review required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) An identification of the following:

(A) The factors, including management practices, that distinguish higher performing regional offices from other regional offices with respect to claims for disability compensation.

(B) The best practices employed by higher performing regional offices that distinguish the performance of such offices from other regional offices.

(C) Such other management practices or tools as the Comptroller General determines could be used to improve the performance of regional offices.

(2) An assessment of the effectiveness of communication with respect to the processing of claims for disability compensation between the regional offices and veterans service organizations and caseworkers employed by Members of Congress.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 15 months after the effective date specified in subsection (e), the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the results of the review completed under subsection (a).

(d) VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''veterans service organization'' means any organization recognized by the Secretary for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 212. INCLUSION IN ANNUAL BUDGET SUBMISSION OF INFORMATION ON CAPACITY OF VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION TO PROCESS BENEFITS CLAIMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Along with the supporting information included in the budget submitted to Congress by the President pursuant to section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, the President shall include information on the capacity of the Veterans Benefits Administration to process claims for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, including information described in subsection (b), during the fiscal year covered by the budget with which the information is submitted.

(b) INFORMATION DESCRIBED.—The information described in this subsection is the following:

(1) An estimate of the average number of claims for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary, excluding such claims completed during mandatory overtime, that a single full-time equivalent employee of the Administration can process in a year, based on the following:

(A) A time and motion study that the Secretary shall conduct on the processing of such claims.

(B) Such other information relating to such claims as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(2) A description of the actions the Secretary will take to improve the processing of such claims.

(3) An assessment of the actions identified by the Secretary under paragraph (2) in the previous year and an identification of the effects of those actions.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall apply with respect to any budget submitted as described in subsection (a) with respect to any fiscal year after fiscal year 2017.

SEC. 213. REPORT ON STAFFING LEVELS AT REGIONAL OFFICES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AFTER TRANSITION TO NATIONAL WORK QUEUE.

Not later than 15 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the criteria and procedures that the Secretary will use to determine appropriate staffing levels at the regional offices of the Department once the Department has transitioned to using the National Work Queue for the distribution of the claims processing workload.

SEC. 214. ANNUAL REPORT ON PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING VETERANS BENEFITS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than each of one year, two years, and three years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the progress of the Secretary in implementing the Veterans Benefits Management System.

(b) CONTENTS.—Each report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) An assessment of the current functionality of the Veterans Benefits Management System.

(2) Recommendations submitted to the Secretary by employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs who are involved in processing claims for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary, including veterans service representatives, rating veterans service representatives, and decision review officers, for such legislative or administrative action as the employees consider appropriate to improve the processing of such claims.

(3) Recommendations submitted to the Secretary by veterans service organizations who use the Veterans Benefits Management System for such legislative or administrative action as the veterans service organizations consider appropriate to improve such system.

(c) VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''veterans service organization'' means any organization recognized by the Secretary for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 215. REPORT ON PLANS OF SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO REDUCE INVENTORY OF NON-RATING WORKLOAD.

Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report that details the plans of the Secretary to reduce the inventory of work items listed in the Monday Morning Workload Report under End Products 130, 137, 173, 290, 400, 600, 607, 690, 930, and 960.

SEC. 216. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON INCREASED TRANSPARENCY RELATING TO CLAIMS FOR BENEFITS AND APPEALS OF DECISIONS RELATING TO BENEFITS IN MONDAY MORNING WORKLOAD REPORT.

It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs should include in each Monday Morning Workload Report published by the Secretary the following:

(1) With respect to each regional office of the Department of Veterans Affairs, the following:

(A) The number of fully developed claims for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary that have been received.

(B) The number of claims described in subparagraph (A) that are pending a decision.

(C) The number of claims described in subparagraph (A) that have been pending a decision for more than 125 days.

(2) Enhanced information on appeals of decisions relating to claims for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary that are pending, including information contained in the reports of the Department entitled ''Appeals Pending'' and ''Appeals Workload By Station''.

Subtitle C—Other Benefits Matters

SEC. 221. MODIFICATION OF PILOT PROGRAM FOR USE OF CONTRACT PHYSICIANS FOR DISABILITY EXAMINATIONS.

Section 504 of the Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–275; 38 U.S.C. 5101 note) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (c) and (d) as subsections (d) and (e), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (b) the following new subsection (c):

''(c) LICENSURE OF CONTRACT PHYSICIANS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any law regarding the licensure of physicians, a physician described in paragraph (2) may conduct an examination pursuant to a contract entered into under subsection (a) at any location in any State, the District of Columbia, or a Commonwealth, territory, or possession of the United States, so long as the examination is within the scope of the authorized duties under such contract.

''(2) PHYSICIAN DESCRIBED.—A physician described in this paragraph is a physician who—

''(A) has a current license to practice the health care profession of the physician; and

''(B) is performing authorized duties for the Department of Veterans Affairs pursuant to a contract entered into under subsection (a).''.

SEC. 222. DEVELOPMENT OF PROCEDURES TO INCREASE COOPERATION WITH NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Chief of the National Guard Bureau shall jointly develop and implement procedures, including requirements relating to timeliness, to improve the timely provision to the Secretary of such information in the possession of the Chief as the Secretary requires to process claims submitted to the Secretary for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the implementation of the procedures under subsection (a), the Secretary and the Chief shall jointly submit to Congress a report describing—

(1) the requests for information relating to records of members of the National Guard made by the Secretary to the Chief pursuant to such procedures; and

(2) the timeliness of the responses of the Chief to such requests.

SEC. 223. REVIEW OF DETERMINATION OF CERTAIN SERVICE IN PHILIPPINES DURING WORLD WAR II.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense and such military historians as the Secretary of Defense recommends, shall review the process used to determine whether a covered individual served in support of the Armed Forces of the United States during World War II in accordance with section 1002(d) of title X of Division A of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111–5; 38 U.S.C. 107 note) for purposes of determining whether such covered individual is eligible for payments described in such section.

(b) COVERED INDIVIDUALS.—In this section, a covered individual is any individual who timely submitted a claim for benefits under subsection (c) of section 1002 of title X of Division A of the

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111–5; 38 U.S.C. 107 note) based on service as described in subsection (d) of that section.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report detailing any findings, actions taken, or recommendations for legislative action with respect to the review conducted under subsection (a).

(d) PROHIBITION ON BENEFITS FOR DISQUALIFYING CONDUCT UNDER NEW PROCESS PURSUANT TO REVIEW.—If pursuant to the review conducted under subsection (a) the Secretary of Veterans Affairs determines to establish a new process for the making of payments as described in that subsection, the process shall include mechanisms to ensure that individuals are not treated as covered individuals for purposes of such payments if such individuals engaged in any disqualifying conduct during service described in that subsection, including collaboration with the enemy or criminal conduct.

SEC. 224. REPORTS ON DEPARTMENT DISABILITY MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS AND PREVENTION OF UNNECESSARY MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS.

(a) REPORT ON DISABILITY MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS FURNISHED BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the furnishing of general medical and specialty medical examinations by the Department of Veterans Affairs for purposes of adjudicating claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) The number of general medical examinations furnished by the Department during the period of fiscal years 2011 through 2014 for purposes of adjudicating claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary.

(B) The number of general medical examinations furnished by the Department during the period of fiscal years 2011 through 2014 for purposes of adjudicating a claim in which a comprehensive joint examination was conducted, but for which no disability relating to a joint, bone, or muscle had been asserted as an issue in the claim.

(C) The number of specialty medical examinations furnished by the Department during the period of fiscal years 2011 through 2014 for purposes of adjudicating a claim.

(D) The number of specialty medical examinations furnished by the Department during the period of fiscal years 2011 through 2014 for purposes of adjudicating a claim in which one or more joint examinations were conducted.

(E) A summary with citations to any medical and scientific studies that provide a basis for determining that three repetitions is adequate to determine the effect of repetitive use on functional impairments.

(F) The names of all examination reports, including general medical examinations and Disability Benefits Questionnaires, used for evaluation of compensation and pension disability claims which require measurement of repeated ranges of motion testing and the number of examinations requiring such measurements which were conducted in fiscal year 2014.

(G) The average amount of time taken by an individual conducting a medical examination to perform the three repetitions of movement of each joint.

(H) A discussion of whether there are more efficient and effective scientifically reliable methods of testing for functional loss on repetitive use of an extremity other than the three time repetition currently used by the Department.

(I) Recommendations as to the continuation of the practice of measuring functional impairment by using three repetitions of movement of each joint during the examination as a criteria for evaluating the effect of repetitive motion on functional impairment with supporting rationale.

(b) REPORT AND PLAN TO PREVENT THE ORDERING OF UNNECESSARY MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the efforts of the Secretary in reducing the necessity for in-person disability examinations and other efforts to comply with the provisions of section 5125 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) Criteria used by the Secretary to determine if a claim is eligible for the Acceptable Clinical Evidence initiative.

(B) The number of claims determined to be eligible for the Acceptable Clinical Evidence initiative during the period beginning on the date of the initiation of the initiative and ending on the date of the enactment of this Act, disaggregated—

(i) by fiscal year; and

(ii) by claims determined eligible based in whole or in part on medical evidence provided by a private health care provider.

(C) The total number of claims determined to be eligible for the Acceptable Clinical Evidence initiative that required an employee of the Department to supplement the evidence with information obtained during a telephone interview with a claimant or health care provider.

(D) Information on any other initiatives or efforts, including Disability Benefits Questionnaires, of the Department to further encourage the use of medical evidence provided by a private health care provider and reliance upon reports of a medical examination administered by a private physician if the report is sufficiently complete to be adequate for the purposes of adjudicating a claim.

(E) A plan—

(i) to measure, track, and prevent the ordering of unnecessary medical examinations when the provision by a claimant of a medical examination administered by a private physician in support of a claim for benefits under chapter 11 or 15 of title 38, United States Code, is adequate for the purpose of making a decision on that claim; and

(ii) that includes the actions the Secretary will take to eliminate any request by the Department for a medical examination in the case of a claim for benefits under chapter 11 or 15 of such title in support of which a claimant submits medical evidence or a medical opinion provided by a private health care provider that is competent, credible, probative, and otherwise adequate for purposes of making a decision on that claim.

SEC. 225. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON SUBMITTAL OF INFORMATION RELATING TO CLAIMS FOR DISABILITIES INCURRED OR AGGRAVATED BY MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs should submit to Congress information on the covered claims submitted to the Secretary during each fiscal year, including the information specified in subsection (b).

(b) ELEMENTS.—The information specified in this subsection with respect to each fiscal year is the following:

(1) The number of covered claims submitted to or considered by the Secretary during such fiscal year.

(2) Of the covered claims under paragraph (1), the number and percentage of such claims—

(A) submitted by each gender;

(B) that were approved, including the number and percentage of such approved claims submitted by each gender; and

(C) that were denied, including the number and percentage of such denied claims submitted by each gender.

(3) Of the covered claims under paragraph (1) that were approved, the number and percentage, listed by each gender, of claims assigned to each rating percentage of disability.

(4) Of the covered claims under paragraph (1) that were denied—

(A) the three most common reasons given by the Secretary under section 5104(b)(1) of title 38, United States Code, for such denials; and

(B) the number of denials that were based on the failure of a veteran to report for a medical examination.

(5) Of the covered claims under paragraph (1) that were resubmitted to the Secretary after denial in a previous adjudication—

(A) the number of such claims submitted to or considered by the Secretary during such fiscal year;

(B) the number and percentage of such claims—

(i) submitted by each gender;

(ii) that were approved, including the number and percentage of such approved claims submitted by each gender; and

(iii) that were denied, including the number and percentage of such denied claims submitted by each gender;

(C) the number and percentage, listed by each gender, of claims assigned to each rating percentage of disability; and

(D) of such claims that were again denied—

(i) the three most common reasons given by the Secretary under section 5104(b)(1) of such title for such denials; and

(ii) the number of denials that were based on the failure of a veteran to report for a medical examination.

(6) The number of covered claims that, as of the end of such fiscal year, are pending and, separately, the number of such claims on appeal.

(7) The average number of days that covered claims take to complete beginning on the date on which the claim is submitted.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COVERED CLAIMS.—The term ''covered claims'' means claims for disability compensation submitted to the Secretary based on post-traumatic stress disorder alleged to have been incurred or aggravated by military sexual trauma.

(2) MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.—The term ''military sexual trauma'' shall have the meaning specified by the Secretary for purposes of this section and shall include ''sexual harassment'' (as so specified).

TITLE III—EDUCATION MATTERS

SEC. 301. RETENTION OF ENTITLEMENT TO EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE DURING CERTAIN ADDITIONAL PERIODS OF ACTIVE DUTY.

(a) EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE ALLOWANCE.—Section 16131(c)(3)(B)(i) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by striking ''or 12304'' and inserting ''12304, 12304a, or 12304b''.

(b) EXPIRATION DATE.—Section 16133(b)(4) of such title is amended by striking ''or 12304'' and inserting ''12304, 12304a, or 12304b''.

SEC. 302. REPORTS ON PROGRESS OF STUDENTS RECEIVING POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 33 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection 3325(c)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking ''and'' after the semicolon;

(B) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4); and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following new paragraph (3):

''(3) the information received by the Secretary under section 3326 of this title; and''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new section:

''§ 3326. Report on student progress

''As a condition on approval under chapter 36 of this title of a course offered by an educational institution (as defined in section 3452 of this title), each year, each educational institution (as so defined) that received a payment in that year on behalf of an individual entitled to educational assistance under this chapter shall submit to the Secretary such information regarding the academic progress of the individual as the Secretary may require.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''3326. Report on student progress.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 303. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE REPORT ON LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED BY THOSE WHO TRANSFER ENTITLEMENT TO POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3325(b)(1) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''and'' after the semicolon; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(D) indicating the highest level of education attained by each individual who transfers a portion of the individual's entitlement to educational assistance under section 3319 of this title; and''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 304. REPORTS ON EDUCATIONAL LEVELS ATTAINED BY CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AT TIME OF SEPARATION FROM THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) ANNUAL REPORTS REQUIRED.—Each Secretary concerned shall submit to Congress each year a report on the educational levels attained by members of the Armed Forces described in subsection (b) under the jurisdiction of such Secretary who separated from the Armed Forces during the preceding year.

(b) COVERED MEMBERS.—The members of the Armed Forces described in this subsection are members of the Armed Forces who transferred unused education benefits to family members pursuant to section 3319 of title 38, United States Code, while serving as members of the Armed Forces.

(c) SECRETARY CONCERNED DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''Secretary concerned'' has the meaning given that term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

TITLE IV—EMPLOYMENT AND TRANSITION MATTERS

SEC. 401. REQUIRED COORDINATION BETWEEN DIRECTORS FOR VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING WITH STATE DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR AND VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4103 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(c) COORDINATION WITH STATE DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR AND VETERANS AFFAIRS.—Each Director for Veterans' Employment and Training for a State shall coordinate the Director's activities under this chapter with the State department of labor and the State department of veterans affairs.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 402. REPORT ON JOB FAIRS ATTENDED BY ONE-STOP CAREER CENTER EMPLOYEES AT WHICH SUCH EMPLOYEES ENCOUNTER VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 136(d)(1) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2871(d)(1)) is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence: ''The report also shall include information, for the year preceding the year the report is submitted, on the number of job fairs attended by One-Stop Career Center employees at which the employees had contact with a veteran, and the number of veterans contacted at each such job fair.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 403. REVIEW OF CHALLENGES FACED BY EMPLOYERS SEEKING TO HIRE VETERANS AND SHARING OF INFORMATION AMONG FEDERAL AGENCIES THAT SERVE VETERANS.

(a) REVIEW.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Labor, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, shall conduct a review of—

(A) the challenges faced by employers seeking to hire veterans; and

(B) information sharing among Federal departments and agencies that serve veterans and members of the Armed Forces who are separating from service.

(2) MATTERS REVIEWED.—In conducting the review required by paragraph (1), the Secretary of Labor shall examine the following:

(A) The barriers employers face in gaining information identifying veterans who are seeking jobs.

(B) The extent and quality of information sharing among Federal departments and agencies that serve veterans and members of the Armed Forces who are separating from service, including how the departments and agencies may more easily connect employers with such veterans and members.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the effective date specified in subsection (c), the Secretary of Labor shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the review conducted under subsection (a).

(2) CONTENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) Recommendations for addressing the barriers described in subsection (a)(2)(A).

(B) Recommendations for improving information sharing described in subsection (a)(2)(B).

(3) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means—

(A) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 404. REVIEW OF TRANSITION GPS PROGRAM CORE CURRICULUM.

(a) REVIEW.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Labor, shall conduct a review of the Department of Defense Transition GPS Program Core Curriculum in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) MATTERS REVIEWED.—The review shall examine the following:

(A) The Department of Defense Transition GPS Program Core Curriculum in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(B) The roles and responsibilities of each Federal department participating in the Transition GPS Program and whether the various roles and responsibilities of the Federal departments are adequately aligned with one another.

(C) The allotment of time spent on issues under the jurisdiction of each Federal department participating in the Transition GPS Program and whether the allotment is adequate to provide members of the Armed Forces with all the information the members need regarding important benefits that can assist members in transitioning out of military service.

(D) Whether any of the information in the three optional tracks in the Transition GPS Program Core Curriculum should be addressed more appropriately in mandatory tracks rather than optional tracks.

(E) The benefits of and obstacles to establishing—

(i) a standard implementation plan of long-term outcome measures for the Transition GPS Program; and

(ii) a comprehensive system of metrics for such measures.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Labor, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the review conducted under subsection (a).

(2) CONTENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) Recommendations for improving the Department of Defense Transition GPS Program Core Curriculum in order to more accurately address the needs of members of the Armed Forces transitioning out of military service.

(B) Recommendations for improving the roles and responsibilities described in subsection (a)(2)(B).

(C) Recommendations for improving the allotment of time described in subsection (a)(2)(C).

(D) Such recommendations as the Secretary of Defense may have regarding the optional and mandatory tracks in the Transition GPS Program Core Curriculum.

(E) Such recommendations as the Secretary of Defense may have with respect to the outcome measures and metrics described in subsection (a)(2)(E).

(F) Identification of such other areas of concern as the Secretary of Defense may have with respect to the Transition GPS Program and such recommendations for legislative or administrative action as the Secretary may have to address such concerns.

(3) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means—

(A) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 405. MODIFICATION OF REQUIREMENT FOR PROVISION OF PRESEPARATION COUNSELING.

(a) CLARIFICATION OF REQUIREMENT FOR 180 CONTINUOUS DAYS OF ACTIVE DUTY SERVICE.—Subparagraph (A) of section 1142(a)(4) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by inserting ''continuous'' before ''180 days''.

(b) EXCLUSION OF TRAINING FROM PERIODS OF ACTIVE DUTY.—Such section is further amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(C) For purposes of subparagraph (A), the term 'active duty' does not include full-time training duty, annual training duty, and attendance, while in the active military service, at a school designated as a service school by law or by the Secretary concerned.''.

TITLE V—VETERAN SMALL BUSINESS MATTERS

SEC. 501. MODIFICATION OF TREATMENT UNDER CONTRACTING GOALS AND PREFERENCES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES OWNED BY VETERANS OF SMALL BUSINESSES AFTER DEATH OF DISABLED VETERAN OWNERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 8127(h) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking ''rated as'' and all that follows through ''disability.'' and inserting a period; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by amending subparagraph (C) to read as follows:

''(C) The date that—

''(i) in the case of a surviving spouse of a veteran with a service-connected disability rated as 100 percent disabling or who dies as a result of a service-connected disability, is 10 years after the date of the veteran's death; or

''(ii) in the case of a surviving spouse of a veteran with a service-connected disability rated as less than 100 percent disabling who does not die as a result of a service-connected disability, is three years after the date of the veteran's death.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply with respect to applications received pursuant to section 8127(f)(2) of title 38, United States Code, that are verified on or after such date.

SEC. 502. TREATMENT OF BUSINESSES AFTER DEATHS OF SERVICEMEMBER-OWNERS FOR PURPOSES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CONTRACTING GOALS AND PREFERENCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 8127 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (i) through (l) as subsections (j) through (m), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (h) the following new subsection (i):

''(i) TREATMENT OF BUSINESSES AFTER DEATH OF SERVICEMEMBER-OWNER.—(1) If a member of the Armed Forces owns at least 51 percent of a small business concern and such member is killed in line of duty in the active military, naval, or air service, the surviving spouse or dependent child of such member who acquires such ownership rights in such small business concern shall, for the period described in paragraph (2), be treated as if the surviving spouse or dependent child were a veteran with a service-connected disability for purposes of determining the status of the small business concern as a small business concern owned and controlled by veterans for purposes of contracting goals and preferences under this section.

''(2) The period referred to in paragraph (1) is the period beginning on the date on which the member of the Armed Forces dies and ending on the date as follows:

''(A) In the case of a surviving spouse, the earliest of the following dates:

''(i) The date on which the surviving spouse remarries.

''(ii) The date on which the surviving spouse relinquishes an ownership interest in the small business concern and no longer owns at least 51 percent of such small business concern.

''(iii) The date that is ten years after the date of the member's death.

''(B) In the case of a dependent child, the earliest of the following dates:

''(i) The date on which the surviving dependent child relinquishes an ownership interest in the small business concern and no longer owns at least 51 percent of such small business concern.

''(ii) The date that is ten years after the date of the member's death.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Subsection (i) of section 8127 of such title, as added by subsection (a), shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply with respect to the deaths of members of the Armed Forces occurring on or after such date.

TITLE VI—BURIAL MATTERS

SEC. 601. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS STUDY ON MATTERS RELATING TO BURIAL OF UNCLAIMED REMAINS OF VETERANS IN NATIONAL CEMETERIES.

(a) STUDY AND REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than one year after the effective date specified in subsection (d), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall—

(1) complete a study on matters relating to the interring of unclaimed remains of veterans in national cemeteries under the control of the National Cemetery Administration; and

(2) submit to Congress a report on the findings of the Secretary with respect to the study required under paragraph (1).

(b) MATTERS STUDIED.—The matters studied under subsection (a)(1) shall include the following:

(1) Determining the scope of issues relating to unclaimed remains of veterans, including an estimate of the number of unclaimed remains of veterans.

(2) Assessing the effectiveness of the procedures of the Department of Veterans Affairs for working with persons or entities having custody of unclaimed remains to facilitate interment of unclaimed remains of veterans in national cemeteries under the control of the National Cemetery Administration.

(3) Assessing State and local laws that affect the ability of the Secretary to inter unclaimed remains of veterans in national cemeteries under the control of the National Cemetery Administration.

(4) Developing recommendations for such legislative or administrative action as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(c) METHODOLOGY.—

(1) NUMBER OF UNCLAIMED REMAINS.—In estimating the number of unclaimed remains of veterans under subsection (b)(1), the Secretary may review such subset of applicable entities as the Secretary considers appropriate, including a subset of funeral homes and coroner offices that possess unclaimed veterans remains.

(2) ASSESSMENT OF STATE AND LOCAL LAWS.—In assessing State and local laws under subsection (b)(3), the Secretary may assess such sample of applicable State and local laws as the Secretary considers appropriate in lieu of reviewing all applicable State and local laws.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

TITLE VII—OTHER MATTERS

SEC. 701. HONORING AS VETERANS CERTAIN PERSONS WHO PERFORMED SERVICE IN THE RESERVE COMPONENTS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

Any person who is entitled under chapter 1223 of title 10, United States Code, to retired pay for nonregular service or, but for age, would be entitled under such chapter to retired pay for nonregular service shall be honored as a veteran but shall not be entitled to any benefit by reason of this honor.

SEC. 702. REPORT ON LAOTIAN MILITARY SUPPORT OF ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES DURING VIETNAM WAR.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the effective date specified in subsection (c), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense and such agencies and individuals as the Secretary of Veterans Affairs considers appropriate, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on—

(1) the extent to which Laotian military forces provided combat support to the Armed Forces of the United States between February 28, 1961, and May 15, 1975;

(2) whether the current classification by the Civilian/Military Service Review Board of the Department of Defense of service by individuals of Hmong ethnicity is appropriate; and

(3) such recommendations as the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may have for legislative action.

(b) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—In this section, the term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means—

(1) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 703. RESTORATION OF PRIOR REPORTING FEE MULTIPLIERS.

During the 10-year period beginning on September 26, 2015, the second sentence of subsection (c) of section 3684 of title 38, United States Code, shall be applied—

(1) by substituting ''$7'' for ''$12''; and

(2) by substituting ''$11'' for ''$15''.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Isakson amendment be agreed to; the committee-reported substitute, as amended, be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; the title amendment be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The amendment (No. 2806) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To improve the bill)

Beginning on page 29, strike line 1 and all that follows through page 32, line 20, and insert the following:

SEC. 112. REPORTS ON PUBLIC ACCESS TO DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS RESEARCH.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on increasing public access to scientific publications and digital data from research funded by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(b) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) Identification of where on the Internet website of the Department the public will be able to access results of research funded by the Department or be referred to other sources to access the results of research funded by the Department.

(2) A description of the progress made by the Department in meeting public access requirements set forth in the Federal Register notice entitled ''Policy and Implementation Plan for Public Access to Scientific Publications and Digital Data from Research Funded by the Department of Veterans Affairs'' (80 Fed. Reg. 60751), including the following:

(A) Compliance of Department investigators with requirements relating to ensuring that research funded by the Department is accessible by the public.

(B) Ensuring data management plans of the Department include provisions for long-term preservation of the scientific data resulting from research funded by the Department.

(3) An explanation of the factors used to evaluate the merit of data management plans of research funded by the Veterans Health Administration.

(4) An explanation of the process of the Department in effect that enables stakeholders to petition a change to the embargo period for a specific field and the factors considered during such process.

On page 33, line 6, strike ''45'' and insert ''72''.

On page 43, strike lines 7 through 11 and insert the following:

(a) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the education and training program required under section 7302(a)(1) of title 38, United States Code, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall include education and training of marriage and family therapists and licensed professional mental health counselors.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Beginning on page 43, strike line 19 and all that follows through page 44, line 9.

Beginning on page 65, strike line 3 and all that follows through page 70, line 8.

Beginning on page 91, strike line 22 and all that follows through page 92, line 1, and insert the following:

(a) IN GENERAL.—During the 10-year period beginning on September 26, 2015, the second sentence of subsection (c) of section 3684 of title 38, United States Code, shall be applied—

(1) by substituting ''$8'' for ''$12''; and

(2) by substituting ''$12'' for ''$15''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 406 of the Department of Veterans Affairs Expiring Authorities Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–175; 38 U.S.C. 3684 note), as amended by section 410 of the Department of Veterans Affairs Expiring Authorities Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–58), is hereby repealed.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended, was agreed to.

The bill (S. 1203), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 1203

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''21st Century Veterans Benefits Delivery and Other Improvements Act''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—HEALTH CARE MATTERS

Subtitle A—Expansion and Improvement of Health Care Benefits

Sec. 101. Improved access to appropriate immunizations for veterans.

Sec. 102. Expansion of provision of chiropractic care and services to veterans.

Subtitle B—Health Care Administration

Sec. 111. Expansion of availability of prosthetic and orthotic care for veterans.

Sec. 112. Reports on public access to Department of Veterans Affairs research.

Sec. 113. Revival of Intermediate Care Technician Pilot Program of Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 114. Transfer of health care provider credentialing data from Secretary of Defense to Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Subtitle C—Improvement of Medical Workforce

Sec. 121. Inclusion of mental health professionals in education and training program for health personnel of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 122. Expansion of qualifications for licensed mental health counselors of the Department of Veterans Affairs to include doctoral degrees.

Sec. 123. Report on medical workforce of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

TITLE II—COMPENSATION AND OTHER BENEFITS MATTERS

Subtitle A—Benefits Claims Submission

Sec. 201. Participation of veterans service organizations in Transition Assistance Program.

Sec. 202. Requirement that Secretary of Veterans Affairs publish the average time required to adjudicate timely and untimely appeals.

Sec. 203. Determination of manner of appearance for hearings before Board of Veterans' Appeals.

Subtitle B—Practices of Regional Offices Relating to Benefits Claims

Sec. 211. Comptroller General review of claims processing performance of regional offices of Veterans Benefits Administration.

Sec. 212. Inclusion in annual budget submission of information on capacity of Veterans Benefits Administration to process benefits claims.

Sec. 213. Report on staffing levels at regional offices of Department of Veterans Affairs after transition to National Work Queue.

Sec. 214. Annual report on progress in implementing Veterans Benefits Management System.

Sec. 215. Report on plans of Secretary of Veterans Affairs to reduce inventory of non-rating workload.

Sec. 216. Sense of Congress on increased transparency relating to claims for benefits and appeals of decisions relating to benefits in Monday Morning Workload Report.

Subtitle C—Other Benefits Matters

Sec. 221. Modification of pilot program for use of contract physicians for disability examinations.

Sec. 222. Development of procedures to increase cooperation with National Guard Bureau.

Sec. 223. Review of determination of certain service in Philippines during World War II.

Sec. 224. Sense of Congress on submittal of information relating to claims for disabilities incurred or aggravated by military sexual trauma.

TITLE III—EDUCATION MATTERS

Sec. 301. Retention of entitlement to educational assistance during certain additional periods of active duty.

Sec. 302. Reports on progress of students receiving Post-9/11 Educational Assistance.

Sec. 303. Secretary of Defense report on level of education attained by those who transfer entitlement to Post-9/11 educational assistance.

Sec. 304. Reports on educational levels attained by certain members of the Armed Forces at time of separation from the Armed Forces.

TITLE IV—EMPLOYMENT AND TRANSITION MATTERS

Sec. 401. Required coordination between Directors for Veterans' Employment and Training with State departments of labor and veterans affairs.

Sec. 402. Report on job fairs attended by one-stop career center employees at which such employees encounter veterans.

Sec. 403. Review of challenges faced by employers seeking to hire veterans and sharing of information among Federal agencies that serve veterans.

Sec. 404. Review of Transition GPS Program Core Curriculum.

Sec. 405. Modification of requirement for provision of preseparation counseling.

TITLE V—VETERAN SMALL BUSINESS MATTERS

Sec. 501. Modification of treatment under contracting goals and preferences of Department of Veterans Affairs for small businesses owned by veterans of small businesses after death of disabled veteran owners.

Sec. 502. Treatment of businesses after deaths of servicemember-owners for purposes of Department of Veterans Affairs contracting goals and preferences.

TITLE VI—BURIAL MATTERS

Sec. 601. Department of Veterans Affairs study on matters relating to burial of unclaimed remains of veterans in national cemeteries.

TITLE VII—OTHER MATTERS

Sec. 701. Honoring as veterans certain persons who performed service in the reserve components of the Armed Forces.

Sec. 702. Report on Laotian military support of Armed Forces of the United States during Vietnam War.

Sec. 703. Restoration of prior reporting fee multipliers.

TITLE I—HEALTH CARE MATTERS

Subtitle A—Expansion and Improvement of Health Care Benefits

SEC. 101. IMPROVED ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE IMMUNIZATIONS FOR VETERANS.

(a) INCLUSION OF RECOMMENDED ADULT IMMUNIZATIONS AS MEDICAL SERVICES.—

(1) COVERED BENEFIT.—Subparagraph (F) of section 1701(9) of title 38, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(F) immunizations against infectious diseases, including each immunization on the recommended adult immunization schedule at the time such immunization is indicated on that schedule;''.

(2) RECOMMENDED ADULT IMMUNIZATION SCHEDULE DEFINED.—Section 1701 of such title is amended by adding after paragraph (9) the following new paragraph:

''(10) The term 'recommended adult immunization schedule' means the schedule established (and periodically reviewed and, as appropriate, revised) by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices established by the Secretary of Health and Human Services and delegated to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.''.

(b) INCLUSION OF RECOMMENDED ADULT IMMUNIZATIONS IN ANNUAL REPORT.—Section 1704(1)(A) of such title is amended—

(1) in clause (i), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in clause (ii), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by inserting after clause (ii) the following new clause:

''(iii) to provide veterans each immunization on the recommended adult immunization schedule at the time such immunization is indicated on that schedule.''.

(c) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the development and implementation by the Department of Veterans Affairs of quality measures and metrics, including targets for compliance, to ensure that veterans receiving medical services under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, receive each immunization on the recommended adult immunization schedule at the time such immunization is indicated on that schedule.

(2) RECOMMENDED ADULT IMMUNIZATION SCHEDULE DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ''recommended adult immunization schedule'' has the meaning given that term in section 1701(10) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a)(2).

SEC. 102. EXPANSION OF PROVISION OF CHIROPRACTIC CARE AND SERVICES TO VETERANS.

(a) PROGRAM FOR PROVISION OF CHIROPRACTIC CARE AND SERVICES TO VETERANS.—Section 204(c) of the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care Programs Enhancement Act of 2001 (Public Law 107–135; 115 Stat. 2459; 38 U.S.C. 1710 note) is amended—

(1) by inserting ''(1)'' before ''The program''; and

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

''(2) The program shall be carried out at not fewer than two medical centers or clinics in each Veterans Integrated Service Network by not later than two years after the date of the enactment of the 21st Century Veterans Benefits Delivery and Other Improvements Act, and at not fewer than 50 percent of all medical centers in each Veterans Integrated Service Network by not later than three years after such date of enactment.''.

(b) EXPANDED CHIROPRACTOR SERVICES AVAILABLE TO VETERANS.—

(1) MEDICAL SERVICES.—Paragraph (6) of section 1701 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(H) Chiropractic services.''.

(2) REHABILITATIVE SERVICES.—Paragraph (8) of such section is amended by inserting ''chiropractic,'' after ''counseling,''.

(3) PREVENTIVE HEALTH SERVICES.—Paragraph (9) of such section is amended—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (F) through (K) as subparagraphs (G) through (L), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after subparagraph (E) the following new subparagraph (F):

''(F) periodic and preventive chiropractic examinations and services;''.

Subtitle B—Health Care Administration

SEC. 111. EXPANSION OF AVAILABILITY OF PROSTHETIC AND ORTHOTIC CARE FOR VETERANS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OR EXPANSION OF ADVANCED DEGREE PROGRAMS TO EXPAND AVAILABILITY OF PROVISION OF CARE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall work with institutions of higher education to develop partnerships for the establishment or expansion of programs of advanced degrees in prosthetics and orthotics in order to improve and enhance the availability of high quality prosthetic and orthotic care for veterans.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the effective date specified in subsection (d), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report setting forth a plan for carrying out subsection (a). The Secretary shall develop the plan in consultation with veterans service organizations, institutions of higher education with accredited degree programs in prosthetics and orthotics, and representatives of the prosthetics and orthotics field.

(c) FUNDING.—

(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is hereby authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Veterans Affairs, $5,000,000 to carry out this section.

(2) AVAILABILITY.—The amount authorized to be appropriated by paragraph (1) shall remain available for expenditure until September 30, 2019.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 112. REPORTS ON PUBLIC ACCESS TO DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS RESEARCH.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on increasing public access to scientific publications and digital data from research funded by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(b) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) Identification of where on the Internet website of the Department the public will be able to access results of research funded by the Department or be referred to other sources to access the results of research funded by the Department.

(2) A description of the progress made by the Department in meeting public access requirements set forth in the Federal Register notice entitled ''Policy and Implementation Plan for Public Access to Scientific Publications and Digital Data from Research Funded by the Department of Veterans Affairs'' (80 Fed. Reg. 60751), including the following:

(A) Compliance of Department investigators with requirements relating to ensuring that research funded by the Department is accessible by the public.

(B) Ensuring data management plans of the Department include provisions for long-term preservation of the scientific data resulting from research funded by the Department.

(3) An explanation of the factors used to evaluate the merit of data management plans of research funded by the Veterans Health Administration.

(4) An explanation of the process of the Department in effect that enables stakeholders to petition a change to the embargo period for a specific field and the factors considered during such process.

SEC. 113. REVIVAL OF INTERMEDIATE CARE TECHNICIAN PILOT PROGRAM OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) REVIVAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall revive the Intermediate Care Technician Pilot Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs that was carried out by the Secretary between January 2013 and February 2014.

(b) TECHNICIANS.—

(1) SELECTION.—The Secretary shall select not less than 72 intermediate care technicians to participate in the pilot program.

(2) FACILITIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Any intermediate care technician hired pursuant to paragraph (1) may be assigned to a medical facility of the Department as determined by the Secretary for purposes of this section.

(B) PRIORITY.—In assigning intermediate care technicians under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall give priority to facilities at which veterans have the longest wait times for appointments for the receipt of hospital care or medical services from the Department, as determined by the Secretary for purposes of this section.

(c) TERMINATION.—The Secretary shall carry out the pilot program under subsection (a) during the three-year period beginning on the effective date specified in subsection (e).

(d) HOSPITAL CARE AND MEDICAL SERVICES DEFINED.—In this section, the terms ''hospital care'' and ''medical services'' have the meanings given such terms in section 1701 of title 38, United States Code.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 114. TRANSFER OF HEALTH CARE PROVIDER CREDENTIALING DATA FROM SECRETARY OF DEFENSE TO SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In a case in which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs hires a covered health care provider, the Secretary of Defense shall, after receiving a request from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for the credentialing data of the Secretary of Defense relating to such health care provider, transfer to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs such credentialing data.

(b) COVERED HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS.—For purposes of this section, a covered provider is a health care provider who—

(1) is or was employed by the Secretary of Defense;

(2) provides or provided health care related services as part of such employment; and

(3) was credentialed by the Secretary of Defense.

(c) POLICIES AND REGULATIONS.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Defense shall establish such policies and promulgate such regulations as may be necessary to carry out this section.

(d) CREDENTIALING DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''credentialing'' means the systematic process of screening and evaluating qualifications and other credentials, including licensure, required education, relevant training and experience, and current competence and health status.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 115. EXAMINATION AND TREATMENT BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL CONDITIONS AND WOMEN IN LABOR.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter VIII of chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 1784 the following new section:

''§ 1784A. Examination and treatment for emergency medical conditions and women in labor

''(a) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a hospital of the Department that has an emergency department, if any individual comes to the hospital or the campus of the hospital and a request is made on behalf of the individual for examination or treatment for a medical condition, the hospital must provide for an appropriate medical screening examination within the capability of the emergency department, including ancillary services routinely available to the emergency department, to determine whether or not an emergency medical condition exists.

''(b) NECESSARY STABILIZING TREATMENT FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL CONDITIONS AND LABOR.—(1) If any individual comes to a hospital of the Department that has an emergency department or the campus of such a

hospital and the hospital determines that the individual has an emergency medical condition, the hospital must provide either—

''(A) within the staff and facilities available at the hospital, for such further medical examination and such treatment as may be required to stabilize the medical condition; or

''(B) for transfer of the individual to another medical facility in accordance with subsection (c).

''(2) A hospital is deemed to meet the requirement of paragraph (1)(A) with respect to an individual if the hospital offers the individual the further medical examination and treatment described in that paragraph and informs the individual (or a person acting on behalf of the individual) of the risks and benefits to the individual of such examination and treatment, but the individual (or a person acting on behalf of the individual) refuses to consent to the examination and treatment. The hospital shall take all reasonable steps to secure the written informed consent of the individual (or person) to refuse such examination and treatment.

''(3) A hospital is deemed to meet the requirement of paragraph (1) with respect to an individual if the hospital offers to transfer the individual to another medical facility in accordance with subsection (c) and informs the individual (or a person acting on behalf of the individual) of the risks and benefits to the individual of such transfer, but the individual (or a person acting on behalf of the individual) refuses to consent to the transfer. The hospital shall take all reasonable steps to secure the written informed consent of the individual (or person) to refuse such transfer.

''(c) RESTRICTING TRANSFERS UNTIL INDIVIDUAL STABILIZED.—(1) If an individual at a hospital of the Department has an emergency medical condition that has not been stabilized, the hospital may not transfer the individual unless—

''(A)(i) the individual (or a legally responsible person acting on behalf of the individual), after being informed of the obligations of the hospital under this section and of the risk of transfer, requests, in writing, transfer to another medical facility;

''(ii) a physician of the Department has signed a certification that, based upon the information available at the time of transfer, the medical benefits reasonably expected from the provision of appropriate medical treatment at another medical facility outweigh the increased risks to the individual and, in the case of labor, to the unborn child from effecting the transfer; or

''(iii) if a physician of the Department is not physically present in the emergency department at the time an individual is transferred, a qualified medical person (as defined by the Secretary for purposes of this section) has signed a certification described in clause (ii) after a physician of the Department, in consultation with the person, has made the determination described in such clause, and subsequently countersigns the certification; and

''(B) the transfer is an appropriate transfer to that facility.

''(2) A certification described in clause (ii) or (iii) of paragraph (1)(A) shall include a summary of the risks and benefits upon which the certification is based.

''(3) For purposes of paragraph (1)(B), an appropriate transfer to a medical facility is a transfer—

''(A) in which the transferring hospital provides the medical treatment within its capacity that minimizes the risks to the health of the individual and, in the case of a woman in labor, the health of the unborn child;

''(B) in which the receiving facility—

''(i) has available space and qualified personnel for the treatment of the individual; and

''(ii) has agreed to accept transfer of the individual and to provide appropriate medical treatment;

''(C) in which the transferring hospital sends to the receiving facility all medical records (or copies thereof) available at the time of the transfer relating to the emergency medical condition for which the individual has presented, including—

''(i) observations of signs or symptoms;

''(ii) preliminary diagnosis;

''(iii) treatment provided;

''(iv) the results of any tests; and

''(v) the informed written consent or certification (or copy thereof) provided under paragraph (1)(A);

''(D) in which the transfer is effected through qualified personnel and transportation equipment, including the use of necessary and medically appropriate life support measures during the transfer; and

''(E) that meets such other requirements as the Secretary considers necessary in the interest of the health and safety of individuals transferred.

''(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) The term 'campus' means, with respect to a hospital of the Department—

''(A) the physical area immediately adjacent to the main buildings of the hospital;

''(B) other areas and structures that are not strictly contiguous to the main buildings but are located not less than 250 yards from the main buildings; and

''(C) any other areas determined by the Secretary to be part of the campus of the hospital.

''(2) The term 'emergency medical condition' means—

''(A) a medical condition manifesting itself by acute symptoms of sufficient severity (including severe pain) such that the absence of immediate medical attention could reasonably be expected to result in—

''(i) placing the health of the individual (or, with respect to a pregnant woman, the health of the woman or her unborn child) in serious jeopardy;

''(ii) serious impairment to bodily functions; or

''(iii) serious dysfunction of any bodily organ or part; or

''(B) with respect to a pregnant woman who is having contractions—

''(i) that there is inadequate time to effect a safe transfer to another hospital before delivery; or

''(ii) that transfer may pose a threat to the health or safety of the woman or the unborn child.

''(3)(A) The term 'to stabilize' means, with respect to an emergency medical condition described in paragraph (2)(A), to provide such medical treatment of the condition as may be necessary to assure, within reasonable medical probability, that no material deterioration of the condition is likely to result from or occur during the transfer of the individual from a facility, or, with respect to an emergency medical condition described in paragraph (2)(B), to deliver (including the placenta).

''(B) The term 'stabilized' means, with respect to an emergency medical condition described in paragraph (2)(A), that no material deterioration of the condition is likely, within reasonable medical probability, to result from or occur during the transfer of the individual from a facility, or, with respect to an emergency medical condition described in paragraph (2)(B), that the woman has delivered (including the placenta).

''(4) The term 'transfer' means the movement (including the discharge) of an individual outside the facilities of a hospital of the Department at the direction of any person employed by (or affiliated or associated, directly or indirectly, with) the hospital, but does not include such a movement of an individual who—

''(A) has been declared dead; or

''(B) leaves the facility without the permission of any such person.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 17 of such title is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1784 the following new item:

''Sec. 1784A. Examination and treatment for emergency medical conditions and women in labor.''.

Subtitle C—Improvement of Medical Workforce

SEC. 121. INCLUSION OF MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAM FOR HEALTH PERSONNEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the education and training program required under section 7302(a)(1) of title 38, United States Code, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall include education and training of marriage and family therapists and licensed professional mental health counselors.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 122. EXPANSION OF QUALIFICATIONS FOR LICENSED MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO INCLUDE DOCTORAL DEGREES.

Section 7402(b)(11)(A) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting ''or doctoral degree'' after ''master's degree''.

SEC. 123. REPORT ON MEDICAL WORKFORCE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the medical workforce of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) With respect to licensed professional mental health counselors and marriage and family therapists of the Department—

(A) how many such counselors and therapists are currently enrolled in the mental health professionals trainee program of the Department;

(B) how many such counselors and therapists are expected to enroll in the mental health professionals trainee program of the Department during the 180-day period beginning on the date of the submittal of the report;

(C) a description of the eligibility criteria for such counselors and therapists as compared to other behavioral health professions in the Department;

(D) a description of the objectives, goals, and timing of the Department with respect to increasing the representation of such counselors and therapists in the behavioral health workforce of the Department; and

(E) a description of the actions taken by the Secretary, in consultation with the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, to create an occupational series for such counselors and therapists and a timeline for the creation of such an occupational series.

(2) A breakdown of spending by the Department in connection with the education debt reduction program of the Department under subchapter VII of chapter 76 of title 38, United States Code, including—

(A) the amount spent by the Department in debt reduction payments during the three-year period preceding the submittal of the report disaggregated by the medical profession of the individual receiving the payments;

(B) a description of how the Department prioritizes such spending by medical profession, including an assessment of whether such priority reflects the five occupations identified in the most recent determination by the Inspector General of the Department of Veterans Affairs as having the largest staffing shortages in the Veterans Health Administration; and

(C) a description of the actions taken by the Secretary to increase the effectiveness of such spending for purposes of recruitment of health care providers to the Department, including efforts to more consistently include eligibility for the education debt reduction program in vacancy announcements of positions for health care providers at the Department.

(3) A description of any impediments to the delivery by the Department of telemedicine services to veterans and any actions taken by the Department to address such impediments, including with respect to—

(A) restrictions under Federal or State laws;

(B) licensing or credentialing issues for health care providers, including non-Department health care providers, practicing telemedicine with a veteran located in a different State;

(C) the effect of limited broadband access or limited information technology capabilities on the delivery of health care;

(D) the distance a veteran is required to travel to access a facility or clinic with telemedicine capabilities;

(E) the effect on the provision of telemedicine services to veterans of policies of and limited liability protection for certain entities; and

(F) issues relating to reimbursement and travel limitations for veterans that affect the participation of non-Department health care providers in the telemedicine program.

(4) An update on the efforts of the Secretary to offer training opportunities in telemedicine to medical residents in medical facilities of the Department that use telemedicine, consistent with medical residency program requirements established by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, as required in section 108(b) of the Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–154; 38 U.S.C. 7406 note).

(5) An assessment of the development and implementation by the Secretary of succession planning policies to address the prevalence of vacancies in positions in the Veterans Health Administration of more than 180 days, including the development of an enterprise position management system to more effectively identify, track, and resolve such vacancies.

(6) A description of the actions taken by the Secretary, in consultation with the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, to address any impediments to the timely appointment and determination of qualifications for Directors of Veterans Integrated Service Networks and Medical Directors of the Department.

TITLE II—COMPENSATION AND OTHER BENEFITS MATTERS

Subtitle A—Benefits Claims Submission

SEC. 201. PARTICIPATION OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS IN TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Defense, in collaboration with the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, should establish a process by which a representative of a veterans service organization may be present at any portion of the program carried out under section 1144 of title 10, United States Code, relating to the submittal of claims to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for compensation under chapter 11 or 13 of title 38, United States Code.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to Congress a report on participation of veterans service organizations in the program carried out under section 1144 of title 10, United States Code.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) An assessment of the compliance of facilities of the Department of Defense with the directives included in the memorandum of the Secretary of Defense entitled ''Installation Access and Support Services for Nonprofit Non-Federal Entities'' and dated December 23, 2014.

(B) The number of military bases that have complied with such directives.

(C) How many veterans service organizations have been present at a portion of a program as described in subsection (a).

(c) VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''veterans service organization'' means any organization recognized by the Secretary for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38.

SEC. 202. REQUIREMENT THAT SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PUBLISH THE AVERAGE TIME REQUIRED TO ADJUDICATE TIMELY AND UNTIMELY APPEALS.

(a) PUBLICATION REQUIREMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—On an ongoing basis, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall make available to the public the following:

(A) The average length of time to adjudicate a timely appeal.

(B) The average length of time to adjudicate an untimely appeal.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Paragraph (1) shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply until the date that is three years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 39 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on whether publication pursuant to subsection (a)(1) has had an effect on the number of timely appeals filed.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) The number of appeals and timely appeals that were filed during the one-year period ending on the effective date specified in subsection (a)(2).

(B) The number of appeals and timely appeals that were filed during the one-year period ending on the date that is two years after the effective date specified in subsection (a)(2).

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPEAL.—The term ''appeal'' means a notice of disagreement filed pursuant to section 7105(a) of title 38, United States Code, in response to notice of the result of an initial review or determination regarding a claim for a benefit under a law administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(2) TIMELY.—The term ''timely'' with respect to an appeal means that the notice of disagreement was filed not more than 180 days after the date of mailing of the notice of the result of the initial review or determination described in paragraph (1).

(3) UNTIMELY.—The term ''untimely'' with respect to an appeal means the notice of disagreement was filed more than 180 days after the date of mailing of the notice of the result of the initial review or determination described in paragraph (1).

SEC. 203. DETERMINATION OF MANNER OF APPEARANCE FOR HEARINGS BEFORE BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7107 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (e);

(2) by redesignating subsections (d) and (f) as subsections (f) and (g), respectively;

(3) by inserting after subsection (c) the following new subsections (d) and (e):

''(d)(1) Subject to paragraph (2), a hearing before the Board shall be conducted, as the Board considers appropriate—

''(A) in person; or

''(B) through picture and voice transmission, by electronic or other means, in such manner that the appellant is not present in the same location as the member or members of the Board during the hearing.

''(2) Upon request by an appellant, a hearing before the Board shall be conducted, as the appellant considers appropriate—

''(A) in person; or

''(B) through picture and voice transmission as described in paragraph (1)(B).

''(e)(1) In a case in which a hearing before the Board is to be conducted through picture and voice transmission as described in subsection (d)(1)(B), the Secretary shall provide suitable facilities and equipment to the Board or other components of the Department to enable an appellant located at an appropriate facility within the area served by a regional office to participate as so described.

''(2) Any hearing conducted through picture and voice transmission as described in subsection (d)(1)(B) shall be conducted in the same manner as, and shall be considered the equivalent of, a personal hearing.''; and

(4) in subsection (f)(1), as redesignated by paragraph (2), by striking ''An appellant may request'' and all that follows through ''office of the Department'' and inserting ''In a case in which a hearing before the Board is to be conducted in person, the hearing shall be held at the principal location of the Board or at a facility of the Department located within the area served by a regional office of the Department''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Subsection (a)(1) of such section is amended by striking ''in subsection (f)'' and inserting ''in subsection (g)''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to cases received by the Board of Veterans' Appeals pursuant to notices of disagreement submitted on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Subtitle B—Practices of Regional Offices Relating to Benefits Claims

SEC. 211. COMPTROLLER GENERAL REVIEW OF CLAIMS PROCESSING PERFORMANCE OF REGIONAL OFFICES OF VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION.

(a) REVIEW REQUIRED.—Not later than 15 months after the effective date specified in subsection (e), the Comptroller General of the United States shall complete a review of the regional offices of the Veterans Benefits Administration to help the Veterans Benefits Administration achieve more consistent performance in the processing of claims for disability compensation.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The review required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) An identification of the following:

(A) The factors, including management practices, that distinguish higher performing regional offices from other regional offices with respect to claims for disability compensation.

(B) The best practices employed by higher performing regional offices that distinguish the performance of such offices from other regional offices.

(C) Such other management practices or tools as the Comptroller General determines could be used to improve the performance of regional offices.

(2) An assessment of the effectiveness of communication with respect to the processing of claims for disability compensation between the regional offices and veterans service organizations and caseworkers employed by Members of Congress.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 15 months after the effective date specified in subsection (e), the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the results of the review completed under subsection (a).

(d) VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''veterans service organization'' means any organization recognized by the Secretary for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 212. INCLUSION IN ANNUAL BUDGET SUBMISSION OF INFORMATION ON CAPACITY OF VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION TO PROCESS BENEFITS CLAIMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Along with the supporting information included in the budget submitted to Congress by the President pursuant to section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, the President shall include information on the capacity of the Veterans Benefits Administration to process claims for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, including information described in subsection (b), during the fiscal year covered by the budget with which the information is submitted.

(b) INFORMATION DESCRIBED.—The information described in this subsection is the following:

(1) An estimate of the average number of claims for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary, excluding such claims completed during mandatory overtime, that a single full-time equivalent employee of the Administration can process in a year, based on the following:

(A) A time and motion study that the Secretary shall conduct on the processing of such claims.

(B) Such other information relating to such claims as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(2) A description of the actions the Secretary will take to improve the processing of such claims.

(3) An assessment of the actions identified by the Secretary under paragraph (2) in the previous year and an identification of the effects of those actions.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall apply with respect to any budget submitted as described in subsection (a) with respect to any fiscal year after fiscal year 2017.

SEC. 213. REPORT ON STAFFING LEVELS AT REGIONAL OFFICES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AFTER TRANSITION TO NATIONAL WORK QUEUE.

Not later than 15 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the criteria and procedures that the Secretary will use to determine appropriate staffing levels at the regional offices of the Department once the Department has transitioned to using the National Work Queue for the distribution of the claims processing workload.

SEC. 214. ANNUAL REPORT ON PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING VETERANS BENEFITS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than each of one year, two years, and three years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the progress of the Secretary in implementing the Veterans Benefits Management System.

(b) CONTENTS.—Each report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) An assessment of the current functionality of the Veterans Benefits Management System.

(2) Recommendations submitted to the Secretary by employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs who are involved in processing claims for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary, including veterans service representatives, rating veterans service representatives, and decision review officers, for such legislative or administrative action as the employees consider appropriate to improve the processing of such claims.

(3) Recommendations submitted to the Secretary by veterans service organizations who use the Veterans Benefits Management System for such legislative or administrative action as the veterans service organizations consider appropriate to improve such system.

(c) VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''veterans service organization'' means any organization recognized by the Secretary for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 215. REPORT ON PLANS OF SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO REDUCE INVENTORY OF NON-RATING WORKLOAD.

Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report that details the plans of the Secretary to reduce the inventory of work items listed in the Monday Morning Workload Report under End Products 130, 137, 173, 290, 400, 600, 607, 690, 930, and 960.

SEC. 216. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON INCREASED TRANSPARENCY RELATING TO CLAIMS FOR BENEFITS AND APPEALS OF DECISIONS RELATING TO BENEFITS IN MONDAY MORNING WORKLOAD REPORT.

It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs should include in each Monday Morning Workload Report published by the Secretary the following:

(1) With respect to each regional office of the Department of Veterans Affairs, the following:

(A) The number of fully developed claims for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary that have been received.

(B) The number of claims described in subparagraph (A) that are pending a decision.

(C) The number of claims described in subparagraph (A) that have been pending a decision for more than 125 days.

(2) Enhanced information on appeals of decisions relating to claims for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary that are pending, including information contained in the reports of the Department entitled ''Appeals Pending'' and ''Appeals Workload By Station''.

Subtitle C—Other Benefits Matters

SEC. 221. MODIFICATION OF PILOT PROGRAM FOR USE OF CONTRACT PHYSICIANS FOR DISABILITY EXAMINATIONS.

Section 504 of the Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–275; 38 U.S.C. 5101 note) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (c) and (d) as subsections (d) and (e), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (b) the following new subsection (c):

''(c) LICENSURE OF CONTRACT PHYSICIANS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any law regarding the licensure of physicians, a physician described in paragraph (2) may conduct an examination pursuant to a contract entered into under subsection (a) at any location in any State, the District of Columbia, or a Commonwealth, territory, or possession of the United States, so long as the examination is within the scope of the authorized duties under such contract.

''(2) PHYSICIAN DESCRIBED.—A physician described in this paragraph is a physician who—

''(A) has a current license to practice the health care profession of the physician; and

''(B) is performing authorized duties for the Department of Veterans Affairs pursuant to a contract entered into under subsection (a).''.

SEC. 222. DEVELOPMENT OF PROCEDURES TO INCREASE COOPERATION WITH NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Chief of the National Guard Bureau shall jointly develop and implement procedures, including requirements relating to timeliness, to improve the timely provision to the Secretary of such information in the possession of the Chief as the Secretary requires to process claims submitted to the Secretary for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the implementation of the procedures under subsection (a), the Secretary and the Chief shall jointly submit to Congress a report describing—

(1) the requests for information relating to records of members of the National Guard made by the Secretary to the Chief pursuant to such procedures; and

(2) the timeliness of the responses of the Chief to such requests.

SEC. 223. REVIEW OF DETERMINATION OF CERTAIN SERVICE IN PHILIPPINES DURING WORLD WAR II.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense and such military historians as the Secretary of Defense recommends, shall review the process used to determine whether a covered individual served in support of the Armed Forces of the United States during World War II in accordance with section 1002(d) of title X of Division A of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111–5; 38 U.S.C. 107 note) for purposes of determining whether such covered individual is eligible for payments described in such section.

(b) COVERED INDIVIDUALS.—In this section, a covered individual is any individual who timely submitted a claim for benefits under subsection (c) of section 1002 of title X of Division A of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111–5; 38 U.S.C. 107 note) based on service as described in subsection (d) of that section.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to

the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report detailing any findings, actions taken, or recommendations for legislative action with respect to the review conducted under subsection (a).

(d) PROHIBITION ON BENEFITS FOR DISQUALIFYING CONDUCT UNDER NEW PROCESS PURSUANT TO REVIEW.—If pursuant to the review conducted under subsection (a) the Secretary of Veterans Affairs determines to establish a new process for the making of payments as described in that subsection, the process shall include mechanisms to ensure that individuals are not treated as covered individuals for purposes of such payments if such individuals engaged in any disqualifying conduct during service described in that subsection, including collaboration with the enemy or criminal conduct.

SEC. 224. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON SUBMITTAL OF INFORMATION RELATING TO CLAIMS FOR DISABILITIES INCURRED OR AGGRAVATED BY MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs should submit to Congress information on the covered claims submitted to the Secretary during each fiscal year, including the information specified in subsection (b).

(b) ELEMENTS.—The information specified in this subsection with respect to each fiscal year is the following:

(1) The number of covered claims submitted to or considered by the Secretary during such fiscal year.

(2) Of the covered claims under paragraph (1), the number and percentage of such claims—

(A) submitted by each gender;

(B) that were approved, including the number and percentage of such approved claims submitted by each gender; and

(C) that were denied, including the number and percentage of such denied claims submitted by each gender.

(3) Of the covered claims under paragraph (1) that were approved, the number and percentage, listed by each gender, of claims assigned to each rating percentage of disability.

(4) Of the covered claims under paragraph (1) that were denied—

(A) the three most common reasons given by the Secretary under section 5104(b)(1) of title 38, United States Code, for such denials; and

(B) the number of denials that were based on the failure of a veteran to report for a medical examination.

(5) Of the covered claims under paragraph (1) that were resubmitted to the Secretary after denial in a previous adjudication—

(A) the number of such claims submitted to or considered by the Secretary during such fiscal year;

(B) the number and percentage of such claims—

(i) submitted by each gender;

(ii) that were approved, including the number and percentage of such approved claims submitted by each gender; and

(iii) that were denied, including the number and percentage of such denied claims submitted by each gender;

(C) the number and percentage, listed by each gender, of claims assigned to each rating percentage of disability; and

(D) of such claims that were again denied—

(i) the three most common reasons given by the Secretary under section 5104(b)(1) of such title for such denials; and

(ii) the number of denials that were based on the failure of a veteran to report for a medical examination.

(6) The number of covered claims that, as of the end of such fiscal year, are pending and, separately, the number of such claims on appeal.

(7) The average number of days that covered claims take to complete beginning on the date on which the claim is submitted.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COVERED CLAIMS.—The term ''covered claims'' means claims for disability compensation submitted to the Secretary based on post-traumatic stress disorder alleged to have been incurred or aggravated by military sexual trauma.

(2) MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.—The term ''military sexual trauma'' shall have the meaning specified by the Secretary for purposes of this section and shall include ''sexual harassment'' (as so specified).

TITLE III—EDUCATION MATTERS

SEC. 301. RETENTION OF ENTITLEMENT TO EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE DURING CERTAIN ADDITIONAL PERIODS OF ACTIVE DUTY.

(a) EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE ALLOWANCE.—Section 16131(c)(3)(B)(i) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by striking ''or 12304'' and inserting ''12304, 12304a, or 12304b''.

(b) EXPIRATION DATE.—Section 16133(b)(4) of such title is amended by striking ''or 12304'' and inserting ''12304, 12304a, or 12304b''.

SEC. 302. REPORTS ON PROGRESS OF STUDENTS RECEIVING POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 33 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection 3325(c)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking ''and'' after the semicolon;

(B) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4); and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following new paragraph (3):

''(3) the information received by the Secretary under section 3326 of this title; and''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new section:

''§ 3326. Report on student progress

''As a condition on approval under chapter 36 of this title of a course offered by an educational institution (as defined in section 3452 of this title), each year, each educational institution (as so defined) that received a payment in that year on behalf of an individual entitled to educational assistance under this chapter shall submit to the Secretary such information regarding the academic progress of the individual as the Secretary may require.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''3326. Report on student progress.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 303. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE REPORT ON LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED BY THOSE WHO TRANSFER ENTITLEMENT TO POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3325(b)(1) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''and'' after the semicolon; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(D) indicating the highest level of education attained by each individual who transfers a portion of the individual's entitlement to educational assistance under section 3319 of this title; and''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 304. REPORTS ON EDUCATIONAL LEVELS ATTAINED BY CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AT TIME OF SEPARATION FROM THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) ANNUAL REPORTS REQUIRED.—Each Secretary concerned shall submit to Congress each year a report on the educational levels attained by members of the Armed Forces described in subsection (b) under the jurisdiction of such Secretary who separated from the Armed Forces during the preceding year.

(b) COVERED MEMBERS.—The members of the Armed Forces described in this subsection are members of the Armed Forces who transferred unused education benefits to family members pursuant to section 3319 of title 38, United States Code, while serving as members of the Armed Forces.

(c) SECRETARY CONCERNED DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''Secretary concerned'' has the meaning given that term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

TITLE IV—EMPLOYMENT AND TRANSITION MATTERS

SEC. 401. REQUIRED COORDINATION BETWEEN DIRECTORS FOR VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING WITH STATE DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR AND VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4103 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(c) COORDINATION WITH STATE DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR AND VETERANS AFFAIRS.—Each Director for Veterans' Employment and Training for a State shall coordinate the Director's activities under this chapter with the State department of labor and the State department of veterans affairs.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 402. REPORT ON JOB FAIRS ATTENDED BY ONE-STOP CAREER CENTER EMPLOYEES AT WHICH SUCH EMPLOYEES ENCOUNTER VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 136(d)(1) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2871(d)(1)) is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence: ''The report also shall include information, for the year preceding the year the report is submitted, on the number of job fairs attended by One-Stop Career Center employees at which the employees had contact with a veteran, and the number of veterans contacted at each such job fair.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 403. REVIEW OF CHALLENGES FACED BY EMPLOYERS SEEKING TO HIRE VETERANS AND SHARING OF INFORMATION AMONG FEDERAL AGENCIES THAT SERVE VETERANS.

(a) REVIEW.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Labor, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, shall conduct a review of—

(A) the challenges faced by employers seeking to hire veterans; and

(B) information sharing among Federal departments and agencies that serve veterans and members of the Armed Forces who are separating from service.

(2) MATTERS REVIEWED.—In conducting the review required by paragraph (1), the Secretary of Labor shall examine the following:

(A) The barriers employers face in gaining information identifying veterans who are seeking jobs.

(B) The extent and quality of information sharing among Federal departments and agencies that serve veterans and members of the Armed Forces who are separating from service, including how the departments and agencies may more easily connect employers with such veterans and members.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the effective date specified in subsection (c), the Secretary of Labor shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the review conducted under subsection (a).

(2) CONTENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) Recommendations for addressing the barriers described in subsection (a)(2)(A).

(B) Recommendations for improving information sharing described in subsection (a)(2)(B).

(3) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means—

(A) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 404. REVIEW OF TRANSITION GPS PROGRAM CORE CURRICULUM.

(a) REVIEW.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Labor, shall conduct a review of the Department of Defense Transition GPS Program Core Curriculum in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) MATTERS REVIEWED.—The review shall examine the following:

(A) The Department of Defense Transition GPS Program Core Curriculum in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(B) The roles and responsibilities of each Federal department participating in the Transition GPS Program and whether the various roles and responsibilities of the Federal departments are adequately aligned with one another.

(C) The allotment of time spent on issues under the jurisdiction of each Federal department participating in the Transition GPS Program and whether the allotment is adequate to provide members of the Armed Forces with all the information the members need regarding important benefits that can assist members in transitioning out of military service.

(D) Whether any of the information in the three optional tracks in the Transition GPS Program Core Curriculum should be addressed more appropriately in mandatory tracks rather than optional tracks.

(E) The benefits of and obstacles to establishing—

(i) a standard implementation plan of long-term outcome measures for the Transition GPS Program; and

(ii) a comprehensive system of metrics for such measures.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Labor, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the review conducted under subsection (a).

(2) CONTENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) Recommendations for improving the Department of Defense Transition GPS Program Core Curriculum in order to more accurately address the needs of members of the Armed Forces transitioning out of military service.

(B) Recommendations for improving the roles and responsibilities described in subsection (a)(2)(B).

(C) Recommendations for improving the allotment of time described in subsection (a)(2)(C).

(D) Such recommendations as the Secretary of Defense may have regarding the optional and mandatory tracks in the Transition GPS Program Core Curriculum.

(E) Such recommendations as the Secretary of Defense may have with respect to the outcome measures and metrics described in subsection (a)(2)(E).

(F) Identification of such other areas of concern as the Secretary of Defense may have with respect to the Transition GPS Program and such recommendations for legislative or administrative action as the Secretary may have to address such concerns.

(3) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means—

(A) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 405. MODIFICATION OF REQUIREMENT FOR PROVISION OF PRESEPARATION COUNSELING.

(a) CLARIFICATION OF REQUIREMENT FOR 180 CONTINUOUS DAYS OF ACTIVE DUTY SERVICE.—Subparagraph (A) of section 1142(a)(4) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by inserting ''continuous'' before ''180 days''.

(b) EXCLUSION OF TRAINING FROM PERIODS OF ACTIVE DUTY.—Such section is further amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(C) For purposes of subparagraph (A), the term 'active duty' does not include full-time training duty, annual training duty, and attendance, while in the active military service, at a school designated as a service school by law or by the Secretary concerned.''.

TITLE V—VETERAN SMALL BUSINESS MATTERS

SEC. 501. MODIFICATION OF TREATMENT UNDER CONTRACTING GOALS AND PREFERENCES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES OWNED BY VETERANS OF SMALL BUSINESSES AFTER DEATH OF DISABLED VETERAN OWNERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 8127(h) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking ''rated as'' and all that follows through ''disability.'' and inserting a period; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by amending subparagraph (C) to read as follows:

''(C) The date that—

''(i) in the case of a surviving spouse of a veteran with a service-connected disability rated as 100 percent disabling or who dies as a result of a service-connected disability, is 10 years after the date of the veteran's death; or

''(ii) in the case of a surviving spouse of a veteran with a service-connected disability rated as less than 100 percent disabling who does not die as a result of a service-connected disability, is three years after the date of the veteran's death.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply with respect to applications received pursuant to section 8127(f)(2) of title 38, United States Code, that are verified on or after such date.

SEC. 502. TREATMENT OF BUSINESSES AFTER DEATHS OF SERVICEMEMBER-OWNERS FOR PURPOSES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CONTRACTING GOALS AND PREFERENCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 8127 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (i) through (l) as subsections (j) through (m), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (h) the following new subsection (i):

''(i) TREATMENT OF BUSINESSES AFTER DEATH OF SERVICEMEMBER-OWNER.—(1) If a member of the Armed Forces owns at least 51 percent of a small business concern and such member is killed in line of duty in the active military, naval, or air service, the surviving spouse or dependent child of such member who acquires such ownership rights in such small business concern shall, for the period described in paragraph (2), be treated as if the surviving spouse or dependent child were a veteran with a service-connected disability for purposes of determining the status of the small business concern as a small business concern owned and controlled by veterans for purposes of contracting goals and preferences under this section.

''(2) The period referred to in paragraph (1) is the period beginning on the date on which the member of the Armed Forces dies and ending on the date as follows:

''(A) In the case of a surviving spouse, the earliest of the following dates:

''(i) The date on which the surviving spouse remarries.

''(ii) The date on which the surviving spouse relinquishes an ownership interest in the small business concern and no longer owns at least 51 percent of such small business concern.

''(iii) The date that is ten years after the date of the member's death.

''(B) In the case of a dependent child, the earliest of the following dates:

''(i) The date on which the surviving dependent child relinquishes an ownership interest in the small business concern and no longer owns at least 51 percent of such small business concern.

''(ii) The date that is ten years after the date of the member's death.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Subsection (i) of section 8127 of such title, as added by subsection (a), shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply with respect to the deaths of members of the Armed Forces occurring on or after such date.

TITLE VI—BURIAL MATTERS

SEC. 601. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS STUDY ON MATTERS RELATING TO BURIAL OF UNCLAIMED REMAINS OF VETERANS IN NATIONAL CEMETERIES.

(a) STUDY AND REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than one year after the effective date specified in subsection (d), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall—

(1) complete a study on matters relating to the interring of unclaimed remains of veterans in national cemeteries under the control of the National Cemetery Administration; and

(2) submit to Congress a report on the findings of the Secretary with respect to the study required under paragraph (1).

(b) MATTERS STUDIED.—The matters studied under subsection (a)(1) shall include the following:

(1) Determining the scope of issues relating to unclaimed remains of veterans, including an estimate of the number of unclaimed remains of veterans.

(2) Assessing the effectiveness of the procedures of the Department of Veterans Affairs for working with persons or entities having custody of unclaimed remains to facilitate interment of unclaimed remains of veterans in national cemeteries under the control of the National Cemetery Administration.

(3) Assessing State and local laws that affect the ability of the Secretary to inter unclaimed remains of veterans in national cemeteries under the control of the National Cemetery Administration.

(4) Developing recommendations for such legislative or administrative action as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(c) METHODOLOGY.—

(1) NUMBER OF UNCLAIMED REMAINS.—In estimating the number of unclaimed remains of veterans under subsection (b)(1), the Secretary may review such subset of applicable entities as the Secretary considers appropriate, including a subset of funeral homes and coroner offices that possess unclaimed veterans remains.

(2) ASSESSMENT OF STATE AND LOCAL LAWS.—In assessing State and local laws under subsection (b)(3), the Secretary may assess such sample of applicable State and local laws as the Secretary considers appropriate in lieu of reviewing all applicable State and local laws.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

TITLE VII—OTHER MATTERS

SEC. 701. HONORING AS VETERANS CERTAIN PERSONS WHO PERFORMED SERVICE IN THE RESERVE COMPONENTS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

Any person who is entitled under chapter 1223 of title 10, United States Code, to retired pay for nonregular service or, but for age, would be entitled under such chapter to retired pay for nonregular service shall be honored as a veteran but shall not be entitled to any benefit by reason of this honor.

SEC. 702. REPORT ON LAOTIAN MILITARY SUPPORT OF ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES DURING VIETNAM WAR.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the effective date specified in subsection (c), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense and such agencies and individuals as the Secretary of Veterans Affairs considers appropriate, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on—

(1) the extent to which Laotian military forces provided combat support to the Armed Forces of the United States between February 28, 1961, and May 15, 1975;

(2) whether the current classification by the Civilian/Military Service Review Board of the Department of Defense of service by individuals of Hmong ethnicity is appropriate; and

(3) such recommendations as the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may have for legislative action.

(b) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—In this section, the term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means—

(1) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 703. RESTORATION OF PRIOR REPORTING FEE MULTIPLIERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—During the 10-year period beginning on September 26, 2015, the second sentence of subsection (c) of section 3684 of title 38, United States Code, shall be applied—

(1) by substituting ''$8'' for ''$12''; and

(2) by substituting ''$12'' for ''$15''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 406 of the Department of Veterans Affairs Expiring Authorities Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–175; 38 U.S.C. 3684 note), as amended by section 410 of the Department of Veterans Affairs Expiring Authorities Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–58), is hereby repealed.

The title amendment was agreed to, as follows:

Amend the title so as to read: ''A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the furnishing of health care to veterans by the Department of Veterans Affairs, to improve the processing by the Department of claims for disability compensation, and for other purposes.''.

SPACE ACT OF 2015

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 2262 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

An bill (H.R. 2262) to facilitate a pro-growth environment for the developing commercial space industry by encouraging private sector investment and creating more stable and predictable regulatory conditions, and for other purposes.

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

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Cruz substitute amendment at the desk be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The amendment (No. 2805) in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under ''Text of Amendments.'')

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

The bill was read the third time.

The bill (H.R. 2262), as amended, was passed.

PRO BONO WORK TO EMPOWER AND REPRESENT ACT OF 2015

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 2280, introduced earlier today.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2280) to promote pro bono legal services as a critical way in which to empower survivors of domestic violence.

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

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

The bill (S. 2280) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 2280

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 ''Pro bono Work to Empower and Represent Act of 2015'' or ''POWER Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Extremely high rates of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking exist at the local, State, and national levels and such violence or behavior harms the most vulnerable members of our society.

(2) According to a study commissioned by the Department of Justice, nearly 25 percent of women suffer from domestic violence during their lifetime.

(3) Proactive efforts should be made available in all forums to provide pro bono legal services and eliminate the violence that destroys lives and shatters families.

(4) A variety of factors cause domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, and a variety of solutions at the local, State, and national level are necessary to combat such violence or behavior.

(5) According to the National Network to End Domestic Violence, which conducted a census including almost 1,700 assistance programs, over the course of 1 day in September 2014, more than 10,000 requests for services, including legal representation, were not met.

(6) Pro bono assistance can help fill this need by providing not only legal representation, but also access to emergency shelter, transportation, and childcare.

(7) Research and studies have demonstrated that the provision of legal assistance to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking reduces the probability of such violence or behavior reoccurring in the future and can help survivors move forward.

(8) Legal representation increases the possibility of successfully obtaining a protective order against an attacker, preventing further mental and physical injury to a victim and his or her family, demonstrated by a study that found that 83 percent of victims represented by an attorney were able to obtain a protective order compared to 32 percent of victims without an attorney.

(9) The American Bar Association Model Rules include commentary that ''every lawyer, regardless of professional prominence or professional workload, has a responsibility to provide legal services to those unable to pay, and personal involvement in the problems of the disadvantaged can be one of the most rewarding experiences in the life of a lawyer''.

(10) As representatives of the Department of Justice, the duty of United States Attorneys is to present ''equal and impartial justice to all its citizens,'' which should include, especially, survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking who might not otherwise know how to seek advice and protection.

(11) As Federal leaders who have knowledge of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking in their localities, United States Attorneys should encourage lawyers to provide pro bono resources in an effort to help victims of such

violence or behavior to escape the cycle of abuse.

(12) A dedicated army of pro bono attorneys focused on this mission will inspire others to devote efforts to this cause and will raise awareness of the scourge of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking throughout the country.

(13) Communities, by providing awareness of pro bono legal services and assistance to survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, will empower those survivors to move forward with their lives.

SEC. 3. U.S. ATTORNEYS TO PROMOTE EMPOWERMENT EVENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and not less often than once each year thereafter, each United States Attorney, or his or her designee, for each judicial district shall lead not less than 1 public event, in partnership with a State, local, tribal, or territorial domestic violence service provider or coalition and a State or local volunteer lawyer project, promoting pro bono legal services as a critical way in which to empower survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking and engage citizens in assisting those survivors.

(b) DISTRICTS CONTAINING INDIAN TRIBES AND TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS.—During each 3-year period, a United States Attorney, or his or her designee, for a judicial district that contains an Indian tribe or tribal organization (as those terms are defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b)) shall lead not less than 1 public event promoting pro bono legal services under subsection (a) in partnership with an Indian tribe or tribal organization with the intent of increasing the provision of pro bono legal services for Indian or Alaska Native victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

(c) REQUIREMENTS.—Each United States Attorney shall—

(1) have discretion on the design, organization, and implementation of the public events required under subsection (a); and

(2) in conducting a public event under subsection (a), seek to maximize the local impact of the event and the provision of access to high-quality pro bono legal services by survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

SEC. 4. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.

(a) REPORT TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.—Not later than October 30 of each year, each United States Attorney shall submit to the Attorney General a report detailing each public event conducted under section 3 during the previous fiscal year.

(b) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than January 1 of each year, the Attorney General shall submit to Congress a compilation and summary of each report received under subsection (a) for the previous fiscal year.

(2) REQUIREMENT.—Each comprehensive report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include an analysis of how each public event meets the goals set forth in this Act, as well as suggestions on how to improve future public events.

SEC. 5. FUNDING.

The Department of Justice shall use existing funds to carry out the requirements of this Act.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations placed on the Secretary's desk in the Foreign Service: PN643, PN800, and PN877; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc; the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to any of the nominations; 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 nominations considered and confirmed en bloc are as follows:

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

FOREIGN SERVICE

PN643 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (101) beginning Jennifer Ann Amos, and ending Holly Rothe Wielkoszewski, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of July 8, 2015.

PN800 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (127) beginning Kreshnik Alikaj, and ending Brett David Ziskie, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 8, 2015.

PN877–1 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (404) beginning Jason Douglas Kalbfleisch, and ending Stuart MacKenzie Hatcher, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 21, 2015.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am pleased that the Senate passed several lists for more than 600 career promotions in the Foreign Service. I spoke earlier this week about these promotions, and I am pleased that Senator GRASSLEY has allowed these lists to pass this evening.

Regardless of which party controlled the Senate, Foreign Service promotion lists have moved without political interference. That is until recently. In August, Senator GRASSLEY decided to block the promotions of more than 20 career officials in order to pursue the same agenda we saw the Republicans go after with the Benghazi committee.

I have spoken with Senator GRASSLEY about this issue. Holding back the promotions of career Foreign Service officers is not the way the Senate should be operating. The 20 officials that are still being blocked include officers stationed in Cambodia, Kenya, Rwanda, Ethiopia, and other nations.

Although I am pleased about the Senate passing more than 600 promotions this evening, the senior Senator from Iowa should drop his holds on career diplomats and give these 20 officials the promotions they have earned.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 5 p.m. on Monday, November 16, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 141; that there be 30 minutes of debate on the nomination; that following the use or yielding back of time, the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that following disposition of the nomination, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the 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.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016

COMMITTEE-REPORTED SUBSTITUTE AMENDMENT WITHDRAWN

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that not withstanding the passage of H.R. 2029, the committee-reported substitute be withdrawn.

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

SUPPORTING ISRAEL AND CONDEMNING PALESTINIAN TERROR ATTACKS

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 292, S. Res. 302.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 302) expressing the sense of the Senate in support of Israel and in condemnation of Palestinian terror attacks.

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

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Blumenthal amendment to the resolution be agreed to; the resolution, as amended, be agreed to; the Blumenthal amendment to the preamble be agreed to; the preamble, as amended, 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 amendment (No. 2807) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To urge the international community to condemn the Palestinian terror attacks)

On page 5, line 1, strike ''the President and''.

The resolution (S. Res. 302), as amended, was agreed to.

The amendment (No. 2808) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To add a whereas clause regarding President Obama's condemnation of Palestinian violence against innocent Israeli citizens)

Insert after the eleventh whereas clause of the preamble the following:

Whereas President Barack Obama condemned in the strongest terms Palestinian violence against innocent Israeli citizens and expressed his ''strong belief that Israel has not just the right, but the obligation to protect itself'';

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The resolution, as amended, with its preamble, as amended, reads as follows:

S. RES. 302

Whereas Israel is a democratic ally and major strategic partner of the United States, as codified by the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–296), and cooperation between Israel and the United States continues to increase in importance with a swiftly shifting security situation in the Middle East and North Africa;

Whereas Jerusalem is an undivided city, eternal capital of Israel, holiest city for the Jewish people, central to the worship of three monotheistic religions, and unique in the Middle East region as a city of religious tolerance where Israel guarantees access, security, and respect for the three monotheistic religions to worship in peace at holy sites;

Whereas, upon Israel securing control of Jerusalem in 1967, it has maintained a policy of keeping the Haram Al Sharif specifically open for Muslim prayer, welcoming over 3,500,000 regular worshipers annually;

Whereas the Government of Israel upholds the 1994 Treaty of Peace Between the State of Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, which states in Article Nine that each party ''will provide freedom of access to places of religious and historical significance,'' as well as ''act together to promote interfaith relations among the three monotheistic religions, with the aim of working toward religious understanding, moral commitment, freedom of religious worship, and tolerance and peace'';

Whereas Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), committed in his exchange of letters with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on September 9, 1993, that ''the PLO renounces the use of terrorism and other acts of violence and will assume responsibility over all PLO elements and personnel in order to assure their compliance,'' and under the subsequent 1995 Oslo II Accord, the Palestinians pledged to ''abstain from incitement, including hostile propaganda . . . [and to] take legal measures to prevent such incitement by any organizations, groups or individuals within their jurisdiction'';

Whereas the President of the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, wrongly announced during the tenth anniversary of Yasser Arafat's death in November 2014 that Israel has no claim to Jerusalem, that the Temple Mount will not be allowed to be ''contaminated'' by Jews, and that Jewish prayer on the Temple Mount would lead to a ''devastating religious war'';

Whereas President Abbas falsely claimed during his address to the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015 that the Government of Israel has used ''brutal force to impose its plans to undermine the Islamic and Christian sanctities in Jerusalem'' and announced that the Palestinian Authority is no longer bound by the Oslo Accords;

Whereas Israel has in recent weeks been subjected to an alarming wave of terrorism directed against innocent civilians by Palestinians armed with knives, meat cleavers, guns, and cars;

Whereas there have been approximately 69 such attacks since the beginning of October 2015, leaving 11 Israelis dead and another 145 wounded;

Whereas United States citizens have lost their lives as a result of these terrorist attacks, including Richard Lakin and Eitam Henkin;

Whereas these random, gruesome attacks are intended to instill a sense of fear among the people of Israel leading their normal lives, and also destabilize security for both Palestinians and Israelis;

Whereas President Barack Obama condemned in the strongest terms Palestinian violence against innocent Israeli citizens and expressed his ''strong belief that Israel has not just the right, but the obligation to protect itself'';

Whereas Israel, Jordan, and the United States have reached an agreement regarding the installation of surveillance cameras on the Temple Mount in accordance with the respective responsibilities of the Israeli authorities and the Jordanian Waqf;

Whereas President Abbas has helped to fuel the current violence in recent weeks by falsely casting Israel as the brutal aggressor in multiple public speeches, refusing to condemn the lethal terror attacks, and failing to acknowledge Israel's right to self-defense;

Whereas President Abbas' statements are part of a pattern of incitement among Palestinian leaders that includes denial of the Jewish heritage of Jerusalem, paying monthly salaries to the families of imprisoned Palestinian terrorists, praising slain terrorists as martyrs, demonizing Jews in official Palestinian Authority media, and encouraging attacks on social media; and

Whereas Palestinian leaders have repeatedly threatened to suspend cooperation and further encouraged violence by blaming Israel for killing Palestinian perpetrators of these heinous crimes: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) condemns these brutal attacks in the harshest terms possible;

(2) welcomes Israel's commitment to the continued maintenance of the status quo on the Temple Mount;

(3) urges the international community to join in forcefully condemning these Palestinian terror attacks;

(4) clarifies that there is no justification for these types of attacks and that there is a direct correlation between the recent upsurge in violence and Arab incitement regarding the Temple Mount;

(5) stands with the people of Israel during these difficult days;

(6) supports Israel's right to self-defense and rejects any suggestion of the moral equivalence of Israeli security personnel protecting its citizens from senseless violence and terrorists intent to deliberately take innocent lives;

(7) supports the agreement reached to install surveillance cameras on the Temple Mount according to the arrangements to be determined between the parties;

(8) calls upon President Abbas to stop all incitement by Palestinian officials and by Palestinian media, to strongly and unequivocally demand an end to the violence, and to take all steps necessary to halt these attacks;

(9) expresses support and admiration for individuals and organizations working to encourage cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians;

(10) encourages President Abbas to continue strengthening and maintaining security cooperation with Israel;

(11) reiterates that Palestinian political goals will never be achieved through violence; and

(12) calls on all parties to return to the negotiating table immediately and without preconditions, as direct discussions remain the best avenue to ending the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2015

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn under the provisions of H. Con. Res. 92 until 3 p.m., Monday, November 16; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each until 5 p.m.; finally, that at 5 p.m., the Senate then proceed to executive session as under the previous order.

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

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator SESSIONS for 10 minutes.

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

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I thank the Presiding Officer, and I thank Senator MURKOWSKI for her courtesy.

FIFTH CIRCUIT COURT DECISION

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, we had a very important court of appeals ruling last night. The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals reviewed the injunction that had been issued by Judge Hanen in Texas, that blocked the President's determination to carry out his DAPA Executive amnesty plan. The court found it improper and unlawful, and ordered it to be stopped.

It recalls for us the fact that when the President announced he was going to do this no matter what—before the election—great public outcry arose. Then he said—for political reasons, obviously—well, I am not going to do it before the election, but I will do it after the election. That is when I will issue this Executive amnesty and give lawful presence and Federal benefits and Social Security cards and work authorization to millions of people—4.3 million here in the country illegally. It is a dramatic thing. So the country was in an uproar about it. It was a big

factor in the Republicans winning a huge majority in the House and a surging majority in the Senate.

So what was this all about? Well, Judge Hanen found that this was wrong. The President didn't have authority to take people Congress has said are here illegally and give them food stamps, health care, Medicaid, and work authorization. It went against the law. He couldn't do that. And he found that this was such an egregious action that it needed to be stopped now through an injunction before the trial even completed. So it was that injunction, that blocking of the President's amnesty, that went up on appeal to the Fifth Circuit, and they upheld Judge Hanen's decision.

First, 26 States—over half the States—participated in this litigation against the President's order, and they were found to have legal standing.

Then the court found this critical legal fact: They found that the States that were objecting to the President's order were likely to succeed in the final court ruling and on appeal. They found that it would likely succeed. And they noted this, referring to the Secretary of Homeland Security:

> At its core, this case is about the Secretary's decision to change the immigration classification of millions of illegal aliens on a class-wide basis.

The Court went on to say:

> DAPA would make 4.3 million otherwise removable aliens eligible for lawful presence, employment authorization, and associated benefits, and we must be guided to a degree by common sense as to the manner in which Congress is likely to delegate a policy decision of such economic and political magnitude to an administrative agency.

They basically were saying that they see no evidence that such a huge event would be delegated to the administrative bureaucrats at the Department of Homeland Security. Congress, in fact, I believe—and the court went on to say—explicitly laid out how we deal with this.

The Fifth Circuit rejected President Obama's claim that he could issue employment documents—the right to work in America—to persons illegally here in any way he sees fit. That is what the administration argued.

The court condemned that interpretation, saying:

> The interpretation of those provisions that the Secretary advances would allow him to grant lawful presence and work authorization to any illegal alien in the United States—an untenable position in light of the Immigration and Nationality Act's intricate system of immigration classifications and employment eligibility. Even with ''special deference'' to the Secretary, the INA flatly does not permit the reclassification of millions of illegal aliens as lawfully present and thereby make them newly eligible for a host of federal and state benefits, including work authorization.

That is an absolute refutation of the President's position, as well it should be, because anybody who is familiar with that debate last year knew that it was bogus. The American people knew that argument was bogus, and the court affirmed it just last night with clarity and consistency.

They said: Well, historically, the Secretaries have done some of these things.

The court doubted that.

Quote:

> Historical practice that is so far afield from the challenged program sheds no light on the Secretary's authority to implement DAPA. Indeed, as the district court recognized, the President explicitly stated that ''it was the failure of Congress to enact such a program that prompted him . . . to 'change the law.'''

He asked for this. He asked for legislation to do this, and the House of Representatives said no. And he did it anyway. And the court of appeals slapped that down as being above the powers of the President of the United States, as indeed it is.

The court found that this DAPA Program is foreclosed by Congress's careful plan. Quote: ''The program is 'manifestly contrary to statute' and therefore was properly enjoined.''

The President of the United States has a duty to the law, a duty to enforce the law whether he likes it or not, and he has a duty to carry out the law. That is his oath. He is the Chief Executive. He is the person responsible for ensuring that the laws of the United States are carried out, and he breached his duty and took steps to absolutely eviscerate law passed by Congress. And being unhappy that Congress refused to change it as he wished it to be changed, he just did it anyway. And that is wrong. The court has slapped him down, as they should.

I hope the American people understand that somewhere in this system there is a commitment to law and to propriety and to the right of Congress. Congress is going to have to continue to work on this. It should boldly assert its prerogative to pass laws and its prerogative not to fund Executive amnesties, or any other program we don't think is worthy of being funded.

Mr. President, I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2015, AT 3 P.M.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands adjourned until 3 p.m. on Monday, November 16, under the provisions of H. Con. Res. 92.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:05 p.m., adjourned until Monday, November 16, 2015, at 3 p.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate November 10, 2015:

FOREIGN SERVICE

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JENNIFER ANN AMOS AND ENDING WITH HOLLY ROTHE WIELKOSZEWSKI, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JULY 8, 2015.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH KRESHNIK ALIKAJ AND ENDING WITH BRETT DAVID ZISKIE, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON SEPTEMBER 8, 2015.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JASON DOUGLAS KALBFLEISCH AND ENDING WITH STUART MACKENZIE HATCHER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON SEPTEMBER 21, 2015.

WITHDRAWAL

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on November 10, 2015 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nomination:

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF BRIG. GEN. RANDALL R. BALL, TO BE MAJOR GENERAL, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON FEBRUARY 4, 2015.

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

Senate agreed to the motion to concur in the amendment of the House of Representatives to S. 1356, National Defense Authorization Act.

Senate passed H.R. 2029, Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, as amended.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S7869–S7957

Measures Introduced: Twenty bills and one resolution were introduced, as follows: S. 2262–2281, and S. Res. 312. **Pages S7912–13**

Measures Reported:

Report to accompany S. 1334, to strengthen enforcement mechanisms to stop illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, to amend the Tuna Conventions Act of 1950 to implement the Antigua Convention. (S. Rept. No. 114–166)

S. Res. 302, expressing the sense of the Senate in support of Israel and in condemnation of Palestinian terror attacks. **Page S7912**

Measures Passed:

National Defense Authorization Act: Senate agreed to H. Con. Res. 90, directing the Secretary of the Senate to make a technical correction in the enrollment of S. 1356, after taking action on the following amendment proposed thereto: **Page S7878**

Adopted:

McCain Amendment No. 2796, to modify the resolution. **Page S7878**

Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act: By a unanimous vote of 93 yeas (Vote No. 302), Senate passed H.R. 2029, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, after withdrawing the committee reported substitute amendment, and taking action on the following amendments proposed thereto:

Pages S7871–75, S7878–81

Adopted:

Kirk (for Moran) Amendment No. 2774 (to Amendment No. 2763), to prohibit the use of funds to pay for the transfers or relocations of senior executives of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Page S7879

McConnell (for Murkowski) Amendment No. 2775 (to Amendment No. 2763), to require the Comptroller General of the United States to submit to Congress a report evaluating the implementation by the Department of Veterans Affairs of section 101 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014. **Page S7879**

McConnell (for Murkowski) Amendment No. 2776 (to Amendment No. 2763), to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit to Congress a report on the provision of health care to veterans in Alaska through the use of non-Department of Veterans Affairs health care providers. **Page S7879**

Tester (for Blumenthal) Amendment No. 2779 (to Amendment No. 2763), to require that amounts appropriated to the Department of Veterans Affairs for medical and prosthetic research are used to ensure the provision of gender appropriate prosthetics and to conduct research related to toxic exposure.

Page S7879

Tester (for Blumenthal) Amendment No. 2781 (to Amendment No. 2763), to require that amounts appropriated to the Department of Veterans Affairs for medical supplies and equipment are used to procure gender appropriate prosthetics. **Page S7879**

Kirk (for Toomey/Casey) Amendment No. 2785 (to Amendment No. 2763), to prohibit the use of funds to carry out Fast Letter 13–10 or create or maintain certain patient record-keeping systems.

Page S7879

Kirk (for Sullivan/Murkowski) Amendment No. 2786 (to Amendment No. 2763), to require the Comptroller General of the United States to submit to Congress a report on the recruitment and retention of health care providers by the Department of Veterans Affairs. **Page S7879**

Kirk (for Sullivan) Amendment No. 2787 (to Amendment No. 2763), to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit to Congress a report on the implementation by the Department of Veterans Affairs of section 101 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 in rural areas. **Page S7880**

Kirk (for Collins) Amendment No. 2788 (to Amendment No. 2763), to require a report on the use of social security numbers by the Department of Veterans Affairs and the plans of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to discontinue such use. **Page S7880**

Kirk (for Cornyn/Cruz) Amendment No. 2789 (to Amendment No. 2763), to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit to Congress a report on wait times for medical appointments at the South Texas Veterans Health Care System of the Department of Veterans Affairs. **Page S7880**

Tester (for Bennet) Amendment No. 2795 (to Amendment No. 2763), to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct a study on the impact of combat service on suicide rates and other mental health issues among members of the Armed Forces and veterans. **Page S7880**

Tester (for Durbin) Amendment No. 2794 (to Amendment No. 2763), to modify the amounts appropriated to the Department of Veterans Affairs for medical services and medical and prosthetic research. **Page S7880**

Tester (for Boxer) Amendment No. 2798 (to Amendment No. 2763), to make available $5,000,000 for a pilot program on awarding grants to provide furniture, household items, and other assistance to formerly homeless veterans moving into permanent housing. **Page S7880**

Tester (for Brown/Tillis) Amendment No. 2801 (to Amendment No. 2763), to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to develop and publish an action plan for improving the vocational rehabilitation services and assistance provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs. **Page S7880**

Kirk/Tester Amendment No. 2763, in the nature of a substitute. **Pages S7871, S7881**

Withdrawn:

Kirk Amendment No. 2764 (to Amendment No. 2763), to clarify the term "congressional defense committees." **Pages S7871, S7881**

21st Century Veterans Benefits Delivery Act: Senate passed S. 1203, to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the furnishing of health care to veterans by the Department of Veterans Affairs, to improve the processing by the Department of claims for disability compensation, after agreeing to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, the title amendment, and the following amendment proposed thereto: **Pages S7939–54**

Murkowski (for Isakson) Amendment No. 2806, relating to reports on public access to Department of Veterans Affairs research. **Page S7946**

SPACE Act: Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation was discharged from further consideration of H.R. 2262, to facilitate a pro-growth environment for the developing commercial space industry by encouraging private sector investment and creating more stable and predictable regulatory conditions, and the bill was then passed, after agreeing to the following amendment proposed thereto: **Page S7954**

Murkowski (for Cruz) Amendment No. 2805, in the nature of a substitute. **Page S7954**

Promote Pro Bono Legal Services: Senate passed S. 2280, to promote pro bono legal services as a critical way in which to empower survivors of domestic violence. **Pages S7954–55**

Expressing Support of Israel: Senate agreed to S. Res. 302, expressing the sense of the Senate in support of Israel and in condemnation of Palestinian terror attacks, after agreeing to the following amendments proposed thereto: **Pages S7955–56**

Murkowski (for Blumenthal) Amendment No. 2807, to urge the international community to condemn the Palestinian terror attacks. **Page S7955**

Murkowski (for Blumenthal) Amendment No. 2808, to add a whereas clause regarding President Obama's condemnation of Palestinian violence against innocent Israeli citizens. **Page S7956**

House Messages:

National Defense Authorization Act: By 91 yeas to 3 nays (Vote No. 301), Senate agreed to the motion to concur in the amendment of the House of Representatives to S. 1356, to clarify that certain provisions of the Border Patrol Agent Pay Reform Act of 2014 will not take effect until after the Director of the Office of Personnel Management promulgates and makes effective regulations relating to such provisions. **Pages S7875–78**

Developing a Reliable and Innovative Vision for the Economy Act—Motions To Instruct Conferees: Senate began consideration of the amendment of the House of Representatives to the amendment of the Senate to H.R. 22, to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, disagreed to the amendment of the House of Representatives to the amendment of the

Senate to the bill, agreed to the request from the House of Representatives for a conference, and authorized the Presiding Officer to appoint conferees, after taking action on the following motions to instruct conferees on the part of the Senate on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the bill to be instructed to insist on the inclusion in the final conference report the following motions proposed thereto: **Pages S7881–87**

Adopted:

By 56 yeas to 31 nays (Vote No. 304), Wicker Motion to Instruct Conferees to insist upon inclusion of the following section in title XXXII: Truck Tractor-Semitrailer-Trailer Combination Length Limitation. The Secretary may promulgate a rule to increase the minimum length limitation that a State may prescribe for a truck tractor-semitrailer-trailer combination under section 31111(b)(1)(A) of title 49, United States Code, from 28 feet to 33 feet if the Secretary makes a statistically significant finding, based on the final Comprehensive Truck Size and Weight Limit Study required under section 32801 of the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Enhancement Act of 2012 (title II of division C of Public Law 112–141), that such increase would not have a net negative impact on public safety. **Pages S7886–87**

Blumenthal Motion to Instruct Conferees to insist upon the inclusion of the rail safety provisions contained in the amendment passed by the Senate on July 30, 2015, including the authorization of grants for the installment of positive train control. **Page S7887**

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

By 82 yeas to 7 nays (Vote No. 303), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn, having voted in the affirmative, Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the motion to disagree to the amendment of the House of Representatives to the amendment of the Senate to the bill, agree to the request from the House of Representatives for a conference, and authorize the Presiding Officer to appoint conferees. **Page S7886**

The Chair was authorized to appoint the following conferees on the part of the Senate: Senators Inhofe, Thune, Hatch, Murkowski, Fischer, Barrasso, Cornyn, Boxer, Brown, Nelson, Wyden, Durbin, and Schumer. **Page S7887**

Hall Nomination—Agreement: A unanimous-consent-time agreement was reached providing that at 5 p.m., on Monday, November 16, 2015, Senate begin consideration of the nomination of LaShann Moutique DeArcy Hall, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of New York; that there be 30 minutes of debate on the nomination, and that following the use or yielding back of time, Senate vote on confirmation of the nomination, without intervening action or debate; and that no further motions be in order to the nomination. **Page S7955**

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nominations:

Routine lists in the Foreign Service. **Pages S7955, S7957**

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

Beth F. Cobert, of California, to be Director of the Office of Personnel Management for a term of four years.

A routine list in the Foreign Service. **Pages S7955, S7957**

Nomination Withdrawn: Senate received notification of withdrawal of the following nomination:

1 Air Force nomination in the rank of general. **Page S7957**

Messages from the House: **Page S7911**

Executive Communications: **Pages S7911–12**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S7913–15**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S7915–17**

Additional Statements: **Pages S7910–11**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S7918–38**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Pages S7938–39**

Record Votes: Four record votes were taken today. (Total—304) **Pages S7878, S7881, S7886–87**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned, pursuant to the provisions of H. Con. Res. 92, at 7:05 p.m., until 3 p.m. on Monday, November 16, 2015. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S7957.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

GOLDWATER-NICHOLS REFORM

Committee on Armed Services: Committee concluded a hearing to examine 30 years of Goldwater-Nichols reform, after receiving testimony from John J. Hamre, Center for Strategic and International Studies, on behalf of the Defense Policy Board Advisory Committee, James R. Locher III, Joint Special Operations University, and Jim Thomas, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, all of Washington, D.C.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 2184, to direct the President to establish guidelines for United States foreign development and economic assistance programs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

H.R. 515, to protect children from exploitation, especially sex trafficking in tourism, by providing advance notice of intended travel by registered child-sex offenders outside the United States to the government of the country of destination, requesting foreign governments to notify the United States when a known child-sex offender is seeking to enter the United States, with amendments;

S. Res. 302, expressing the sense of the Senate in support of Israel and in condemnation of Palestinian terror attacks;

An original resolution calling upon the President to condemn the ongoing sexual violence against women and children from Yezidi, Christian, Shabak, Turkmen, and other religious communities by Islamic State of Iraq and Syria militants and to urge the prosecution of the perpetrators and those complicit in these crimes;

Protocol Amending the Convention between the United States of America and the Swiss Confederation for the Avoidance of Double Taxation with Respect to Taxes on Income, signed at Washington on October 2, 1996, signed on September 23, 2009, at Washington, as corrected by an exchange of notes effected November 16, 2010 and a related agreement effected by an exchange of notes on September 23, 2009 (Treaty Doc. 112–01);

Protocol Amending the Convention between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital, signed on May 20, 2009, at Luxembourg (the ''proposed Protocol'') and a related agreement effected by the exchange of notes also signed on May 20, 2009 (Treaty Doc. 111–08);

Convention between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Hungary for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income, signed on February 4, 2010, at Budapest (the ''proposed Convention'') and a related agreement effected by an exchange of notes on February 4, 2010 (Treaty Doc. 111–07);

The Convention between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Chile for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital, signed in Washington on February 4, 2010, with a Protocol signed the same day, as corrected by exchanges of notes effected February 25, 2011, and February 10 and 21, 2012, and a related agreement effected by exchange of notes (the ''related Agreement'') on February 4, 2010 (Treaty Doc. 112–08);

The Protocol Amending the Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters, done at Paris on May 27, 2010 (the ''proposed Protocol''), which was signed by the United States on May 27, 2010 (Treaty Doc. 112–05);

The Protocol Amending the Convention between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Spain for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and its Protocol, signed at Madrid on February 22, 1990 (Treaty Doc. 113–04);

The Convention between the United States of America and the Republic of Poland for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income, signed on February 13, 2013, at Warsaw (Treaty Doc. 113–05);

The Protocol Amending the Convention between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Japan for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income and a related agreement entered into by an exchange of notes (together the ''proposed Protocol''), both signed on January 24, 2013, at Washington, together with correcting notes exchanged March 9 and March 29, 2013 (Treaty Doc. 114–01); and

The nominations of Linda I. Etim, of Wisconsin, to be an Assistant Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, Kenneth Damian Ward, of Virginia, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as United States Representative to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, John Morton, of Massachusetts, to be Executive Vice President of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, and Roberta S. Jacobson, of Maryland, to be Ambassador to the United Mexican States, Marc Jonathan Sievers, of Maryland, to be Ambassador to the Sultanate of Oman, Elisabeth I. Millard, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Tajikistan, Deborah R. Malac, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Uganda, Lisa J. Peterson, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Swaziland, H. Dean Pittman, of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Mozambique, Peter William Bodde, of Maryland, to be Ambassador to Libya, and Thomas A. Shannon, Jr., of Virginia, to be an Under Secretary (Political Affairs), all of the Department of State.

ISIS IN SYRIA

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee received a closed briefing on the campaign against ISIS in Syria from Brett McGurk, Deputy Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL, Department of State.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee met in closed session to receive a briefing on certain intelligence matters from officials of the intelligence community.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

The House was not in session today. The House is scheduled to meet at 2 p.m. on Monday, November 16, 2015, pursuant to the provisions of H. Con. Res. 92.

Committee Meetings

No hearings were held.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

NEW PUBLIC LAWS

(For last listing of Public Laws, see DAILY DIGEST, *p. D1174)*

H.R. 313, to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide leave to any new Federal employee who is a veteran with a service-connected disability rated at 30 percent or more for purposes of undergoing medical treatment for such disability. Signed on November 5, 2015. (Public Law 114–75)

H.R. 322, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 16105 Swingley Ridge Road in Chesterfield, Missouri, as the ''Sgt. Zachary M. Fisher Post Office''. Signed on November 5, 2015. (Public Law 114–76)

H.R. 323, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 55 Grasso Plaza in St. Louis, Missouri, as the ''Sgt. Amanda N. Pinson Post Office''. Signed on November 5, 2015. (Public Law 114–77)

H.R. 324, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 11662 Gravois Road in St. Louis, Missouri, as the ''Lt. Daniel P. Riordan Post Office''. Signed on November 5, 2015. (Public Law 114–78)

H.R. 558, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 55 South Pioneer Boulevard in Springboro, Ohio, as the ''Richard 'Dick' Chenault Post Office Building''. Signed on November 5, 2015. (Public Law 114–79)

H.R. 623, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to authorize the Department of Homeland Security to establish a social media working group. Signed on November 5, 2015. (Public Law 114–80)

H.R. 774, to strengthen enforcement mechanisms to stop illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, to amend the Tuna Conventions Act of 1950 to implement the Antigua Convention. Signed on November 5, 2015. (Public Law 114–81)

H.R. 1442, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 90 Cornell Street in Kingston, New York, as the ''Staff Sergeant Robert H. Dietz Post Office Building''. Signed on November 5, 2015. (Public Law 114–82)

H.R. 1884, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 206 West Commercial Street in East Rochester, New York, as the ''Officer Daryl R. Pierson Memorial Post Office Building''. Signed on November 5, 2015. (Public Law 114–83)

H.R. 3059, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4500 SE 28th Street, Del City, Oklahoma, as the James Robert Kalsu Post Office Building. Signed on November 5, 2015. (Public Law 114–84)

S. 1362, to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to clarify waiver authority regarding programs of all-inclusive care for the elderly (PACE programs). Signed on November 5, 2015. (Public Law 114–85)

S. 2162, to establish a 10-year term for the service of the Librarian of Congress. Signed on November 5, 2015. (Public Law 114–86)

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2015

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House

No hearings are scheduled.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

3 p.m., Monday, November 16

Senate Chamber

Program for Monday: After the transaction of any morning business (not to extend beyond 5 p.m.), Senate will begin consideration of the nomination of LaShann Moutique DeArcy Hall, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of New York, with a vote on confirmation of the nomination at approximately 5:30 p.m.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

2 p.m., Monday, November 16

House Chamber

Program for Monday: The House was not in session today. The House is scheduled to meet at 2 p.m. on Monday, November 16, 2015, pursuant to the provisions of H. Con. Res. 92.

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