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House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BYRNE).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
December 7, 2015.

I hereby appoint the Honorable BRADLEY BYRNE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

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

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

IT IS TIME TO RESTORE THE AMERICAN PEOPLE'S FAITH IN GOVERNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, when a married couple killed 14 people celebrating the holidays in San Bernardino last Thursday, President Obama immediately used this terrible tragedy to renew his call for tougher gun restrictions.

Never mind the fact that the shooting took place in California, which has some of the strictest gun laws in the Nation, or that authorities would quickly determine this rampage was an act of terrorism that appears to have been inspired by the Islamic State.

This messaging blunder led to last night's televised address from the Oval Office where President Obama sought to reassure the American people that his administration is taking the threat of terrorism seriously. Sadly, the only thing he revealed was he has no comprehensive strategy to confront and defeat ISIS. The President continues to cling to failing policy.

This week the House will vote on a bipartisan bill to update our visa waiver program to reduce the risk of an extremist entering the country from abroad. However, only the Commander in Chief can provide the wide-ranging plan that is necessary to eliminate the danger caused by radical Islamist terrorism.

We need more from President Obama about what can be done with our military, our intelligence-gathering, and our international partners. We are facing a new era of violence and terrorism where danger exists both abroad and on American soil. We must do all that we can to eliminate the extremist threat.

It is easy to see why the American people have no faith in the Federal Government. While the United States remains one step behind our enemy and Americans wonder if our country is safe, the Justice Department is undermining Congress' spending authority by funneling money to President Obama's political allies.

The Justice Department prosecutes cases against corporate bad actors, and those companies agree to settlements that often include financial penalties. However, the Department has begun to mandate that at least some of that penalty money be paid in the form of donations to nonprofits that allegedly aid consumers and bolster neighborhoods.

The purpose of financial penalties is to punish the bad actors and provide restitution to real victims. However, the list of government-approved nonprofit beneficiaries reads like a who's who of liberal activist groups. An investigation by the House Judiciary and Financial Services Committees revealed that DOJ has used mandatory donations to direct as much as half a billion dollars to these activist groups.

These payments also occur entirely outside of the congressional appropriations and oversight process. The Miscellaneous Receipts Act requires money received by the government from any source to be deposited in the Treasury. Directing banks to give money to third parties evades that statute.

Thank goodness the House passed an amendment by Chairman GOODLATTE in June that blocks funding for negotiating settlements that require a defendant to donate to an organization or an individual not involved in the litigation. This commonsense amendment passed by voice vote and should absolutely be included in the omnibus spending bill we are expected to vote on this week.

It is time for Republicans to confront this administration and restore the people's faith in their government.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 5 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. EMMER of Minnesota) at 2 p.m.

Printed on recycled paper.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Loving God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

In this season, among the holiest for millions of Americans, many live in fear of the dangers that abound. Just as at Pearl Harbor 74 years ago, violence in our land has been visited upon us.

But in Your Word, You have implored us to have no fear, for You are with us. Help us to put our trust in You and thus live up to our motto, which faces the assembly as a constant call to us. Bless all the peacemakers of our world. May Your eternal spirit be with them and with us always.

May Your special blessings be upon the Members of this assembly in the important and difficult work they are given to do. Give them wisdom and charity, that they might work together for the common good.

May all that is done this day in the people's House be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. DELBENE 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.

KARA ECKERT RECYCLING FOR CHARITY

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today I want to recognize a student from Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District who is giving back to her community while helping our environment.

Kara Eckert, who is a senior at State College Area High School, teamed up with a waste management company in 2012 to recycle a number of items, including granola bar wrappers and cereal bags. She also set up boxes at her school so her fellow classmates and teachers could contribute to her efforts.

Since 2012, Kara has recycled more than 18,200 granola bar wrappers, around 3,500 cereal bags, and approximately 1,800 oral care products. More importantly, proceeds from those items have gone to local organizations, including the Boalsburg Cemetery Association and the Penn State Figure Skating Club.

Mr. Speaker, it is so impressive to see charitable efforts such as this one in the communities we represent. What makes this even more praiseworthy, though, is Kara Eckert's regard for her community at such a young age.

I wish her the best of luck as she finishes her high school career and in the next step of her education.

TERRORIST WATCH LIST

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

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, terrorists shouldn't be able to legally buy guns. However, right now, someone on the FBI's terrorist watch list can go into a gun store and buy a firearm of their choosing—legally. Since 2004, more than 2,000 suspected terrorists have legally purchased weapons in the United States.

Last week, House Republicans voted three times to protect the ability of suspected terrorists to continue buying guns. This made our country less safe.

Mr. Speaker, that is why I just filed a discharge petition that would allow us to vote on a bipartisan bill to close the terror list loophole. The bill makes sure those on the FBI's terrorist watch list can't walk into a gun store, pass a background check, and buy a gun.

If House Republicans are concerned about the accuracy of the list, let's scrub the list. If you agree that terrorists shouldn't be able to have guns, then put your name down in writing, and let's have a vote.

HONORING DOUGLAS ''STRETCH'' BAKER OF NYE COUNTY, NEVADA

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

Mr. HARDY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Douglas ''Stretch'' Baker of Nye County, Nevada, for his dedicated service to save and preserve the Tonopah Historic Mining Park. The park, a critically acclaimed tourism site, is a crucial part of the mining heritage of Tonopah and the proud history of the State of Nevada.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Baker has given countless hours of his time and use of his equipment to make the site safe and attractive to visitors, to build a unique welcoming sign and gate, and to promote the park through appropriate signage.

When it became known that the signature Mizpah shaft was in immediate need of repair, the Tonopah Historic Mining Park Foundation undertook a momentous fundraising effort to save the structure and was able to raise over $100,000.

Mr. Baker was invaluable in the effort, even acting as a crane operator and ''adviser in chief.''

Mr. Speaker, Douglas ''Stretch'' Baker is to be commended, along with the Tonopah Historic Mining Park Foundation Board, for bringing the exciting project to a successful conclusion, thereby preserving one of the most important artifacts of Nevada's mining history.

COMBATING CLIMATE CHANGE

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

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, the Pacific Northwest has always been a leader when it comes to climate change. However, it is critical the United States shows the same leadership globally. That is why it is so encouraging to hear the reports from the climate summit in Paris. We need to take action not just domestically, but around the world.

Mr. Speaker, in Washington State, we know firsthand how damaging climate change can be. From longer and worsening fire seasons, increased pests and invasive species, an acidifying ocean to more unpredictable natural disasters, a vast majority of the population recognizes climate change as a growing problem in need of international solutions.

We often hear talk about the debt we will be leaving the next generation but not enough about the environment we are leaving our children and our grandchildren. Mr. Speaker, it is long past time for bold solutions and an international approach to combat climate change. This summit comes at a crucial time, and we look forward to its progress.

PASS THE MICROBEAD-FREE WATERS ACT OF 2015

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

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on the Microbead-Free Waters Act of 2015.

Mr. Speaker, I represent a district that borders Lake Michigan. The Great Lakes are the source of fresh drinking water for literally millions of Americans. Jobs, recreation, and tourism all depend on a healthy and flourishing Great Lakes ecosystem, and we must do all that we can to protect this vital natural resource.

Mr. Speaker, microbeads are microscopic pieces of plastic that are included in products like soaps and cosmetics. They are designed to help these products to be more effective. But when these products are used, the microbeads inside them can get into the Nation's waterways. They end up accumulating in lakes, rivers, and oceans—where they stay, and where they eventually collect toxic chemicals

and eventually enter the food and water supply.

Mr. Speaker, the Microbead-Free Waters Act is a great step forward to preserving the Great Lakes for our future generations. As a cosponsor of this important bill, I urge its passage.

TERRORIST WATCH LIST

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, as a Member of Congress, I take seriously my responsibility to protect and defend the American people.

That is why it is so troubling to me that Republicans in Congress last week voted three times to block debate on a bill, offered by Republican Congressman PETER KING, that would close a loophole that allows suspects on the FBI's terrorist watch list to buy assault weapons.

The shocking truth is that, according to the GAO, more than 2,000 suspects on the FBI's terrorist watch list tried to buy weapons in the U.S. over the last 11 years; 91 percent of them walked away with a weapon.

With all of the threats and dangers that we face, this loophole should be closed. We should make it harder for suspected terrorists to buy assault weapons, not easier.

Mr. Speaker, 80 percent of gun owners support keeping guns away from people on the terror watch list. Yet Republicans in Congress and the NRA continue to block commonsense bills to do what? To allow suspected terrorists to purchase weapons? Congress needs to act to protect the American people and close this dangerous loophole.

CLIMATE CHANGE SOUNDS FISHY

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, President Obama is misleading Americans about climate change. At a news conference in Paris, the President claimed that fish are swimming through the streets of Miami as a result of climate change. There is indeed something fishy about this story.

According to the National Weather Service, south Florida has been under a coastal flood advisory as a result of ''high . . . tides due to the lunar cycle.'' This is the cause of the high tides which subsequently led to flooding in low-lying areas.

The alignment of the Earth, Moon, and Sun, along with strong easterly winds, caused the abnormal tides, not climate change. How could the President not know this?

Mr. Speaker, the administration's alarmism and exaggeration is not good science; it is science fiction. The administration wants to advance an extreme climate change agenda that will damage our economy and have little impact on global warming.

THE 74TH ANNIVERSARY OF PEARL HARBOR

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, today we recognize the somber 74th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

On this day in 1941, our Nation was gripped in shock and sadness. Over 2,000 lives were lost, and over 1,000 servicemembers were wounded. We honor and remember those lives lost during this horrific attack. These brave men and women fought for our freedoms and made the ultimate sacrifice.

We also remember the strength our Nation demonstrated following this tragedy. From the ashes rose the Greatest Generation and a stronger United States of America. As President Roosevelt said: ''The American people, in their righteous might, will win through to absolute victory.''

Mr. Speaker, on this somber day, we honor the lives lost. We are reminded of the sacrifices made and of the strength of our great Nation. I am forever grateful for all those in our armed services and the sacrifices they make for each and every one of us.

IT IS TIME FOR THE UNITED STATES TO BE AT WAR WITH ISIS

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

Mr. POE of Texas. December 7, 1941—a date which will live in infamy. No matter how long it may take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people, in their righteous might, will win through to absolute victory. So help us, Almighty God.

Mr. Speaker, that was Franklin Delano Roosevelt's reaction to an attack on the United States.

Last night, Mr. Speaker, President Obama held a rare Oval Office address to give his update on ISIS. His message—stay the course with the same ineffective strategy. Not as inspiring as Franklin Delano Roosevelt's address when the United States faced another enemy.

The President has promised no ground troops and more gun control. He called ISIS the JV team. They defied American airstrikes and expanded their caliphate, killing everyone in their way.

He declared ISIS was contained hours before 130 people were slaughtered in the City of Light. He said there was no immediate, credible threat to the homeland. Days later, 14 people died in San Bernardino at the hands of ISIS sympathizers.

Mr. Speaker, Congress needs to approve an authorization to use military force, specifically against ISIS. ISIS is at war with the United States. It is time for the United States to be at war with ISIS, and the Commander in Chief should lead us to absolute victory.

And that is just the way it is.

□ 1415

PRESIDENT OBAMA REFUSES TO CONFRONT OUR ENEMY

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues have come to the floor and we do remember Pearl Harbor and we remember this day. And we also remember how our relatives who talked about this who served, how they told these stories. I think we are blessed to have that insight into history. It is such a difference when you compare what the President did last night—13 minutes is what he had to say about terrorism and the war on terror.

I have been reading emails from some of my constituents. Their words are this: He is tone deaf, he is in denial, he is the fearful leader—the fearful leader. They want to see leadership that will communicate the message: we are going to find you, we are going to destroy you, and we are going to destroy your networks. That is not what the President has been saying.

My constituents see him as being very timid and very hesitant in this fight. They feel like that he just does not get it. They have a lot of questions that they are asking me: Why is it that he is so timid in fighting terrorism? Could it be that he does not possess the courage to call them out? That he thinks America is to blame for this? Or he doesn't want to offend our enemies?

They have declared war on us. It is time for us to confront our enemy.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

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

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 4, 2015.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on December 4, 2015 at 10:40 a.m.:

That the Senate agreed to Conference Report H.R. 22.

That the Senate passed S. 2032.

That the Senate passed with an amendment H.R. 3762.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 4 of rule I, the following enrolled bill was signed by Speaker pro tempore COMSTOCK on Friday, December 4, 2015:

H.R. 22, to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes.

COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF MEMBER, THE HONORABLE MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from Paul Ritacco, staff member, the Honorable MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK, Member of Congress:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 2, 2015.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a grand jury subpoena for testimony issued by the United States District Court for the Central District of Illinois.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I will make the determinations required by Rule VIII.

Sincerely,

PAUL RITACCO.

COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF MEMBER OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from a staff member of the Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 2, 2015.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a grand jury subpoena for testimony issued by the United States District Court for the Central District of Illinois.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I will make the determinations required by Rule VIII.

Sincerely,

NORMAN GUGLIOTTA.

COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF MEMBER OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from a staff member of the Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 2, 2015.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

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After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I will make the determinations required by Rule VIII.

Sincerely,

JOHN NADEAU.

COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF MEMBER OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from a staff member of the Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 2, 2015.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

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After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I will make the determinations required by Rule VIII.

Sincerely,

JACQUELINE HURDA.

COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF MEMBER OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from a staff member of the Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 2, 2015.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a grand jury subpoena for testimony issued by the United States District Court for the Central District of Illinois.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I will make the determinations required by Rule VIII.

Sincerely,

ANDREW TODD CAULK.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 3:45 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 19 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1546

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SMITH of Nebraska) at 3 o'clock and 46 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

FEDERAL IMPROPER PAYMENTS COORDINATION ACT OF 2015

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 614) to provide access to and use of information by Federal agencies in order to reduce improper payments, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 614

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Federal Improper Payments Coordination Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. AVAILABILITY OF THE DO NOT PAY INITIATIVE TO THE JUDICIAL AND LEGISLATIVE BRANCHES AND STATES.

Section 5 of the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act of 2012 (31 U.S.C. 3321 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(3)—

(A) in the paragraph heading, by striking ''BY AGENCIES'';

(B) by striking ''For purposes'' and inserting the following:

''(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(B) OTHER ENTITIES.—States and any contractor, subcontractor, or agent of a State, and the judicial and legislative branches of the United States (as defined in paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively, of section 202(e) of title 18, United States Code), shall have access to, and use of, the Do Not Pay Initiative for the purpose of verifying payment or award eligibility for payments (as defined in section 2(g)(3) of the Improper Payments Information Act of 2002 (31 U.S.C. 3321 note)) when, with respect to a State, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget determines that the Do Not Pay Initiative is appropriately established for that State and any contractor, subcontractor, or agent of the State, and, with respect to the judicial and legislative branches of the United States, when the Director of the Office of Management and Budget determines that the Do Not Pay Initiative is appropriately established for the judicial branch or the legislative branch, as applicable.

''(C) CONSISTENCY WITH PRIVACY ACT OF 1974.—To ensure consistency with the principles of section 552a of title 5, United States

Code (commonly known as the 'Privacy Act of 1974'), the Director of the Office of Management and Budget may issue guidance that establishes privacy and other requirements that shall be incorporated into Do Not Pay Initiative access agreements with States, including any contractor, subcontractor, or agent of a State, and the judicial and legislative branches of the United States.''; and

(2) in subsection (d)(2)—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''and'' after the semicolon;

(B) in subparagraph (C), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (C) the following:

''(D) may include States and their quasi-government entities, and the judicial and legislative branches of the United States (as defined in paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively, of section 202(e) of title 18, United States Code) as users of the system in accordance with subsection (b)(3).''.

SEC. 3. IMPROVING THE SHARING AND USE OF DATA BY GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TO CURB IMPROPER PAYMENTS.

The Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act of 2012 (31 U.S.C. 3321 note) is amended—

(1) in section 5(a)(2), by striking subparagraph (A) and inserting the following:

''(A) The death records maintained by the Commissioner of Social Security.''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 7. IMPROVING THE USE OF DATA BY GOVERNMENT AGENCIES FOR CURBING IMPROPER PAYMENTS.

''(a) PROMPT REPORTING OF DEATH INFORMATION BY THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense shall establish a procedure under which each Secretary shall, promptly and on a regular basis, submit information relating to the deaths of individuals to each agency for which the Director of the Office of Management and Budget determines receiving and using such information would be relevant and necessary.

''(b) GUIDANCE TO AGENCIES REGARDING DATA ACCESS AND USE FOR IMPROPER PAYMENTS PURPOSES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, the heads of other relevant Federal, State, and local agencies, and Indian tribes and tribal organizations, as appropriate, shall issue guidance regarding implementation of the Do Not Pay Initiative under section 5 to—

''(A) the Department of the Treasury; and

''(B) each agency or component of an agency—

''(i) that operates or maintains a database of information described in section 5(a)(2); or

''(ii) for which the Director determines improved data matching would be relevant, necessary, or beneficial.

''(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The guidance issued under paragraph (1) shall—

''(A) address the implementation of subsection (a); and

''(B) include the establishment of deadlines for access to and use of the databases described in section 5(a)(2) under the Do Not Pay Initiative.''.

SEC. 4. DATA ANALYTICS.

Section 5 of the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act of 2012 (31 U.S.C. 3321 note), is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(h) REPORT ON IMPROPER PAYMENTS DATA ANALYSIS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Federal Improper Payments Coordination Act of 2015, the Secretary of the Treasury shall submit to Congress a report which shall include a description of—

''(1) data analytics performed as part of the Do Not Pay Business Center operated by the Department of the Treasury for the purpose of detecting, preventing, and recovering improper payments through preaward, postaward prepayment, and postpayment analysis, which shall include a description of any analysis or investigations incorporating—

''(A) review and data matching of payments and beneficiary enrollment lists of State programs carried out using Federal funds for the purposes of identifying eligibility duplication, residency ineligibility, duplicate payments, or other potential improper payment issues;

''(B) review of multiple Federal agencies and programs for which comparison of data could show payment duplication; and

''(C) review of other information the Secretary of the Treasury determines could prove effective for identifying, preventing, or recovering improper payments, which may include investigation or review of information from multiple Federal agencies or programs;

''(2) the metrics used in determining whether the analytic and investigatory efforts have reduced, or contributed to the reduction of, improper payments or improper awards; and

''(3) the target dates for implementing the data analytics operations performed as part of the Do Not Pay Business Center''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. MULVANEY) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, this is a Senate bill that we take up today, but there has actually been a House bill that is almost exactly the same for the last year or so.

The story behind how this bill comes to the floor is one of those stories that should make folks confident that the system can work. I was on a Facebook townhall meeting about a year and a half ago and got a question from one of the constituents about all the money that they have heard the government wastes by paying the wrong people, paying dead people, or paying people way too much money.

I remember it specifically, Mr. Speaker, because shortly after that, my uncle passed away. When my uncle passed away, I was named executor of his estate. It was the first time I have ever been the executor of an estate. One of the things I remember was that I got a notice 10 days after he had died, very shortly—2 weeks—from the Social Security Administration saying: You are going to get another check for your uncle. Don't cash it or else you can be in a lot of trouble.

I thought that was really neat. Here is a Federal agency that is actually doing its job in very short order and very efficiently. And I filed that away.

A couple months later, Mr. Speaker, my good friend from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS), who is the subcommittee chairman of the Government Operations on the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, was having a hearing about all of these payments that we are not supposed to be making. I had a chance to ask some questions, and I told that story to the government witnesses from the executive branch who were there. I said: Look, how is it that this works so well in the Social Security Administration, but we have all these tales of all these improper payments going to other people?

They said: Well, Mr. Congressman, that is because the Social Security Administration has a really, really good database, and they process the information very well when folks die.

I asked what I thought was a relatively straightforward question: Why don't they share the information with the other Federal agencies?

That was the genesis of this bill. What we set out to try and do is try and take circumstances, take examples of where the Federal Government actually does its job well and use that as a model that can be shared by other parts of the government.

Mr. Speaker, the bill, by the way, that we are talking about is S. 614. There was a House version of it that I worked off of, just because I am a little bit more familiar with it. It is H.R. 2320. The language is almost exactly the same.

I want to thank Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. CONNOLLY, and also Mr. CARTER of Georgia and Mr. WESTMORELAND of Georgia, who are the original cosponsors of this.

Mr. Speaker, the bill does two very specific, large things and one small thing. It expands that Social Security database. So it takes this, again, this example of something that actually works the way that it is supposed to, and lets other folks use the information.

What does that mean? States will now be able to use it. State contractors will now be able to gain access to it. The judicial branch will be able to gain access to it, and the legislative branch will as well.

So the example is that this really good information is not being shared broadly throughout governments—local, State, and Federal—and we are seeking to fix that in the bill.

The other thing the bill does is to expand what is called the Do Not Pay portal. This is a database that is managed by the United States Department of the Treasury and contains, again,

really good information about who has passed away, how much money people should be receiving, who has moved, and who is entitled to benefits and who is not.

By the way, there is a third thing that the bill does, Mr. Speaker. It seems inevitable that we cannot pass a bill here without asking for a report that goes along with it. But I think it is probably common sense to say that at some point in the future, we would like the Treasury to tell us if it is actually working.

It is not very often, Mr. Speaker, that I come up here and tell you that there are examples of the Federal Government doing its job well; but when we do find those examples, I am very happy to get up and admit it. As a small government, conservative Republican, ordinarily I am the one that says government never does anything right; but here, actually, parts and parcels of the Federal Government are doing their job well. If we can take that example, take that model and expand it to other parts of the government, we would actually have a chance to solve what is a real problem.

We spent about $125 billion last year on improper payments, payments to people who should not have received it, payments to people who have passed away, or payments to people in the wrong amount—$125 billion. We just had a major fight on this floor 2 weeks ago over spending $80 billion extra in the budget bill, yet we spend that much, half again, on improper payments every single year. In fact, it is one of the fastest growing line items in our budget. That $125 billion represents a 15 percent increase over the previous year. One of the fastest growing areas of our government is improper payments.

So, Mr. Speaker, I just want to thank Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, and Mr. WESTMORELAND in the House for helping bring this bill to the floor. Also, I want to thank Senator CARPER from Delaware and Senator RON JOHNSON from Wisconsin for shepherding it through the Senate.

This is their bill that we are taking. I guess that is another inevitability, that, if the Senate has the same bill as the House does, the Senate gets all the credit. But sometimes it is interesting to see what you can actually accomplish around here, Mr. Speaker, if you don't worry about who gets the credit.

I do want to thank the folks who took the time and the effort to shepherd this very sound, well-considered, and bipartisan bill to the floor today.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Federal Improper Payments Coordination Act before the House this afternoon. I am pleased to join my friend from South Carolina (Mr. MULVANEY) in sponsoring the House companion of this bipartisan legislation. He has already mentioned the cosponsors, CHERI BUSTOS, BUDDY CARTER, and LYNN WESTMORELAND among them. I also want to thank our Senate partners for their work on this important initiative.

I want to assure my friend, Mr. MULVANEY, we are going to be marking up a companion bill to this tomorrow in our committee, and hopefully we will send it over to the Senate with a House number on it. Fair is fair.

This is the latest in a series of commonsense, good-government laws we have enacted over the last decade as we work to reduce, if not outright eliminate, billions of taxpayer dollars in improper payments made by Federal agencies. The gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. MULVANEY) pointed out just how large a number this is: $125 billion a year.

Now, over a decade, that is $1.25 trillion. That exceeds all of sequestration. We wouldn't have to make any cuts to investments or raise any taxes to deal with sequestration if we just dealt with this. With the GAO reporting nearly $125 billion of improper payments, it is clear that more can and must be done to deal with government waste and fraud.

Today's legislation would expand the use, as Mr. MULVANEY indicated, of the Do Not Pay Initiative to the legislative and judicial branches and to our State partners. That initiative was the result of the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act of 2012, which was also a product of our committee, and I was pleased to cosponsor it at that time.

The Do Not Pay Initiative was launched by Treasury and leverages multiple data sources—many of which were formerly siloed—to create a central, comprehensive list that Federal agencies can quickly reference to determine whether an individual or organization is, in fact, eligible to receive a Federal grant, benefit, or contract; and it also allows them to verify such payments after the fact.

For example, this initiative has prompted agencies to better share the reporting of death information to help reduce Federal payments to those, obviously, we have lost or for those who have had their identities stolen. Today's legislation would require the Departments of Defense and State to report information on deaths that occur overseas more quickly so that the agencies can better detect fraudulent payments or recoup improper payments if necessary.

Just last week, Mr. Speaker, the Office of Management and Budget delivered its first report to Congress on the Do Not Pay Initiative, which it says resulted in more than $2 billion in stopped payments—that is to say, savings for the U.S. taxpayer. Obviously, we can, with this bill, increase that number even more.

Based on that early success, it makes good sense for us to expand the use of this valuable tool to the legislative and judicial branches, as well as our State partners, so they have the ability to quickly verify payments or the eligibility of recipients to receive such payments.

This commonsense proposal was a welcomed suggestion from the GAO in its latest report on improper payments. I would also add that the Oversight and Government Reform Committee will continue this work, as I indicated, with a markup tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, again, I want to thank my colleague, Mr. MULVANEY, for his leadership on this matter, and I urge our colleagues to support this important reform to our government in making it more efficient and accountable to the taxpayer.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BUSTOS), my good friend and the cosponsor of this legislation.

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman CONNOLLY and Congressman MULVANEY for their hard work on this.

Mr. Speaker, as one of the Democratic coleaders of this legislation, I am so proud to rise in support of the Federal Improper Payments Coordination Act of 2015. The goal of this bill is straightforward: simply, to save taxpayer dollars that are currently going to waste and to make the Federal Government more effective and more efficient.

Each year, Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government spends billions of dollars in improper payments. This not only wastes taxpayer dollars, but it also erodes the public trust in government. Just last year, as my colleagues have pointed out, improper payments by the Federal Government rose to $125 billion. That is more than $1 trillion over a decade. That is according to the Office of Management and Budget. It is also an increase of 15 percent up from the year before, where it was $106 billion. So we are talking about real money here.

In tough times, working families have to figure out how to cut costs to get their budgets in line. We all know that. I think it is time that Washington do the same thing. That is why our bill takes reasonable—reasonable—steps to improve information sharing between Federal and State agencies to prevent these improper payments.

This also helps modernize Federal agencies by putting 21st century data analytics to work in identifying and eliminating governmentwide waste and fraud. The status quo is, plain and simple, not acceptable.

At a time when so many working families have to tighten their belts and cut costs, they expect Congress to act responsibly with their hard-earned taxpayer dollars. This bipartisan legislation represents a commonsense approach to a problem that is costing the taxpayers billions of dollars. This is undermining the effectiveness and the credibility of the Federal Government.

I thank Congressman MULVANEY and Congressman CONNOLLY. I think this is

an indication that we know how to work together. I want to applaud my colleagues for joining our efforts to protect taxpayers.

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

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Mr. CONNOLLY. Again, I want to thank my friend, Mrs. BUSTOS, for her leadership on this very important issue.

I, also, in closing, just want to say to my friend from South Carolina, part of improper payments is also fraud, and the biggest chunk of that is Medicare fraud. We need the help of U.S. Attorney's Offices to go after that. I am aware of one U.S. Attorney's Office last year that identified and recovered $3 billion of Medicare fraud. Now, I believe there are 99 U.S. Attorney's Offices in the United States. If every one of them made going after this fraud a priority, I assure you, we could significantly reduce improper payments by a commensurate amount. I would be glad to work with him and my friend, Mrs. BUSTOS, on a bipartisan basis to address that aspect of it as well.

Again, I want to thank Mr. MULVANEY for his leadership and for the bipartisan approach we have approached this legislation.

We have no more speakers on our side, Mr. Speaker.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I urge adoption.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. MULVANEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 614.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MICROBEAD-FREE WATERS ACT OF 2015

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1321) to prohibit the sale or distribution of cosmetics containing synthetic plastic microbeads, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1321

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 ''Microbead-Free Waters Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. PROHIBITION AGAINST SALE OR DISTRIBUTION OF RINSE-OFF COSMETICS CONTAINING PLASTIC MICROBEADS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 301 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 331) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(ddd)(1) The manufacture or the introduction or delivery for introduction into interstate commerce of a rinse-off cosmetic that contains intentionally-added plastic microbeads.

''(2) In this paragraph—

''(A) the term 'plastic microbead' means any solid plastic particle that is less than five millimeters in size and is intended to be used to exfoliate or cleanse the human body or any part thereof; and

''(B) the term 'rinse-off cosmetic' includes toothpaste.''.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amendment made by subsection (a) applies—

(A) with respect to manufacturing, beginning on July 1, 2017, and with respect to introduction or delivery for introduction into interstate commerce, beginning on July 1, 2018; and

(B) notwithstanding subparagraph (A), in the case of a rinse-off cosmetic that is a nonprescription drug, with respect to manufacturing, beginning on July 1, 2018, and with respect to the introduction or delivery for introduction into interstate commerce, beginning on July 1, 2019.

(2) NONPRESCRIPTION DRUG.—For purposes of this subsection, the term ''nonprescription drug'' means a drug not subject to section 503(b)(1) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 353(b)(1)).

(c) PREEMPTION OF STATE LAWS.—No State or political subdivision of a State may directly or indirectly establish under any authority or continue in effect restrictions with respect to the manufacture or introduction or delivery for introduction into interstate commerce of rinse-off cosmetics containing plastic microbeads (as defined in section 301(ddd) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, as added by subsection (a)) that are not identical to the restrictions under such section 301(ddd) that have begun to apply under subsection (b).

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this Act (or the amendments made by this Act) shall be construed to apply with respect to drugs that are not also cosmetics (as such terms are defined in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321)).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1321, the Microbead-Free Waters Act of 2015.

I am pleased to have partnered with my friend, Energy and Commerce Committee Ranking Member FRANK PALLONE from New Jersey, on this very important bill to begin the phaseout of plastic microbeads, which you can see in this picture, literally the size of a pinhead sometimes on a penny, to begin the phaseout of plastic microbeads from personal care products on July 1, 2017.

Many folks might be wondering, what exactly is a microbead? Well, I am sure many of you here and at home are using products that contain microbeads without even realizing it. Microbeads are those tiny little scrubbers in cleansers, body scrubs, and even toothpaste. On their own, they are nearly invisible, smaller than a pinhead, as I indicated.

But once they are flushed down the drain, that is when the problem really begins. They are so small they easily flow through the water filtration systems and end up in our bodies of water, obviously, including the Great Lakes, where I hail from. They are known to absorb pollutants and often mistaken as food by fish and wildlife. Simply put, microbeads are causing megaproblems.

As someone who grew up on Lake Michigan and represents a large chunk of the Michigan coastline, I understand firsthand how important it is to maintain the beauty and integrity of our Great Lakes and all of our water systems. The Great Lakes have survived many a foe—severe pollution, oil spills, discharge from refineries, zebra mussels, and attempts to steal our water, just to name a few. We are going to fight any activity that puts our beloved Great Lakes in jeopardy.

Many State and local governments have created a patchwork of differing laws, which creates problems for interstate commerce. This bipartisan legislation will also preempt all State and local laws related to microbeads in cosmetics, which will ensure certainty for manufacturers and other job creators across the country.

I urge all my colleagues to join me in ending this pesky problem of microbeads. They are tiny plastic, but big time pollution. As Michigan's Holland Sentinel editorialized this past spring, ''There's no reason keeping our faces feeling clean should require us to trash our lakes.''

I urge all Members to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1321, the Microbead-Free Waters Act of 2015.

This legislation sets up a strong Federal program to ban the use of plastic microbeads in personal care products. I would like to personally thank Chairman FRED UPTON for working with me to introduce and move this important legislation.

Plastic microbeads have been in use in cosmetic products, such as face washes and toothpaste, for many years. These tiny plastic beads are often used as exfoliants, removing dead skin cells from the surface of the skin. While these plastic particles are not harmful to the user of the product, in recent years, studies have shown that these tiny particles that are often washed down the drain are making it through the wastewater treatment process and ending up in our Nation's waterways. We must put a stop to this unnecessary and avoidable pollution.

Mr. Speaker, studies conducted in the Great Lakes, the world's largest source of freshwater, have turned up alarmingly high levels of microplastic. In addition to contributing to the buildup of plastic pollution in waterways, microbeads can often be mistaken by fish and other organisms as food. I have serious concerns about fish and other aquatic life potentially ingesting these particles and the effect this could have on humans who consume fish that have ingested the plastic.

Numerous natural, biodegradable alternatives to plastic microbeads already exist in commerce and product supply chains, including apricot seeds, walnut shells, and pecan shell powder. Several personal care product companies have already announced plans to phase out the use of plastic microbeads in their products in favor of natural exfoliants.

Beginning with Illinois in 2014, nine States have enacted some form of a ban on plastic microbeads in personal care products. Yet, in my opinion, we need a national solution. Our Nation's waterways do not always respect State boundaries. In order to put a stop to these plastic particles making their way into our oceans, lakes, and streams, we need to ban plastic microbeads in every State.

The legislation before us today is the product of bipartisan input since it has moved through the committee process. Chairman UPTON and I have worked to strengthen and clarify a number of provisions in the bill, most notably, by setting up an aggressive timetable for the phaseout of these products, which begins in 2017, earlier than any of the currently enacted State laws.

The legislation exclusively bans the use of biodegradable plastic as an alternative ingredient, a loophole that has been discovered in a number of existing State laws. Many of the State laws contain a provision allowing companies to transition to biodegradable plastic as an alternative ingredient, and little is known about the ability of these biodegradable plastics to break down in a marine environment.

The language we used to define the scope of this bill was carefully chosen. Plastic microbead is defined as any solid plastic particle that is less than 5 millimeters in size and is used to exfoliate or cleanse the human body. This definition limiting the scope to exfoliating products is also in all nine State-passed laws, and it focuses the prohibition on the products currently containing plastic microbeads that are being washed down the drain.

The bill also includes preemption of State laws regulating plastic microbeads and cosmetics. While I am typically not a supporter of preempting State law, the strong Federal standard we have developed is more protective and implementation will occur sooner than in any State law in place.

Mr. Speaker, limiting pollution in our Nation's waterways has always been one of my top priorities. It is an issue that helps further creation of the Environmental Protection Agency in 1970 after the Cuyahoga River in Ohio caught fire. While much progress has been made, we must continue our efforts to protect America's waterways. And by banning plastic microbeads in personal care products, we are taking one more step towards a cleaner and healthier environment in America.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation. Again, thank our Chairman UPTON, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take this time to thank my colleague, Mr. PALLONE. This was his legislation, which I cosponsored, as he indicated. We moved it through regular order, lots of hearings, a unanimous vote in subcommittee and full committee, and we want to get this bill to the President for him to sign.

As I have talked to Members of the Great Lakes Coalition, our colleagues in the Great Lakes States—Republican and Democrat—but also our Senators from the Great Lakes as well, there is huge interest in getting this bill to the President. It will, indeed, make a difference. The phaseout time was appropriate, so, in essence, we are telling the manufacturers to stop making it, and a time then for them to see the products off the shelf, so that ultimately, they will not be in cosmetics or toothpaste and other personal care products.

Again, I want to thank the gentleman for his leadership on this. I look forward to passing it on a bipartisan vote.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Let me thank the chairman again. As he pointed out, this truly has been a bipartisan effort. There is also a Senate bill that is bipartisan that this matches, which I think was a strong indication that we can get this bill not only passed here, but also in the Senate and get it to the President's desk.

I should also point out that this is one of those occasions, which happens quite a bit, even though people don't realize it, where the industry is actually in cooperation with us, and the cosmetic products industry supports this initiative as well.

For all those reasons, let's get the bill passed, and I urge all my colleagues to vote ''yes.''

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1321, as amended.

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

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: ''A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to prohibit the manufacture and introduction or delivery for introduction into interstate commerce of rinse-off cosmetics containing intentionally-added plastic microbeads.''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 2032. An act to adopt the bison as the national mammal of the United States; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker pro tempore, Mrs. COMSTOCK, on Friday, December 4, 2015:

An act to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes.

BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on December 4, 2015, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill:

H.R. 22. To authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 12 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, December 8, 2015, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for Official Foreign Travel during the third quarter of 2015, pursuant to Public Law 95–384, are as follows:

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, HON. ANDY BARR, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 9 AND OCT. 17, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Hon. Garland "Andy" Barr	10/10	10/11	Israel		500.00	(3)	7,413		90.65		8,003.65
	10/11	10/13	Jordan		810.82		(3)		15.78		826.60
	10/13	10/14	Iraq		11.00	(3)	2,700		1.67		2,712.67
	10/14	10/15	Kuwait		423.81		(3)		75.48		499.29
	10/15	10/16	Afghanistan		12.00		(3)		1.67		13.67
	10/16	10/17	Turkey		304.00		(3)		159.42		463.42
Committee total					2,061.63		10,113.00				12,519.30

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
[3] Military air transportation.

HON. ANDY BARR, Nov. 10, 2015.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, DELEGATION TO NORWAY, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 9 AND OCT. 13, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Hon. Michael Turner	10/10	10/13	Norway		1,131.00		7,016.00				8,147.00
Hon. Gerry Connolly	10/10	10/13	Norway		1,131.00		14,880.00				16,011.00
Hon. Bill Johnson	10/10	10/13	Norway		1,131.00		14,353.00				15,484.00
Hon. Brett Guthrie	10/10	10/13	Norway		1,131.00		11,840.00				12,971.00
Hon. Paul Cook	10/10	10/12	Norway		898.00		12,677.00				13,575.00
Hon. Susan Davis	10/10	10/13	Norway		1,015.00		12,276.00				13,291.00
Hon. Ted Poe	10/10	10/13	Norway		1,015.00		11,751.00				12,766.00
Hon. Theodore Deutch	10/10	10/12	Norway		819.00		3,831.00				4,650.00
Hon. Lois Frankel	10/10	10/13	Norway		1,015.00		11,484.00				12,499.00
Hon. Rich Nugent	10/10	10/13	Norway		1,131.00		2,319.00				3,450.00
Morley Greene	10/09	10/13	Norway		1,132.00		11,134.00				12,266.00
Janice Robinson	10/09	10/13	Norway		1,132.00		11,134.00				12,266.00
Ed Rice	10/09	10/13	Norway		1,132.00		11,134.00				12,266.00
Committee total					13,813.00		135,829.00				149,642.00

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. MICHAEL R. TURNER, Nov. 10, 2015.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JULY 1 AND SEPT. 30, 2015*

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Hon. Terri Sewell	8/22	8/24	Ethiopia		395.15		1,120.45				1,515.60
	8/24	8/26	Rwanda		483.00		(3)				483.00
	8/26	8/28	Gabon		820.22		(3)				820.22
	8/28	8/28	Cape Verde				(3)				
Committee total					1,698.37		1,120.45				2,818.82

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
[3] Military air transportation.
* Amended.

HON. JEB HENSARLING, Chairman, Nov. 9, 2015.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JULY 1 AND SEPT. 30, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Hon. Stephen Lynch	6/27	6/28	Kuwait		424.00						424.00
	6/28	6/29	Iraq		11.00		2,700.00				2,711.00
	6/29	6/30	Jordan		405.00						405.00
	6/30	7/2	Turkey		419.00						419.00
Hon. Peter Welch	6/27	6/28	Kuwait		424.00						424.00
	6/28	6/29	Iraq		11.00		2,700.00				2,711.00
	6/29	6/30	Jordan		405.00						405.00
	6/30	7/2	Turkey		331.00						331.00
Dimple Shah	8/17	8/19	United Kingdom		1,388.00		1,007.00				2,395.00
Cordell Hull	8/17	8/19	United Kingdom		1,388.00		1,007.00				2,395.00
Sean McLaughlin	8/24	8/25	Germany		315.00						315.00
	8/25	8/27	Portugal		224.00						224.00
	8/27	8/29	United Kingdom		1,000.00						1,000.00
Commercial airfare							12,092.00				12,092.00
Art Arthur	8/24	8/25	Germany		315.00						315.00
	8/25	8/27	Portugal		224.00						224.00
	8/27	8/29	United Kingdom		1,000.00						1,000.00
Commercial airfare							12,092.00				12,092.00
Valerie Shen	8/24	8/25	Germany		315.00						315.00
	8/25	8/27	Portugal		224.00						224.00
	8/27	8/29	United Kingdom		1,000.00						1,000.00
Commercial airfare							12,014.00				12,014.00
Sang Yi	8/24	8/25	Germany		315.00						315.00
	8/25	8/27	Portugal		224.00						224.00
	8/27	8/29	United Kingdom		500.00						500.00
Commercial airfare							11,784.00				11,784.00
Committee total					10,862.00		55,396.00				66,258.00

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. JASON CHAFFETZ, Chairman, Nov. 13, 2015.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JULY 1 AND SEPT. 30, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Hon. Erik Paulsen	8/25	8/27	Gabon		957.00		15,659.80				16,616.80
Hon. Jason Smith	8/25	8/27	Gabon		957.00		16,279.50				17,236.50
Angela Ellard	8/25	8/28	Gabon		1,385.00		14,318.42				15,703.42
Geoff Antell	8/25	8/28	Gabon		1,395.00		13,441.42				14,836.42
Beth Baltzan	8/25	8/28	Gabon		1,235.00		12,610.22				13,845.22
Hon. Sander Levin	8/23	8/26	Mexico		1,086.00		2,072.33		3,113.00		6,271.33
Hon. Charles Rangel	8/19	8/24	South Korea		1,750.00		4,596.00		1,734.50		8,080.50
Hon. Kenny Marchant	8/5	8/6	Latvia		232.98		3,885.90				4,118.88
	8/4	8/5	Poland		271.54						271.54
	8/9	8/10	United Kingdom		490.12						490.12
	8/7	8/9	Estonia		657.45						657.45
	8/3	8/4	Belgium		336.71						336.71
	8/31	9/1	Switzerland		790.40		3,061.30				3,851.70
	9/1	9/4	France		991.00						991.00
Hon. Linda Sánchez	8/26	8/28	Germany		575.39		9,512.20				10,087.59
	8/28	8/30	France		615.00						615.00
	8/30	9/1	Poland		549.21						549.21
	9/1	9/3	Lithuania		647.51						647.51
Committee total					14,922.31		95,437.09				115,206.90

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. KEVIN BRADY, Chairman, Nov. 20, 2015.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

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

3662. A letter from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's small entity compliance guide — Federal Acquisition Regulation; Federal Acquisition Circular 2005-85; Small Entity Compliance Guide [Docket No.: FAR 2015-0051, Sequence No.: 5] received December 4, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); jointly to the Committees on Armed Services and Oversight and Government Reform.

3663. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; ND; Update to Materials Incorporated by Reference [EPA-R08-OAR-2013-0047; FRL-9932-60-Region 8] received December 3, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3664. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Massachusetts; Transit System Improvements [EPA-R01-OAR-2013-0786; A-1-FRL-9936-08-Region 1] received December 3, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3665. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; New Mexico; Albuquerque-Bernalillo County; Infrastructure and Interstate Transport State Implementation Plan for the 2008 Lead National Ambient Air Quality Standards [EPA-R06-OAR-2012-0400; FRL-9939-47-Region 6] received December 3, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3666. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Approval of California Air Plan Revisions, Placer County Air Pollution Control District [EPA-R09-OAR-2015-0689; FRL-9936-83-Region 9] received December 3, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3667. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Approval of California Air Plan Revisions, South Coast Air Quality Management District and Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District [EPA-R09-OAR-2015-0690; FRL-9937-29-Region 9] received December 3, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3668. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Etoxazole; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2014-0681; FRL-9934-60] received December 3, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3669. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Hexythiazox; Pesticide Tolerances; Technical Correction [EPA-HQ-OPP-2014-0804; FRL-9937-02] received December 3, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3670. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Polyester Polyol Polymers; Tolerance Exemption [EPA-HQ-OPP-2015-0465; FRL-9936-91] received December 3, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3671. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Revisions to the California State Implementation Plan, Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District, Feather River Air Quality Management District and Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District [EPA-R09-OAR-2015-0619; FRL-9936-67-Region 9] received December 3, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3672. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Significant New Use Rule on Certain Chemical Substances [EPA-HQ-OPPT-2014-0390; FRL-9939-20] (RIN: 2070-AB27) received December 3, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3673. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Accessibility of User Interfaces, and Video Programming Guides and Menus [MB Docket No.: 12-108] received December 4, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3674. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 21-210, ''Ward 5 Paint Spray Booth Conditional Moratorium Temporary Act of 2015'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3675. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 21-211, ''N Street Village, Inc. Tax and TOPA Exemption Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2015'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3676. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 21-212, ''Gas Station Advisory Board Temporary Amendment Act of 2015'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3677. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 21-209, ''Wage Theft Prevention Correction and Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2015'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3678. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 21-208, ''Truancy Referral Temporary Amendment Act of 2015'', pursuant to

Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3679. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 21-207, ''Emergency Medical Services Contract Authority Temporary Amendment Act of 2015'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3680. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 21-206, ''Grocery Store Restrictive Covenant Prohibition Temporary Act of 2015'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3681. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 21-205, ''Extension of Time to Dispose of the Strand Theater Temporary Amendment Act of 2015'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3682. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 21-204, ''Early Learning Quality Improvement Network Temporary Amendment Act of 2015'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3683. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 21-203, ''ABLE Program Trust Establishment Act of 2015'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3684. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. Act 21-213, ''Extension of Time to Dispose of Property Located at Sixth and E Streets, S.W., Amendment Act of 2015'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3685. A letter from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Federal Acquisition Regulation; Technical Amendment [FAC 2005-85; Item VII; Docket No.: 2015-0052; Sequence No.: 4] received December 4, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3686. A letter from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Federal Acquisition Regulation: Establishing a Minimum Wage for Contractors [FAC 2005-85; FAR Case 2015-003; Item VI; Docket No.: 2014-0050; Sequence No.: 1] (RIN: 9000-AM82) received December 4, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); jointly to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform and Armed Services.

3687. A letter from the Chief Impact Analyst, Office of Regulations Policy and Management, Office of the General Counsel (02REG), Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's interim final rule — Expanded Access to Non-VA Care through the Veterans Choice Program (RIN: 2900-AP60) received December 3, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

3688. A letter from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Federal Acquisition Regulation; Retention Periods [FAC 2005-85; FAR Case 2015-009; Item V; Docket No.: 2015-0009, Sequence No.: 1] (RIN: 9000-AN12) received December 4, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); jointly to the Committees on Armed Services, Science, Space, and Technology, and Oversight and Government Reform.

3689. A letter from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's summary presentation of interim and final rules — Federal Acquisition Regulation; Federal Acquisition Circular 2005-85; Introduction [Docket No.: FAR 2015-0051, Sequence No.: 5] received December 4, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); jointly to the Committees on Armed Services and Oversight and Government Reform.

3690. A letter from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Federal Acquisition Regulation; Pilot Program for Enhancement of Contractor Employee Whistleblower Protections [FAC 2005-85; FAR Case 2013-015; Item IV; Docket 2013-0015, Sequence 1] (RIN: 9000-AM56) received December 4, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); jointly to the Committees on Armed Services, Science, Space, and Technology, and Oversight and Government Reform.

3691. A letter from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's interim rule — Federal Acquisition Regulation; Updating Federal Contractor Reporting of Veterans' Employment [FAC 2005-85; FAR Case 2015-036; Item III; Docket No.: 2015-0036, Sequence No.: 1] (RIN: 9000-AN14) received December 4, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); jointly to the Committees on Armed Services, Oversight and Government Reform, and Science, Space, and Technology.

3692. A letter from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Federal Acquisition Regulation; Further Amendments to Equal Employment Opportunity [FAC 2005-85; FAR Case 2015-013; Item II; Docket No.: 2015-0013, Sequence No.: 1] (RIN: 9000-AN01) received December 4, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); jointly to the Committees on Armed Services, Oversight and Government Reform, and Science, Space, and Technology.

3693. A letter from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's interim rule — Federal Acquisition Regulation: Prohibition on Contracting with Corporations with Delinquent Taxes or a Felony Conviction [FAC 2005-85; FAR Case 2015-011; Item No.: I; Docket No.: 2015-0011; Sequence No.: 1] (RIN: 9000-AN05) received December 4, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); jointly to the Committees on Armed Services, Oversight and Government Reform, and Science, Space, and Technology.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

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

Mr. MCCAUL: Committee on Homeland Security. H.R. 158. A bill to clarify the grounds for ineligibility for travel to the United States regarding terrorism risk, to expand the criteria by which a country may be removed from the Visa Waiver Program, to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to submit a report on strengthening the Electronic System for Travel Authorization to better secure the international borders of the United States and prevent terrorists and instruments of terrorism from entering the United States, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–369, Pt. 1). Order to be printed.

Mr. MCCAUL: Committee on Homeland Security. H.R. 2795. A bill to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to submit a study on the circumstances which may impact the effectiveness and availability of first responders before, during, or after a terrorist threat or event; with an amendment (Rept. 114–370). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 1321. A bill to prohibit the sale of distribution of cosmetics containing synthetic plastic microbeads; with amendments (Rept. 114–371). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

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

By Ms. PINGREE:

H.R. 4184. A bill to decrease the incidence of food waste, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committees on House Administration, Oversight and Government Reform, Ways and Means, Education and the Workforce, and Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana (for herself and Ms. DELBENE):

H. Res. 554. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of ''Computer Science Education Week''; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

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

By Ms. PINGREE:

H.R. 4184.

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

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

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

H.R. 158: Mr. TROTT, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. BENISHEK, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. KLINE, Mr. HILL, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. LANCE, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. LONG, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. ASHFORD, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. COLE, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. TITUS, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. WELCH, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. POLIS, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. RICHMOND, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. MARINO, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. KATKO, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Ms. MCSALLY, and Mr. PERRY.

H.R. 415: Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. VISCLOSKY, and Mr. CUMMINGS.

H.R. 721: Mr. VARGAS, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 865: Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia.

H.R. 879: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. JOLLY, Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, and Mr. LAHOOD.

H.R. 985: Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 997: Mr. FORTENBERRY.

H.R. 1220: Mr. CRAMER.

H.R. 1288: Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mr. HIGGINS, and Mr. O'ROURKE.

H.R. 1321: Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 1427: Mr. ZELDIN and Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 1482: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia and Mr. ENGEL.

H.R. 1548: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.

H.R. 1594: Mr. YODER.

H.R. 1595: Mr. DEUTCH and Mr. ROSS.

H.R. 1625: Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, and Ms. MOORE.

H.R. 1671: Mr. TIPTON and Mr. CHABOT.

H.R. 1769: Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 2082: Mr. HONDA, Mrs. LAWRENCE, and Mr. CONYERS.

H.R. 2144: Mrs. WALORSKI.

H.R. 2287: Mr. WILLIAMS.

H.R. 2290: Mr. BARLETTA.

H.R. 2302: Ms. CLARKE of New York and Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 2382: Mr. ZELDIN.

H.R. 2404: Mr. MCKINLEY.

H.R. 2500: Mr. LATTA, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. WEBER of Texas, and Mr. RANGEL.

H.R. 2657: Mr. DENT, Ms. STEFANIK, and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.

H.R. 2660: Ms. ADAMS and Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 2680: Mrs. DAVIS of California and Ms. BROWNLEY of California.

H.R. 2759: Mr. RUIZ.

H.R. 2847: Mr. FITZPATRICK and Mr. HASTINGS.

H.R. 3061: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.

H.R. 3065: Ms. JUDY CHU of California.

H.R. 3071: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

H.R. 3092: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. DOLD, and Mrs. HARTZLER.

H.R. 3222: Mr. LATTA and Mr. MARCHANT.

H.R. 3225: Mr. CRAMER.

H.R. 3280: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.

H.R. 3323: Mr. COURTNEY.

H.R. 3339: Mr. ROUZER and Mr. BURGESS.

H.R. 3355: Mr. SHERMAN.

H.R. 3381: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa and Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.

H.R. 3384: Ms. SPEIER.

H.R. 3406: Mrs. LOVE.

H.R. 3411: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.

H.R. 3437: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, and Mr. HENSARLING.

H.R. 3484: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.

H.R. 3565: Ms. LEE.

H.R. 3639: Mr. LOEBSACK.

H.R. 3700: Mr. MCHENRY.

H.R. 3706: Mr. LANCE and Mr. SERRANO.

H.R. 3734: Mr. MCKINLEY.

H.R. 3760: Ms. ESHOO.

H.R. 3791: Mr. WILLIAMS and Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 3799: Mr. HARRIS, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, and Mr. HENSARLING.

H.R. 3848: Mr. LEVIN and Mr. WALBERG.

H.R. 3868: Mr. DOLD.

H.R. 3888: Mr. MEEKS, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, and Mr. TAKANO.

H.R. 3940: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, and Mr. WALKER.

H.R. 4006: Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 4007: Mr. ROUZER.

H.R. 4079: Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 4087: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.

H.R. 4094: Mr. GOSAR, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. GRIFFITH, and Mr. SALMON.

H.R. 4132: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.

H.R. 4138: Mr. HUELSKAMP and Mr. JONES.

H.R. 4163: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.

H.R. 4171: Mr. QUIGLEY and Mr. ISRAEL.

H.R. 4177: Ms. GABBARD.

H.R. 4178: Ms. JUDY CHU of California.

H.J. Res. 33: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.

H. Res. 32: Mr. CARSON of Indiana and Ms. WILSON of Florida.

H. Res. 110: Mr. ROSKAM.

H. Res. 289: Mr. MCGOVERN.

H. Res. 467: Mr. VARGAS, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. PETERS, Mr. CROWLEY, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. RUIZ, and Mr. NADLER.

H. Res. 494: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.

H. Res. 536: Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. KEATING, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. DONOVAN, Mr. DEUTCH, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, and Mr. CHABOT.

H. Res. 538: Mr. QUIGLEY.

H. Res. 548: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY and Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H. Res. 553: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia and Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.

United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 161 WASHINGTON, MONDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2015 No. 176

Senate

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, the protector of our dreams, we praise Your righteous Name. Lord, December 7 reminds us of a season of infamy. At that time, our Nation confronted greater challenges than we face today. Remind our Senators and Nation that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself. May our lawmakers not repeat past mistakes, always remembering that eternal vigilance is freedom's price. Help us to remember that we will be buffeted by winds of fear only when we forget how You have protected us in the past. If Your power prevailed in our past, it can still conquer all our present and future dangers, toils, and snares. May we never forget that in everything You are working for the good of those who love You.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The Democratic leader is recognized.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING BILL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have heard reports that the Speaker has announced that Congress will be in session next week. I don't know if that is valid. I haven't heard from him myself, but the December 11 deadline was a deadline that the Republicans set and we didn't.

If the Congress fails to finish our business by December 11, it will be because Republicans continue to insist on extraneous poison pill riders in the government funding bill. These are Republican riders, Republican earmarks, and as long as they are there, there can be no legislation.

Without legislation, the government shuts down again—as it did a couple of years ago—because of Republicans.

FIGHTING ISIS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, last night, President Obama spoke in stark terms about the threat terrorism poses to the United States. He detailed the extraordinary efforts our government is taking to protect Americans. He also outlined a strong plan for continuing to combat terrorism at home and abroad. President Obama is right to say the first thing Congress should do is close the loophole that lets the FBI terror suspects buy assault weapons such as those used in the San Bernardino shooting.

Senate Democrats support President Obama's plan to fight ISIS and protect America. President Obama has made it clear that Democrats do not believe we should put thousands of troops on the ground in the middle of another civil war in the Middle East. But we do support the President's strategy of continuing to go after ISIS in the air with our coalition partners, targeting their leadership, oil infrastructure, and heavy weapons.

We know that it must be the local forces on the ground that ultimately fight for and hold their ground because it is their land.

Senate Democrats understand that the Syrian war will only be resolved diplomatically, with all parties supporting the removal of Assad. We also know that we can do more to address the threats from terrorists. That is why beginning today Senate Democrats will unveil a series of proposals to take the fight to ISIS while enhancing our protection of Americans at home.

There are a few important steps we must take in order to combat ISIS's terrorism. The Democratic plan would create a new ISIS czar, one person who is fully empowered and unifies the Federal Government's efforts in fighting ISIS. We did it with Ebola. We certainly can do it with this scourge that is facing our country, ISIS. I am pleased that President Obama has taken a first step in that direction.

To continue targeted airstrikes on ISIS strongholds and oil supplies and to increase support for anti-ISIS local fighters on the ground are part of the plan.

We must also cut off ISIS money through new sanctions.

ISIS runs its reign of terror in Iraq and Syria through extortion, oil sales, and theft. Senate Democrats' legislation imposes new sanctions—and they are tough—including a cutoff from the U.S. and international financial systems if people knowingly facilitate financial transactions with ISIS.

One of the things that would help is that we have a person who has been waiting for hundreds of days to be confirmed. What is his job? He works in the Treasury Department with the State Department to stop financing of terrorism. The Republicans—for reasons totally not understood by anyone—are blocking voting on this person. The job is vacant.

We also believe that we should improve intelligence training between the United States and our allies in the fight against ISIS. Some of that has started, of course.

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

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We believe we must screen and support migrants in Europe and the Middle East. Europe is facing an unprecedented number of migrants landing on their shores, almost 1 million this year. Their screening systems have been overwhelmed by the large number of migrants. Our bill would respond to Europeans' request to provide them with technical assistance to screen migrants and improve their own border security and our security as well.

In the Middle East, the Democrats' plan will help Jordan, a strong U.S. ally at the forefront of the migrant crisis. Four million people are displaced in the region, creating instability in Jordan, our ally, and also harming the neighboring countries. Democrats' legislation includes a new stabilization fund for Jordan and Lebanon, helping those fleeing the conflict in Syria stay in the region, closer to home.

These are just a few of the components of our plan to degrade and destroy ISIS, but we are equally committed to thwarting terrorism here at home. The Democratic plan would close the terrorist's gun loophole.

As of today, there is a legal loophole that prevents law enforcement from verifying that potential gun buyers are not FBI terror suspects. That means if a person has pledged allegiance to ISIS online and is barred from flying due to the threat they pose, that man or woman can still walk into any gunshop and purchase weapons and ammunition. They can do that today, right now. That is wrong.

Last Thursday Democrats tried to pass legislation to give law enforcement the tools needed to prevent the sale of guns to suspected terrorists. Republicans blocked our commonsense measure. We are not finished. We will bring this vote to the floor as often as we can. That is the way it should be.

We need to strengthen the Visa Waiver Program. It was amazing to see the Republicans running for President waffle and weasel out of why someone who is on a flight-risk status, someone who cannot fly, should be able to buy a gun. It was interesting to see on the Sunday shows the Republicans waffle and weasel through answers on this subject.

We need to strengthen the Visa Waiver Program so ISIS fighters cannot access the program and travel to our country. This includes requiring visa waiver travelers to use machine-readable passports, requiring information sharing rules with visa waiver countries and requiring visa waiver countries to enter into agreements regarding the air marshal program and to comply with U.S. aviation and airport security standards.

We must improve aviation security. We must work to secure our airports. We saw all the news when ISIS brought down a Russian plane with hundreds of passengers aboard.

A recent report from the Homeland Security inspector general found that 73 workers with access to secure areas in airports had links to terrorism—stunning. Our legislation authorizes new vetting for aviation workers and new security measures for the most important areas of our airports.

We must lock down radiological materials to stop a dirty bomb. With both ISIS and Al Qaeda saying they want to get their hands on weapons of mass destruction, it is disturbing that there are 2,300 sites around the United States with radiological material. Our legislation requires a new plan for locking down those materials at the places where they are held, such as universities and hospitals, so we can reduce the threat of a dirty bomb.

Our legislation is concerned—and we are going to do everything we can—with preventing homegrown terrorists by creating an office within the Department of Homeland Security tasked with countering extremism.

We must address encryption by directing the National Academy of Sciences, the intelligence community, and the private sector to work together to identify new encryption technology and how it is used to make sure that our national security needs and technology policies are not working at cross purposes.

Finally, Senate Democrats are proposing legislation to provide law enforcement agencies with grant money to help prepare for active shooter situations. We know how critical first responders are to containing and ending active shooter attacks. So we should ensure they have all the tools necessary.

This is the plan that we, Senate Democrats, are putting forward. It is comprehensive. It addresses international and domestic concerns. The consequences of inaction are too grave for us to waste time seeking political gain.

The security of our Nation and the decimation of ISIS depend on the steps we take now. So I hope Republicans will join us to implement these logical reforms that place the security of Americans first and address the threat of ISIS around the world.

Mr. President, I see no one on the floor wishing to speak.

Would the Chair announce the program for the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

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

FAST ACT

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I rise today to applaud the tremendous work that has been done over the course of this year to pass a bipartisan, 5-year, $305 billion highway bill, the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, known as the FAST Act. Transportation infrastructure is an essential part of the U.S. economy. It serves as the foundation to support our country's economic global competitiveness and connects communities, people, and markets.

Federal investment in transportation and other infrastructure has, unfortunately, lagged in recent decades, with public expenditures on infrastructure as a percentage of GDP steadily declining to its lowest levels in 20 years. I have consistently called for a highway bill that ensures steady and reliable funding for States so they can make long-term plans for improving our crumbling infrastructure. For too long, stopgap measures to prop up the highway trust fund for just a few months at a time have failed to provide the stability necessary to grow our economy.

The FAST Act comes at a critical time. This legislation will improve our Nation's infrastructure, make our Federal surface transportation programs work better for States, and address our Nation's infrastructure priorities by focusing on critical commerce corridors and emerging freight corridors as well.

The FAST Act also makes key investments in something I am very passionate about, and that is the future of mobility in the United States. Today, the auto industry is working hand in hand with tech, telecom, and software companies and their partners in academia and Federal agencies to collaborate and contribute to the transportation system of the future. This future will be dominated by connected and autonomous vehicles—on-demand services such as ride-sharing and car-sharing—and innovations in vehicle-to-infrastructure communications.

Vehicle-to-infrastructure communications technologies—known as V2I—have the potential to deliver incredible safety, mobility, environmental, and operational benefits to the driving public. For example, V2I technologies will allow bridges that are icing up to be able to communicate directly with an automobile before it gets to the bridge and, as a result, will prevent an accident before it even occurs. Today, stakeholders are working to develop and test V2I technologies, and widespread deployment is expected in the coming years.

We have to make sure the States are making plans for their future in V2I technologies. That is why I introduced

legislation earlier this year with Senators STABENOW and BLUNT that promotes investment in vehicle-to-infrastructure technology by authorizing States to use existing surface and highway transportation funding to invest in V2I projects as they upgrade their highway infrastructure. It is called the Vehicle-to-Infrastructure Safety Technology Investment Flexibility Act of 2015, and today I am proud to say this legislation passed as part of the FAST Act.

My vehicle-to-infrastructure provision and the broader bill's other major investments in research and development represent the type of forward-thinking policymaking on which Congress should be focused. By committing now to help usher in the future of mobility and by providing the funding and time to execute these programs, we have the ability to transform our society for the better.

The FAST Act also contains several provisions to improve rail safety in the United States. I am pleased that legislation I authored, in the wake of the devastating Amtrak No. 188 crash earlier this year in Philadelphia that unfortunately took the lives of 8 people and injured over 200, was included in the FAST Act. My provision requires the Department of Transportation, Amtrak, and the National Transportation Safety Board to conduct a post-accident assessment of the Amtrak No. 188 crash to determine if Amtrak followed its emergency preparedness and family assistance response plans and to determine if and how these plans can be improved for the future.

Finally, the FAST Act reauthorizes the Export-Import Bank. Since the beginning of July, the jobs supported by the Ex-Im Bank have been unnecessarily jeopardized. The Ex-Im Bank helps level the playing field for American companies in a tough global market. Last year it supported more than $27.4 billion in U.S. exports and 164,000 jobs. More than $10 billion of that total—nearly 40 percent—represented exports by small businesses, and 90 percent of its overall transactions directly supported small businesses, including many that serve as suppliers for large companies.

In Michigan, for example, the Ex-Im Bank has supported 229 exporter businesses selling $11 billion worth of goods to places such as Saudi Arabia, Mexico, and Canada. This support is particularly important for our manufacturing industry, and the majority of Michigan exporters using Ex-Im Bank are manufacturers of motor vehicles and parts, machinery and chemicals—basically the backbone of Michigan's economy.

I am proud to see that with the FAST Act's passage, we can get back to the business of doing what makes sense for the economy and for jobs in America.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, while my colleague from Michigan is here, let me say that we appreciate so much his participation in the commerce committee, especially the expertise he brings to the table with regard to all things automotive since, in fact, his State is the automotive State. He is a valued member of our commerce committee. I thank the Senator from Michigan.

FIGHTING ISIS

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, Americans are understandably frightened by the terrorist attacks in Paris and San Bernardino. As we mourn the loss of the victims, our hearts go out to their friends and families.

We were shocked 14 years ago, on September 11, when foreign terrorists struck our homeland. For the first time, two big oceans did not protect us from foreign terrorists. Now we know we have to be prepared to meet the threat not only abroad but here at home.

First, that means we have to see the threat clearly. It doesn't just come from shadowy foreign terrorist groups such as ISIS or Al Qaeda; now we see that it comes from a lone wolf or wolves, individuals who get radicalized. We saw that in the case at Fort Hood. We have seen it in other cases. We saw it in the case that was averted in Times Square, from someone who had come all the way across the country. They are extremely hard to detect.

Of course, ISIS uses the Internet to spread its propaganda, its influence, and to try to inspire disaffected young people with its propaganda far beyond where ISIS is located over in the Middle East. That means we have to use all the tools at our disposal to collect actionable intelligence, harden our defenses, counter radicalization, counter propaganda, and stiffen our resolve.

We ought to ensure that terrorists can't exploit the Visa Waiver Program. There are 38 countries with which we share this visa waiver. We ought to ensure that our law enforcement and intelligence agencies have the access they need to the terrorists' electronic communications to disrupt the attacks—that is a big order—all the while protecting Americans' privacy and constitutional rights.

That is why this Senator thinks it was a mistake to change the previous law, as we did earlier this year, which allowed telecom business bulk records to be readily accessed to trace terrorist communications. We have done this. We do not have the ready access of those bulk business records. Again, I remind our listeners we are not talking about the contents of communications—telephone calls or content of the Internet messages. We are talking about the bulk records which are business records that such and such a number or such and such an IP address on such and such a date transmitted a message to another number or another IP address.

In the past, through a court order, those bulk records were held by the NSA, granting ready access so that if we were trying to stop a terrorist by getting intel ahead of time, we could go back and see where those communications were and with whom and how many hops it had gone in order to try to break up the terrorist activity. The problem with the lone wolf is that if they are disguising their operations, they are not communicating with anybody. That is why it makes it so much more difficult to intercept the lone wolf who has been inspired by ISIS.

Recently we saw that ISIS has claimed the responsibility for the bombing of a Russian airliner over Egypt, and it reminds us that our planes and airports remain a target for terror attacks. That is why I am introducing, and will explain tomorrow, legislation to tighten internal security at airports across the country. We had some good examples of that a year ago in Atlanta. Unbelievably, for several months, guns were brought into the Atlanta airport by airport workers, were transferred to a passenger who had already gone through TSA security, and they were actually transported over a number of months from Atlanta to New York. It is the lack of security on the perimeter of allowing workers into the airport proper that needs to be tightened up at all of our 300 airports. Two have already done that over the last several years, and I am very proud of the Miami airport and the Orlando airport that they have done it and done it very successfully.

Because ISIS exploits war in Syria and the instability and sectarian conflict in Iraq, meeting the terrorist threat means the use of military force as well. With the help of our coalition partners, as we speak, our forces are striking ISIS from the air and training local forces to fight ISIS on the ground. We are intensifying airstrikes against ISIS leadership, against heavy weapons, against oil tankers and oil wells, and have recently deployed U.S. Special Operations forces to help local forces build the necessary battlefield momentum to take back territory.

Special Operations forces will be central to the fight in order to avoid the large-scale deployment of U.S. ground forces. These forces are trained to conduct surgical strikes against terrorist leaders. There are press reports that GEN Joseph Votel, the current commander of the U.S. Special Operations Command, in the next year will become the next commander of Central Command, responsible for operations against ISIS. He already works side by side with General Austin—the commander of U.S. Central Command in Tampa at MacDill Air Force Base—and he will bring tremendous experience to the job.

The Congress is not doing our job. We should authorize the use of military force. It is our responsibility. I believe the President has the responsibility to fight ISIS in Iraq or Syria or wherever, but the unity of the Congress backing the President in law is constitutionally

required. We ought to debate these proposals and vote. The authorization would show the world that the United States is united in defeating ISIS.

The military fight is one piece of a broader effort to destroy ISIS and bring about a political transition in Syria to a government where finally Bashar al-Assad will have finally left. That is critical to ending the war, ending the resulting humanitarian crisis, and stemming the flow of the refugees. Our efforts will take time and commitment, but they are clearly necessary to protect our national security.

This is going to be a long, hard war. We can't do it overnight. There has been success in the war effort. We brought together 65 nations. Twelve thousand terrorist fighters have been killed. We have shrunk the territory ISIS occupies and has sanctuary.

I want to show the Senate this map. It has been shown before. It is not classified. All the area in green is what ISIS used to occupy, along with the area in orange—there along the Euphrates River. All of that area in green ISIS occupied but no longer does because of the coalition efforts. There has been success. Someone needs to talk about that success. Going forward, we are going to have to use more Special Operations troops. We are going to have to insist on our Arab neighbors picking up the fight and doing the fighting on the ground, and we do not need to make the mistake of tens of thousands of Americans on the ground because that plays right into ISIS's hands because it looks like—and ISIS would portray it as—it is the United States versus Muslims.

We should treat Muslims with respect here at home in America; treat them with the respect they deserve. Don't overreact. Otherwise that plays to ISIS's advantage of the image of Americans; in other words, it is us versus them. We are accelerating the fight. We have more and more intense coalition partners. We have extensive intel sharing. We have an outreach to Muslims about the truth of ISIS, and we insist our partners share their intel with us. That includes the visa waiver of those 38 nations.

Fear at this time—like San Bernardino—is a natural response. It happens at times such as this, but we cannot let fear get the best of us. We must overcome the fear and not let it compromise who we are as Americans by overreacting. We need to nail down a truth that our government has no greater obligation than to keep us safe.

I want to share with the Senate, where is the unity that we used to have? I know it is not in vogue to say ''the good old days,'' but I can tell you that when this Senator was a young Congressman and when it came to national security, partisanship stopped at the water's edge. Isn't it time to unify? Isn't it the time to disagree without being disagreeable? Isn't it time to think of ourselves as Americans instead of partisans? Isn't it time to remember that Latin phrase that is up there above the President's desk, ''e pluribus unum''—out of many, one. It is time to come together. God bless America.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask to be recognized in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I rise to speak about the devastating impact gun violence has on our families and our communities across America. Every day in America, we have a staggering amount of gun violence. On average, 297 people are shot in America each day, and 89 of them die. On a typical day, there are 31 murders and 55 suicides by gun, as well as several accidental shootings. And every day, on average, 151 Americans are shot and wounded in an assault and 45 are accidently shot but survive. We have had over 350 mass shootings in America just this year, meaning incidents where at least four people are shot, and we have had over 50 incidents this year where guns have been fired at a school—50 at a school.

These statistics are sobering and a call to action. Most shootings in America have become so routine, they don't even make the news. Sadly, many Americans believe this staggering level of violence is just a normal day in America. But in recent weeks, horrific mass shootings at a Planned Parenthood office in Colorado Springs, CO, and a holiday party in San Bernardino have brought the issue of gun violence back into the forefront.

After high-profile mass shootings, we often hear the gun lobby and their political allies say: Any effort to pass a new gun law is just politicizing a tragedy. They say: We don't need any new gun laws; what we really should do is enforce the laws on the books. We saw this dynamic play out just last week. The day after the San Bernardino shooting, the vast majority of Senate Democrats voted for an amendment by Senator FEINSTEIN to close the loophole that lets suspected terrorists buy firearms in America. The vast majority of Senate Republicans voted no. Senate Democrats also voted overwhelmingly for a bipartisan amendment offered by Senators MANCHIN and TOOMEY. This amendment would close the loopholes that allow guns to be sold without background checks either on the Internet or at gun shows. Again, the Senate Republicans overwhelmingly voted against a background check to keep firearms out of the hands of convicted felons and mentally unstable people.

Make no mistake—the whole world saw what happened last week in San Bernardino, and the whole world now knows that people who want to commit acts of mass violence or terror in the United States sadly have easy access to an arsenal of guns. There are major loopholes in the laws on the books.

This is a serious vulnerability, and Americans know we need to address it. The risk of terrorist-inspired mass shootings like Paris has never been higher. What are most effective ways to guard against this vulnerability? Well, I thought those two amendments we considered last week were a good start. Won't we agree—even those who own guns, value them, use them for sport, hunting, or self-defense—won't we agree that keeping guns out of the hands of convicted felons and mentally unstable people is the starting point? I think we should.

The ATF did a review of the crime guns that were seized in the highest crime areas in the city of Chicago. They found out that 40 percent of the guns used in the commission of crime in some of the deadliest precincts of Chicago came from northwest Indiana gun shows. Why? Well, because you don't go through a background check if you buy from certain people at a gun show. So the thugs, the drug gangs, the drive-by shooters—all they have to do is take the Skyway over the border into Indiana, go to one of those gun shows, fill their trunks with guns, firearms, and ammunition, and drive back for a killing spree in Chicago. There are no background checks. Does that make sense?

When they say, ''Well, you know, it is a shame they have so much gun violence in Chicago because you know they have some of the strictest laws on the books,'' well, those strict laws don't apply when you cross the State line into Indiana. Sadly, those laws don't apply as they should across the United States.

So we called the amendment on the floor, a bipartisan amendment. PATRICK TOOMEY of Pennsylvania and JOE MANCHIN of West Virginia—neither one of them liberal by self-definition—have come forward and said—JOE MANCHIN said: I learned a long time ago that if you want to own a gun in West Virginia, in my family, you didn't sell it to a stranger, you didn't sell it to a criminal, and you certainly didn't sell it to someone who was mentally unstable. He said that is just common sense. Well, it is common sense that escaped the support and attention of the Senate Republicans. They voted against that provision overwhelmingly, against background checks to keep firearms out of the hands of convicted felons and those who are mentally unstable. How would you explain that? Well, it might be easier to explain that than to explain the other amendment they voted against.

Listen to this one. If our government, in their investigation, comes up with the name of a person they believe is involved in terrorism and they put them on a no-fly list so they can't get on an airplane, guess what—they can still go to a licensed gun dealer in America and buy a firearm.

These mad people in San Bernardino had AR–15s, semiautomatic and automatic weapons. They weren't on a terrorist watch list that I know of or a no-fly list, but if their names had been on a list, it wouldn't have slowed them down one bit in making a purchase.

So Senator FEINSTEIN of California offered this amendment, an amendment which had previously been offered by the late Senator Lautenberg of New Jersey repeatedly. Senator FEINSTEIN took up his cause and brought this amendment to the floor for a vote last week in Washington.

I went back and looked at the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD to see what the objections were of the people who said they had to vote against the amendment which would say if you are on a terrorist fly list, you cannot purchase firearms or explosives in the United States. I read some of the statements that were made by the senior Senator from Texas. In his argument against this, he said:

> If you believe the Federal Government should be able to deprive an American citizen of one of their core constitutional rights without notice and an opportunity to be heard, then you should vote for the Senator's amendment.

The Senator from Texas continued:

> This is not the way we are supposed to do things in this country. If you think that the Federal Government never makes a mistake and that presumptively the decisions the Federal Government makes about putting you on a list because of some suspicions, then you should vote for this amendment.

So as far as he is concerned—and I suppose those who joined him in voting against this amendment—if your name is on a terrorist watch list in America as somebody we suspect is involved in terrorism, you start off by presuming the government must be wrong and the government has to prove it. You start off, in their position, by saying that the first thing we should do is let that presumed terrorist buy a gun and then let's have a due process hearing. What? What is he thinking? If you thought there was a dangerous person in your city or your community who might engage in terrorism, would you want them to buy an assault weapon? Would you want them to buy explosives? I wouldn't.

Let's err on the side of safety and security and say: No, if you are on that list, you cannot purchase a weapon or an explosive. If you protest being on the list and don't think you belong there, so be it. That is your right. You are entitled to a process to get your name off the list, and the Feinstein amendment provides such a process. And if you prove that our government is wrong, then proceed with buying the gun or the explosives.

But the presumption on the other side is that you are always entitled to buy a gun, you are always entitled to buy explosives, and if the government says otherwise, they have to prove it. It doesn't sound like a recipe for safety in America, but that is what happened on the floor of the Senate.

So we called this measure, and there were 45 who voted yes and 54 voted no—45 to 54 on whether someone on the terrorist watch list should be able to be prohibited from buying firearms and explosives.

There has been a lot of tough talk lately about terrorism, this dozen—13, 14; I forget the number—running for President on the Republican side. They are trying to out trump one another and get tougher with terrorists. Yet when the moment came on the floor of the Senate and the Republicans in the Senate—including three or four running for President—had a chance to vote to keep firearms and explosives out of the hands of suspected terrorists, they voted no. How does that make us any safer? Oh, they are tough as can be in their speeches, but when it comes down to their votes, they are nowhere to be found.

REFUGEES

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, there is also a question about what we can do to keep our country safe in terms of people coming into our country.

Each year we admit about 70,000 refugees from all over the world. The No. 1 country providing refugees to the United States—Burma. Most people wouldn't have guessed that. About one-fourth of our refugees come from Burma.

How do they get into the United States as refugees? They are first identified by the United Nations Council on Refugees, and then they start a process, a background check and process. This goes on for 18 months to 24 months. It involves repetitive fingerprinting and checking, interviews, examinations, questions. Then, finally, after 24 months, they may be allowed to come to the United States as a refugee. About 70,000 a year come into our country. I have met a lot of them. They are from all over the world—Africa, Asia, all over the world. And now we have a focus on them, a laserlike focus on them.

Some are arguing that the way to keep America safe is to stop refugees from coming in from Syria. Well, we know Syria has been engaged in a civil war for more than 4 years. We know some 4 million people have been displaced. I was in Greece a few weeks back and saw numbers coming across the Aegean Sea from Turkey into Greece. These Syrian and some Iraqi refugees are desperate people. You literally see a family walking—mother, father, carrying babies, walking toddlers—with all that they own on their backs. That is it. We stopped to talk to some of them, and they told the story of what it was like to live in Syria amidst a civil war, what it was like to have barrel bombs going off in your town—the damage that it did, the killing that it did. Many of them had lost members of their families. They were running away from that violence—not only from Assad, the head of Syria, but from ISIL as well.

Some of them decide to ask to become refugees in the United States. They know that if they ask, they are in for a long, long haul—18 to 24 months. Some have made it, fewer than 2,000, during the last 4 years. Some have made it. Not a single Syrian refugee coming into the United States since this war began has ever been charged with terrorism. It just hasn't happened.

What happens with other visitors to the United States? Well, we welcome visitors. Certainly we do. Many of us look forward to visiting their countries too. About 55 million foreign travelers come to the United States each year; about 20 million are from visa waiver countries—38 countries where we have a special relationship and say: You don't need a specific visa to come to our country because we have this agreement between us; you may freely travel to the United States on what we call a visa waiver. That is about 20 million of the 55 million.

We can do better when it comes to these visitors on both sides—Americans traveling overseas and foreigners coming into this country. We need to make sure that before a person gets on a plane, we check their fingerprints, for example. That is a pretty easy thing to do these days. Just put your hands down; it reads them and cross-checks against the data bank of suspected people, suspected criminals, and suspected terrorists. Obviously, the overwhelming majority of people will have no problem whatsoever, but it is a way, just like taking off your shoes, to make sure that we are safer. It is a little inconvenient but worth it.

What we have said on the Democratic side is that if you want to make America safe—and we all do—it is far better to focus on foreign travelers and visa waivers, and make sure we are doing the proper checks before the person gets on the airplane. I believe we should do that. When I travel to their countries, I am prepared to face the same fingerprint check. It is not too much to ask in the 21st century, with the terrorism and violence that we face.

All these things will make us safer, but focusing on 70,000 refugees, among which a few hundred are Syrian, instead of looking at the larger group of 55 million foreign travelers—did you know that most of the terrorists in Paris, France, were carrying European passports which would have allowed them to come to the United States without a visa? So if we want to make our country safer—and I do—let's do things that are practical and thoughtful.

Incidentally, those who come to the United States on visa waivers from 38 countries around the world can currently legally buy firearms. What is that all about? Our law prevents foreign visitors who come in on a visa from buying firearms, but a loophole allows those who qualify under the Visa Waiver Program to come as visitors to buy a firearm. I think we can do better there as well.

Let's tighten up the Visa Waiver Program, and make sure we do the proper checks so dangerous people don't ever get on the plane to come to the United States. Let's make sure as well that if you have a visa waiver and you come to the United States as a visitor, you are not going to be purchasing firearms. Finally, if you are on a suspected terrorist no-fly list, you should be disqualified from buying a gun or an explosive, period. Those are three practical steps. I think we ought to move forward and do that on a bipartisan basis. It will be something to keep in mind and make America much safer.

In closing, some of the suggestions being made as these Republican Presidential candidates try to out-trump one another are very sad. They reflect the ignorance of history and a willingness to ignore the values of this country. When I hear some of the awful things being said about people of the Islamic faith—I think about a dinner I went to Saturday night. It was in Chicago; it was by the Children's Heart Research Foundation. They were saluting a number of doctors in the Chicago area who were extraordinary in saving the lives of children. One of them is a current surgeon. He started with Children's Memorial Hospital; he is now with the Advocate hospital system. He is considered to be the best in Chicago. If your baby—and 1 out of 100 are—is born with a congenital heart defect, this is the doctor you want to see the child; this is the surgeon you want to save your child's life. This doctor is a Muslim. He is an American. He is an important part of America. Those who are making negative statements about all people in the Islamic faith, calling for registration or exclusion or whatever it may be—their statements and views are not consistent with who we are as Americans. The President said as much last night, and I agree.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2359

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I understand there is a bill at the desk due for a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2359) to restore Second Amendment rights in the District of Columbia.

Mr. MCCONNELL. In order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to further proceedings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

PRESIDENTIAL STRATEGY TO DEFEAT ISIL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, last evening President Obama addressed the Nation concerning the threat ISIL poses to our people. Unfortunately, the American people did not hear of a strategy or a plan to defeat and destroy this terrorist army. Instead, they heard a restatement of a military campaign crafted to contain—contain—ISIL within Iraq and Syria.

Following the attacks in Paris and California, and the downing of a Russian airliner, about 60 percent of the American people disapprove of the President's handling of terrorism. Nearly two-thirds disapprove of his handling of ISIL.

The American people understand intuitively that ISIL and the wider terrorist threat have not been contained but, rather, that they have evolved into something increasingly more serious and more challenging. Americans also know that the operational concept ordered by the President is insufficient to defeat ISIL. It is not just the American people saying this. It is not just Republicans saying it, either. President Obama's last Defense Secretary recently criticized his approach; so have several other former Obama administration officials.

Here is a sampling of what they have said over just the last week or two: One called on the Obama administration to ''wake up'' to the threat. Another said that the Obama administration ''seems to be really flailing and tone deaf to this latest challenge.'' A third called on the President to ''change your strategy'' because ''by any measure, our strategy in Iraq and Syria is not succeeding.'' And then there is President Obama's former Secretary of State, Secretary Clinton, who put it plainly: ''We're not winning.'' Hillary Clinton said: ''We're not winning.''

The President had a real opportunity last night to show the American people that defeating ISIL is his priority. He had an opportunity to demonstrate his willingness to adapt to the threat. He had an opportunity to explain how he can better prepare our Nation for a fight that will inevitably be passed on to his successor, but he didn't do that. He didn't do it last night.

The American people were looking for a serious strategy and a real vision last night, not a recap of an approach that clearly hasn't worked. Last night was only the President's third Oval Office address, and by any measure a missed opportunity.

Look, throughout his time as Commander in Chief, President Obama has shown an inflexible adherence to policies he advocated as a candidate for office in 2008, most specifically to end our Nation's War on Terror. In his first days in office he issued a series of Executive orders designed to weaken the ability of our warfighter and intelligence community to gather targeted information, to capture terrorists, interrogate, and detain them to advance our understanding of terrorist networks and plans, as well as to protect the American people. Although the President conceded that the complete withdrawal of our forces from Afghanistan would be harmful to our national security interests and slowed our withdrawal in the face of Al Qaeda and Taliban resistance, he inflexibly clung to a fixed date for our drawdown of forces in Iraq, which allowed for the growth of ISIL. As the President inflexibly pursued an end to the War on Terror, the terrorist threat evolved and adapted as Al Qaeda affiliates advanced in presence and capability and Al Qaeda in Iraq grew into the terrorist army we now know as ISIL. ISIL's use of social media and encrypted communications burgeoned at the very moment the President and his allies were working to take away critical electronic surveillance tools from our intelligence community.

Here is what we need from the President now. What we need from the President is for him to clearly outline what it is he aims to achieve, how he aims to achieve it, and what authorities he thinks he will need to make that happen. He needs to match strategic objectives to the means to reach the goals. The President needs to tell us what authorities he needs to defeat encrypted online communications. The President needs to tell us what is needed to establish our capture, interrogation, and surveillance capabilities. The President needs to tell us how the coalition or NATO will forge a ground force capable of not only trying to contain ISIL but actually driving it from Raqqa. The President needs to tell us the force structure and the funding our commanders will need to rebuild our conventional capabilities so we can continue and expand this fight while facing other global threats. The President should also explain why he will not use the secure facility at Guantanamo Bay to safely hold and interrogate newly captured terrorists in order to help prevent the next plot against Americans.

These are the kinds of things the American people are looking for, and by leading on them, President Obama

can demonstrate his commitment to protecting our Nation and leaving it better prepared for his successor.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE NEW CONGRESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, on another matter, last November the American people elected a new Congress to get Washington working again. Nearly every day seems to bring more signs that we are. Over the weekend, President Obama signed the FAST Act, a multiyear highway bill, into law. It represents a significant departure from years of short-term extensions and congressional inaction. In fact, the FAST Act is the longest term highway bill to pass Congress in almost two decades, providing 5 full years of highway funding.

Here is what Kentuckians for Better Transportation—a top transportation advocacy organization in my State—had to say about it:

> After many, many years of short term continuing resolutions we finally have a long term authorization that will give our states the opportunity to plan for and implement major road projects. . . . We can [now] plan for the future.

That is because in a new and more open Senate, Senator INHOFE, a Republican, and Senator BOXER, a Democrat, were able to work together for its passage. Senator BOXER herself called it ''a major accomplishment.''

Here is another major accomplishment: the Every Student Succeeds Act. It is a bipartisan, reformist replacement for No Child Left Behind. Pundits in Washington could never agree on how to replace No Child Left Behind. The issue went unresolved for many years, but in a new and more open Senate, Senator ALEXANDER, a Republican, and Senator MURRAY, a Democrat, worked hard and found success in the bill before us. The House already passed it, 359 to 64. The Senate previously passed a very similar version of the bill, 81 to 17.

Tomorrow we should work together to pass it for a second and final time and send it to the President for his signature. It will be the latest important achievement for the American people from a new Congress that is back to work and back on their side.

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

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

PRESIDENTIAL STRATEGY TO DEFEAT ISIS

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, last night the President addressed the Nation. It was one of the few times during his Presidency that he addressed the Nation from the Oval Office, signifying that this was going to be an important address by the Commander in Chief. Unfortunately, what the President communicated was that little, if any, change will be made in the current administration's approach on terrorism following the attack on San Bernardino last week. The President's approach to eradicating this terrorist threat has only resulted in a tactical stalemate that has kept the morale of ISIS high and their recruitment efforts robust, as we have seen.

In the wake of the shootings last week, an event the President himself called an act of terrorism, the American people deserve a credible and aggressive strategy to combat this terror threat that clearly poses a danger not just over there but over here. A good start would be for the President to listen to his own military leadership as well as members of the intelligence community. If the reports are true—and they certainly haven't been denied—the President has turned a deaf ear to his own military leadership and leaders of the intelligence community on how to fight and defeat the ISIS threat. Despite the President's rhetoric on his so-called strategy against ISIS, one thing is clear: It is not working. So our country clearly needs to change course, and that should start with a real plan and real candor from the Commander in Chief on how he intends to defend our interests abroad and at home to keep our people safe.

While I was eager to hear what the President might say about the bad results from his current strategy, unfortunately, we didn't hear it last night. However, what we did hear was this recent theme from some of our colleagues across the aisle—as we voted on the repeal-ObamaCare set of votes last week—as well as from the President himself during his weekly address, the Democratic leader, and some other Members of the Senate, that what they are basically trying to do is to change the subject. You will recall that one way they tried to do that was by offering an amendment that said people on watch lists would be denied their core constitutional rights under the Bill of Rights, and in this case it happened to be the Second Amendment; that is, you are presumed to be guilty without the necessity of having to go to court and actually prove what you are claiming is true.

I was struck by the fact that the New York Times, back in 2014, noted in an editorial entitled ''Terror Watch Lists Run Amok'' that ''A 2007 audit found that more than half of the 71,000 names on the no-fly list were wrongly included.'' This is the New York Times making the case that basically I and others argued for, which is that there cannot be any presumption of guilt just because the government includes your name on a list, particularly when it comes to denying your core constitutional rights. If the Second Amendment isn't strong enough to withstand this so-called presumption, neither is the freedom to worship according to the dictates of your conscience, the First Amendment rights to free speech and freedom of association. You get my drift.

Rather than address the real problem, which flowed from another speech the President gave a few years ago out of the Oval Office where he announced the precipitous withdrawal of our troops in Iraq that created the vacuum that is now being filled by ISIS and Al Qaeda—rather than talk about the lessons learned and how a new and different strategy was going to be employed after consultation with our military leadership and members of the intelligence community, the President and his supporters decided to try to change the subject and produce a red herring that has nothing to do with the fight to degrade and defeat ISIS. Of course the threat is not only about people traveling from abroad to our country, it is about Americans here and other people on visas, perhaps from visa waiver countries, traveling from the Middle East to the United States. Perhaps the most dangerous of all is the radicalization of people already in the United States. If the preliminary indications prove to be true, that seems to be the thread that connects so many of these attacks, whether it is in San Bernardino or Garland, TX, a short time back, or MAJ Nidal Hasan at Fort Hood back in 2009.

What we need and what the American people deserve from their Commander in Chief is candor and the willingness to show a little humility and say: You know what. The way we have been handling things really isn't working very well. Instead, the President tries to play partisan politics, and he tries to distract the American people by suggesting that our Constitution is too generous when it comes to the right to keep and bear arms.

For the sake of all Americans, I hope the President reconsiders his flawed strategy and produces a more effective one to eradicate ISIS soon because the safety of the American people is clearly at stake.

SENATE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, we are on the downward trajectory of this year's Congress, the 114th Congress, and I thought it would be appropriate to take a few minutes to talk about what this Chamber has been able to accomplish since we convened in January. I know there is a lot of cynicism and indeed outright fear about the way the Federal Government has been operating, and unfortunately I think a lot of that is attributable to the fact that this President has shown a complete unwillingness to work with Congress in many areas; for example, such as immigration reform. So when people see the President acting unilaterally—thank goodness the courts have stopped it,

but it causes them to lose confidence in the Federal Government's ability to address the problems they live with day in and day out and which they have a right to see us do our very best to address.

I can't help but think about this time last year and how, with great anticipation and high expectations, the American people decided to give our side of the aisle, the Republican side, the opportunity to serve in the majority. Our task was a daunting one. The Senate had basically been ground to a halt, and I think Members on both sides of the aisle came back in January ready to change the way we do things around here. I think some of our friends across the aisle found that the do-nothing strategy didn't work for them either, even though they were in the majority, because a number of Senate incumbents—having to face the voters without anything to show—ended up being defeated in last November's election. It didn't work for the American people. So it didn't work for the American people, and it didn't work for those Senators. As I said, the American people deserve better.

We tried to do better, and I think we have made some progress. We have been getting a few things done, delivering on promises made to the American people and working to find real solutions to the problems faced by those whom we are honored to represent. One of those areas that has been particularly important to me is doing something about an issue that plagues every State in our country; that is, human trafficking. At the beginning of last year, I was honored to lead a bipartisan effort to pass legislation designed to help victims of human trafficking get a helping hand and hopefully find a path to healing.

The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, which is now the law of the land, will help these victims, who are too often children, be treated like the victims they are instead of common criminals. After about a month on the floor of the Senate, that bill ultimately ended up passing, 99 to 0, and it was signed into law by the President. It points out that the Congress can work with the President on a bipartisan basis to fight some of the most tragic and troubling issues that face our Nation.

There are other examples. In the fall we passed a major cyber security bill that will help protect the American people from cyber attacks. The Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act fosters information sharing to help address the growing cyber threats we face. Of course we read about them in the news, if we haven't experienced them in person ourselves. The need for this legislation couldn't have been more pressing because over the summer the administration confirmed that hackers had accessed sensitive background information of more than 21 million people on the computer systems of the Office of Personnel Management—21 million Americans. That followed a similar breach at the Internal Revenue Service in which the personal data of more than 100,000 taxpayers was stolen. So passage of the Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act was the right thing to do, and it was done on a bipartisan basis. We are now engaged in a conference discussion with the House to try to reconcile the differences between those bills before it goes to the President.

That is the way we ought to be doing business around here—trying to find solutions that make America stronger and make our cyber infrastructure more resilient.

Another example was from last week. Last week we passed a multiyear highway bill for the first time in more than a decade. My State is blessed to be a fast-growing State, and of course that has encouraged a lot of people to move there—voting with their feet, as I like to say, and coming from places where jobs aren't being produced because the economy is not growing.

This bill helps Texas on the State and local level to prepare for those growing infrastructure needs that come with this increased growth. Just as significantly, it will help the rest of the country as well by creating jobs to build and maintain that infrastructure as well as the commerce that travels on that infrastructure and the environment which will be served by avoiding unnecessary congestion.

This bill also specifically grants States like Texas the flexibility to invest in infrastructure projects—in our case, along the border. We have a 1,200-mile common border with Mexico. It is a unique part of our country. I like to kid my constituents back home. I say: What most of my colleagues in Washington know about the border they read in novels or saw in a movie somewhere. It is a unique and wonderful part of our State, but it is also one that deserves our undivided attention because of the security threats, drug trafficking, and other illegal activity. It is no small thing for the Nation's top exporting State, one that shares almost 1,200 miles with Mexico, to be able to direct some of these funds to help build and maintain that infrastructure.

By the way, I know people frequently talk about Mexico and our relationship with Mexico in a negative way, but we also understand there are enormous benefits to our proximity to Mexico and our shared border. There are about 6 million jobs in America that depend on binational trade with Mexico. While Mexico has its problems—and they certainly have serious problems—we are working with them on their security and corruption issues and the like. It will take all of our efforts in order to address them. By promoting better border infrastructure, Texas can build on our strong trade record, which already includes the export of more than $100 billion in goods to Mexico each year and supports hundreds of thousands of jobs—6 million jobs nationwide.

This multiyear highway bill will also give Texas and other States across the country more certainty. Before this we had been looking at temporary patches, which makes it impossible to plan, and it also makes the expenditure of those dollars enormously inefficient. This bill gives us greater certainty to make sure our States can deliver projects to facilitate greater volumes of trade and travel along interstates and other critical transportation corridors.

An area where we have not yet achieved success but where I think there is great promise—there are other areas, such as criminal justice reform, where I believe we can in the months ahead register another success, again for the benefit of the people we represent.

Last week, at the President's invitation, I joined a bipartisan, bicameral group of legislators to come to the White House to discuss a way forward for bringing substantive criminal justice reform to our country.

For too long, in my State we learned that we treated prisons like warehouses, warehousing people and ignoring the fact—or perhaps just not recognizing the significance of the fact—that sooner or later most of them were going to get out of prison. So what we decided to do in Texas in 2007 was to get smart on crime, not just tough on crime. Nobody doubted how tough we were on crime. But what we realized is that some of the money we spent on corrections could be plowed back into educational programs that would help willing inmates actually learn job skills, deal with their drug and alcohol problems, if they had those, and, in short, better prepare for life on the outside so they didn't end up a frequent flyer or in that turnstile, going from prison to the outside and then back again.

So we have been working on this issue for some time, based on the success we enjoyed in Texas and in other States. The product is a bill called the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act, which passed out of the Senate Judiciary Committee 15 to 5. I know Chairman GOODLATTE in the House of Representatives is working on a bipartisan bill in that Chamber as well. So I think this is one of those pivotal moments where folks across the political spectrum see the advantage of working together in favor of bringing real progress that will benefit the American people by making our criminal justice system more effective and our communities safer. By the way, we can save money at the same time.

On another matter where we have seen significant progress, this week we will be voting on the conference report that accompanies the Every Child Achieves Act. This is the bill that actually fixes No Child Left Behind. This legislation was passed here in the Senate by wide margins over the summer. Chairman ALEXANDER and the conference committee and Ranking Member MURRAY were able to achieve an

amazing thing in this divided, polarized political environment we are in, with, I believe, a 39-to-1 vote in the conference committee for a bill that combines both the House and the Senate product. This is really landmark education legislation that will help parents and local communities take control of their children's education instead of ceding to the Federal Government. Certainly, this bill is another win for the American people.

Where I come from, people like the fact that we essentially have repealed the common core mandate, that we have eliminated the Federal Government as a national school board, and that we have sent the power back where it belongs, which is to parents and teachers and local school districts, and ceded more of that authority from here in Washington, DC, back to them.

I could continue with this list of legislative accomplishments by noting that the Chamber has also passed legislation that replaced the flawed Medicare payment system for physicians. This is the notorious doc fix. This is another example where for years and years we passed temporary patches and never solved the underlying problem. But Congress did, and I think that is another thing we can be proud of, along with the first budget passed since 2009, and there is more I could add to the list. But my point is there is a difference in the new 114th Congress, and elections do make a difference. We have worked together on a bipartisan basis where we can to make progress to solve problems for the American people during this first year of the 114th Congress. A lot of this is due to the steady leadership of the majority leader, the Senator from Kentucky, and all the hard work our colleagues have put in to make this such a productive year.

So we are on track to continue with this momentum into the new year, and with just another week or so of work to do before we break for the holidays, I think we can take some pride in these accomplishments but yet know that there is a lot more we have to do, not only for the remainder of this year but into next year as well.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

NOMINATION OF TRAVIS R. McDONOUGH

Mr. CORKER. Madam President, I rise today to support the confirmation of a fellow Chattanoogan, Travis R. McDonough, who has been nominated to serve as U.S. district court judge for the Eastern District of Tennessee. I have known Travis personally for many years, and I have full confidence that he will serve the people of Tennessee honorably if confirmed to the Federal bench.

Travis is well known in Chattanooga as a civic leader and has earned broad respect in our community. He most recently served as chief of staff and counselor to the mayor, having previously served as a partner at the law firm of Miller & Martin, where he specialized in criminal and white-collar litigation. A Truman scholar, he received his undergraduate degree from Sewanee and his law degree from Vanderbilt University.

We had a number of conversations, as you can imagine, during his confirmation process, and he has assured me he will be a fair and independent judge. I wholeheartedly support his nomination and encourage my colleagues to support his confirmation.

Thank you, Madam President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO KENNETH E. MANNELLA

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I wish to join my friend and Finance Committee colleague, Ranking Member WYDEN, in offering appreciation to a dedicated public servant, Mr. Kenneth E. Mannella, who has worked steadily for the American people at the Social Security Administration and will soon pursue activities in retirement.

Ken Mannella joined the Social Security Administration in 1996 as a legislative analyst with the Office of Legislation for Congressional Affairs. Currently, he serves as an associate commissioner for the Office of Congressional Affairs.

Before joining the Social Security Administration, Ken worked for 8 years for Governor William Donald Schaefer of Maryland. In Governor Schaefer's final terms, Ken Mannella was director of the Maryland National Relations Office, where he worked with Congress to obtain Federal assistance to help Maryland pursue its priorities. Prior to his work in Maryland, Ken worked for the U.S. Senate for 10 years on the staff of Senator Richard Schweiker and for Senator Charles Mathias as counsel on the Patents, Copyrights, and Trademarks Subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

You don't have a career working with the Senate and in congressional relations for as long has Ken has been at it unless you are really good at what you do. And that has been our experience with Ken; he has excelled at developing relations that facilitate useful flows of information and ideas between whom he represents and Congress. It would be hard to find anyone who would not agree that Ken is always an honest broker and always there to help if you need it.

I appreciate Ken's work with Congress, and I know that my good friend Senator WYDEN does as well. We wish him all the very best as he moves on to pursue what lies ahead for him and genuinely appreciate the work he has done with Congress, for the Social Security Administration, and—of most importance—for beneficiaries of the Social Security programs.

RECOGNIZING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF CAVE CITY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, today, in the United States Senate, I wish to commemorate the sesquicentennial of the founding of Cave City, KY. Next year in 2016, 150 years will have passed since Cave City was first incorporated in 1866.

Located in the south central region of the Commonwealth, Cave City is proud to be known worldwide as the home of Mammoth Cave, the world's longest known cave system with more than 400 miles explored underground. It is one of the oldest tourist attractions in the United States.

Cave City may only have about 2,500 residents, but more than 2 million visitors flock to Mammoth Cave National Park every year. Cave City is proud to host so many visitors from across the globe and present to them their special brand of Kentucky hospitality and charm.

Cave City is not only the gateway to Mammoth Cave, but also home to fine shops and restaurants, privately owned caves open for tours, and many other tourist attractions and places of interest. It is the zip line capital of Kentucky, with three zip line tours close to town. And the Cave City Convention Center is one of the premier meeting and convention venues in the region.

The year 2016 will be a busy year for Cave City. Not only is it the 150th anniversary of the town's founding, it is also the 200th anniversary of the earliest known organized tours being given at Mammoth Cave, the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service, and the 75th anniversary of the establishment of Mammoth Cave National Park.

Therefore, I ask my Senate colleagues to join me in recognizing that 2016 is the 150th anniversary of the incorporation of Cave City and in extending a heartfelt congratulations to the people of Cave City as they celebrate this important milestone. I am proud to be their voice here in the Senate as Cave City represents the very best of what Kentucky has to offer our Nation and the world.

TRIBUTE TO TED BEATTIE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I wish to take a few moments to acknowledge Ted A. Beattie, president and chief executive officer of the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago, IL. Earlier this year, Ted announced that he would be retiring from the world's largest indoor aquarium in late 2016.

The Shedd Aquarium is home to 32,500 fish habitats and attracts more than 2 million people every year. It is an educational and cultural treasure in Chicago—and the most popular family and tourist attraction in the city.

Under Ted Beattie's leadership, the Shedd Aquarium was Chicago's top attended paid cultural attraction for 17 of the last 21 years, welcoming more than 33 million guests. It is an extraordinary accomplishment. After a 35-year affiliation with Shedd, Ted is leaving this beloved institution in good shape. Since joining Shedd in 1994 as the third president and CEO in the aquarium's history, here are just some of his many accomplishments: Ted developed and opened six permanent exhibits, only the second expansion since the aquarium opened its doors in 1930. He created eight special exhibits, the latest being ''Amphibians,'' opening next May, and established the Daniel P. Haerther Center for Conservation and Research, which has grown to include 18 global field research programs. Ted also oversaw the addition of Shedd's onsite animal hospital and lab facilities housed in the A. Watson Armour III Center for Aquatic Animal Health and Welfare.

Throughout his time at Shedd, Ted Beattie demonstrated an exceptional ability to engage and inspire the next generation. As president, Ted opened a teen learning lab, a free, collaborative space for teens—developed by teens—to enhance critical thinking skills while exploring environmental interests and science.

Prior to joining Shedd, Ted Beattie served as director for both the Knoxville Zoo and Fort Worth Zoo and held positions at the Chicago Zoological Society's Brookfield Zoo and Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden. During his tenure as president of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, AZA, he spent 15 years teaching management courses as part of AZA's professional management schools and received AZA's highest award for professional excellence—the R. Marlin Perkins Award for Professional Excellence.

Time and time again, Ted found creative ways to get around obstacles and make good things happen for Shedd and other zoos and aquariums across the country. I know this is not the final chapter for Ted Beattie. He will continue to be a passionate advocate for conversation and educational initiatives through the Penny Beattie Leadership Fund, a professional development scholarship program established in honor of Ted's late wife.

I congratulate Ted Beattie on his distinguished career and thank him for dedicating a large part of his career to the Shedd Aquarium and the people of Chicago. It has been a pleasure to support his work, and I wish him all the best in the next chapter of his life.

RECOGNIZING CENTERTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, today I wish to applaud Centerton Elementary School of Martinsville, IN, for being recognized as a 2015 National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education.

Established in 1982, the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program has recognized over 7,500 public and nonpublic schools that have demonstrated a vision of educational excellence for all students, regardless of their social or economic background. Since its inception, this program has offered the opportunity for schools in every State to gain recognition for educational accomplishments in closing the achievement gaps among student groups.

Centerton Elementary School continues to be one of the best performing Indiana schools. It was first named a National Blue Ribbon School in 2008 and has been named an Indiana Four Star School for 18 out of the last 20 years.

In 2014, Centerton Elementary School's ISTEP+ pass rate for English/Language Arts scores increased by approximately 5 percent to 97 percent. Mathematics scores increased to 97 percent and above for third through fifth grades.

Centerton Elementary School's effectiveness can be found in its holistic approach and dedication to student achievement. At Centerton, staff members collaborate to pinpoint and address individual students' needs. In addition, Centerton staff and students' families work together to teach and instill values that develop strong character including responsibility, goal setting, commitment, and communication. With some of the highest English and mathematics scores in Indiana, Centerton Elementary School is a stellar example of the benefits that result from dedication, motivation, collaboration, and family partnership in education.

I would like to recognize Centerton Elementary School principal, Debbie Lipps, the entire staff, the student body, and their families. The effort, dedication, and value you put into education led not only to this prestigious recognition, but will benefit you and our communities well into the future.

On behalf of the citizens of Indiana, I congratulate Centerton Elementary School, and I wish the students and staff continued success in the future.

RECOGNIZING FARMERSVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, today I wish to applaud Farmersville Elementary School of Mount Vernon, IN, for being recognized as a 2015 National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education.

Established in 1982, the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program has recognized over 7,500 public and nonpublic schools that have demonstrated a vision of educational excellence for all students, regardless of their social or economic background. Since its inception, this program has offered the opportunity for schools in every State to gain recognition for educational accomplishments in closing the achievement gaps among student groups.

Farmersville Elementary School continues to be one of the best performing schools in the State of Indiana. It has been named an Indiana Four Star School multiple times.

In 2014, Farmersville Elementary School's ISTEP+ pass rate for English/Language Arts scores increased by more than 5 percent to 99 percent. Mathematics scores increased to approximately 97 percent and above for third through fifth grades.

Farmersville Elementary School's effectiveness can be found in its holistic approach and dedication to student achievement. Farmersville staff and students' families work together to teach and instill values that develop strong character including responsibility, goal setting, commitment, and communication. With some of the highest English and mathematics scores in Indiana, Farmersville Elementary School is a stellar example of the benefits that result from dedication, motivation, collaboration, and family partnership in education.

I would like to acknowledge Farmersville Elementary School principal Dr. Elizabeth Johns, the entire staff, the student body, and their families. The effort, dedication, and value you put into education led not only to this prestigious recognition, but will benefit you and our communities well into the future.

On behalf of the citizens of Indiana, I congratulate Farmersville Elementary School, and I wish the students and staff continued success in the future.

RECOGNIZING MEMORIAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, today, I wish to applaud Memorial Elementary School of Valparaiso, Indiana for being recognized as a 2015 National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education.

Established in 1982, the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program has recognized over 7,500 public and nonpublic schools that have demonstrated a vision of educational excellence for all students, regardless of their social or economic background. Since its inception, this program has offered the opportunity for schools in every State to gain recognition for educational accomplishments in closing the achievement gaps among student groups.

Memorial Elementary School continues to be one of the best performing

schools in the State of Indiana. It has been named an Indiana Four Star School multiple times.

In 2014, Memorial Elementary School's ISTEP+ pass rate for English/Language Arts scores increased by nearly 2 percent to 96.7 percent. Mathematics scores increased to 98 percent combined for third through fifth grades.

Memorial Elementary School's effectiveness can be found in its holistic approach and dedication to student achievement. Memorial staff, students, and students' families work together to teach and instill values that develop strong character and HEART: honesty, effort, attitude, respect, and teamwork. With some of the highest English and mathematics scores in Indiana, Memorial Elementary School is a stellar example of the benefits that result from dedication, motivation, collaboration, and family partnership in education.

I would like to recognize Memorial Elementary School principal, Debra Misecko, the entire staff, the student body, and their families. The effort, dedication, and value you put into education led not only to this prestigious recognition, but will benefit you and our communities well into the future.

On behalf of the citizens of Indiana, I congratulate Memorial Elementary School, and I wish the students and staff continued success in the future.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DR. EUGENE McKAY

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I wish to honor today Chancellor Eugene McKay of Arkansas State University-Beebe. Chancellor McKay will be retiring at the end of December after nearly half a century of dedication to education, the university, and the State of Arkansas.

Chancellor McKay has been a fixture at ASU-Beebe since 1966. He started as a professor of English and French, became vice chancellor of academic affairs and, in 1994, was named chancellor.

During his time with ASU-Beebe, Chancellor McKay oversaw an extensive campus renovation and expansion. Under his leadership, enrollment nearly tripled, and the ASU-Beebe campus had the highest student success rate of any Arkansas institution of higher education.

His passion helped improve higher education across Arkansas. In 1999, he founded ASU-Heber Springs, and he worked with ASU-Newport to become a stand-alone institution in 2001.

Chancellor McKay's dedication to his community extended beyond the campus. In addition to serving on the Arkansas Community College Board, he also served with the Beebe Chamber of Commerce, the Beebe Economic Development Commission, and United Way of White County, to name a few.

Retirement won't slow him down. Chancellor McKay plans to continue to challenge himself by taking yoga and mathematics classes.

I congratulate Chancellor McKay for his outstanding achievements in education and thank him for his service to ASU-Beebe and the countless students he impacted. I was proud to support his efforts to foster growth at the university and help make his vision for a campus emergency alert system a reality. I greatly appreciate his commitment to the university and higher education and wish him continued success in all of his endeavors. ASU-Beebe has benefited greatly from his leadership and dedication.•

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 which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:04 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 8. An act to modernize energy infrastructure, build a 21st century energy and manufacturing workforce, bolster America's energy security and diplomacy, and promote energy efficiency and government accountability, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 8. An act to modernize energy infrastructure, build a 21st century energy and manufacturing workforce, bolster America's energy security and diplomacy, and promote energy efficiency and government accountability, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 2359. A bill to restore Second Amendment rights in the District of Columbia.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 2109. A bill to direct the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to develop an integrated plan to reduce administrative costs under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–173).

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. McCAIN for the Committee on Armed Services.

*Alissa M. Starzak, of New York, to be General Counsel of the Department of the Army.

*John Conger, of Maryland, to be a Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense.

*Stephen P. Welby, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

*Franklin R. Parker, of Illinois, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Navy.

Marine Corps nomination of Lt. Gen. John E. Wissler, to be Lieutenant General.

Navy nomination of Rear Adm. Clinton F. Faison III, to be Vice Admiral.

Army nomination of Maj. Gen. Nadja Y. West, to be Lieutenant General.

Army nomination of Col. Edward E. Hildreth III, to be Brigadier General.

Army nominations beginning with Colonel Jennifer G. Buckner and ending with Colonel Patrick B. Roberson, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 16, 2015.

Air Force nominations beginning with Col. Blake A. Gettys and ending with Col. Karen E. Mansfield, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 19, 2015.

Air Force nominations beginning with Col. Todd M. Branden and ending with Col. Fermin A. Rubio, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 19, 2015.

Air Force nominations beginning with Col. David M. Bakos and ending with Col. Gregory S. Woodrow, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 19, 2015. (minus 1 nominee: Col. Clifford N. James)

Air Force nomination of Brig. Gen. Edward P. Maxwell, to be Major General.

Air Force nominations beginning with Brig. Gen. Robert C. Bolton and ending with Brig. Gen. Wayne A. Zimmet, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 19, 2015.

Air Force nomination of Maj. Gen. John D. Bansemer, to be Lieutenant General.

Air Force nomination of Col. Russell A. Muncy, to be Brigadier General.

Air Force nomination of Col. Patricia N. Beyer, to be Brigadier General.

Air Force nomination of Col. Christopher W. Lentz, to be Brigadier General.

Air Force nominations beginning with Col. Lee Ann T. Bennett and ending with Col. Tracey A. Siems, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 19, 2015.

Army nomination of Brig. Gen. John C. Thomson III, to be Major General.

Army nomination of Brig. Gen. Sylvia R. Crockett, to be Major General.

Air Force nominations beginning with Col. Kenneth T. Bibb, Jr. and ending with Col. Michael P. Winkler, which nominations were

received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 30, 2015.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, for the Committee on Armed Services I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the RECORDS on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

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

Air Force nominations beginning with Bryan K. Allen and ending with Garrick H. Yokoe, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 19, 2015.

Army nomination of James D. Ferguson, to be Major.

Army nominations beginning with Kelvin L. Brown and ending with Paul L. Wagner II, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 19, 2015.

Army nominations beginning with Daesoo Lee and ending with Brian D. Ray, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 19, 2015.

Army nomination of Wayne W. Santos, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Anthony J. Fadell, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Ricardo Alonsojournet, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Jeffrey M. Sloan, to be Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Andrew C. Dillon and ending with Andre R. Holder, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 19, 2015.

Army nomination of Rebecca R. Tomsyck, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Everett S. P. Spain, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Shane R. Reeves, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with David E. Bentzel and ending with Brian U. T. Kim, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 19, 2015.

Army nominations beginning with Teresa L. Brininger and ending with Richard A. Villarreal, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 19, 2015.

Army nominations beginning with Kevin R. Bass and ending with D003940, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 19, 2015.

Army nominations beginning with Kimberlie A. Biever and ending with Pamela M. Wulf, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 19, 2015.

Army nominations beginning with David Barrett and ending with Jennifer S. Zucker, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 19, 2015.

Army nominations beginning with David W. Laws and ending with John E. Swanberg, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 19, 2015.

Army nomination of William A. Altmire, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Jesus J. T. Nufable, to be Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Ruben Bermudezpagan and ending with Todd W. Schaffer, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 19, 2015.

Army nomination of Joshua A. Carlisle, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of William C. Moorhouse, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Gregg T. Olsowy, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Roger S. Giraud, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Steven M. Wilke, to be Colonel.

Navy nomination of Kenneth C. Collins II, to be Captain.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

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 Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) (by request):

S. 2360. A bill to improve the administration of certain programs in the insular areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. NELSON, Ms. AYOTTE, and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 2361. A bill to enhance airport security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. JOHNSON:

S. 2362. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide enhanced security measures for the Visa Waiver Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MCCAIN (for himself and Ms. AYOTTE):

S.J. Res. 27. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Secretary of Agriculture relating to inspection of fish of the order Siluriformes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. INHOFE (for himself, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. MANCHIN, and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. Res. 329. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding an agreement reached at the United Nations Climate Change Conference held in Paris in December 2015; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. PERDUE):

S. Res. 330. A resolution congratulating the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet for winning the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 330

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 330, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the special rule for contributions of qualified conservation contributions, and for other purposes.

S. 569

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 569, a bill to reauthorize the farm to school program, and for other purposes.

S. 574

At the request of Mr. SCOTT, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 574, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow employers a credit against income tax for employees who participate in qualified apprenticeship programs.

S. 579

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 579, a bill to amend the Inspector General Act of 1978 to strengthen the independence of the Inspectors General, and for other purposes.

S. 613

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 613, a bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to improve the efficiency of summer meals.

S. 624

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 624, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to waive coinsurance under Medicare for colorectal cancer screening tests, regardless of whether therapeutic intervention is required during the screening.

S. 885

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) 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. 979

At the request of Mr. COTTON, his name 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. 1152

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1152, a bill to make permanent the extended period of protections for members of uniformed services relating to mortgages, mortgage foreclosure, and eviction, and for other purposes.

S. 1831

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1831, a bill to revise section 48 of title 18, United States Code, and for other purposes.

S. 1874

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1874, a bill to provide protections for workers with respect to their right to select or refrain from selecting representation by a labor organization.

S. 1890

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1890, a bill to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes.

S. 1915

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) 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. 1944

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1944, a bill to require each agency to repeal or amend 1 or more rules before issuing or amending a rule.

S. 2002

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2002, a bill to strengthen our mental health system and improve public safety.

S. 2075

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2075, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on high cost employer-sponsored health coverage and to express the sense of the Senate that the resulting revenue loss should be offset.

S. 2185

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL), the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2185, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of the fight against breast cancer.

S. 2196

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2196, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the non-application of Medicare competitive acquisition rates to complex rehabilitative wheelchairs and accessories.

S. 2292

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2292, a bill to reform laws relating to small public housing agencies, and for other purposes.

S. 2311

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2311, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration, to make grants to States for screening and treatment for maternal depression.

S. 2344

At the request of Mr. COTTON, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) and the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) were added as cosponsors of S. 2344, a bill to provide authority for access to certain business records collected under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 prior to November 29, 2015, to make the authority for roving surveillance, the authority to treat individual terrorists as agents of foreign powers, and title VII of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 permanent, and to modify the certification requirements for access to telephone toll and transactional records by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and for other purposes.

S. 2357

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the names of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2357, a bill to extend temporarily the extended period of protection for members of uniformed services relating to mortgages, mortgage foreclosure, and eviction, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 25

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 25, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the President should submit the Paris climate change agreement to the Senate for its advice and consent.

S. RES. 113

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 113, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee should recommend the issuance of, and the United States Postal Service should issue, a commemorative stamp in honor of the holiday of Diwali.

S. RES. 189

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 189, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the 25th anniversary of democracy in Mongolia.

S. RES. 199

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 199, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding establishing a National Strategic Agenda.

S. RES. 326

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the names of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 326, a resolution celebrating the 135th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the United States and Romania.

S. RES. 327

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 327, a resolution condemning violence that targets healthcare for women.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) (by request):

S. 2360. A bill to improve the administration of certain programs in the insular areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I rise with Senator CANTWELL of Washington State to introduce the Omnibus Territories Act of 2015, which relates to the U.S. territory of American Samoa, as well as the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau—collectively known as the Freely Associated States. Sections 2 and 3 of the legislation are introduced at the request of the administration and section 4 at the request of the governments of the three Freely Associated States.

Section 2 would permit the use of resettlement and relocation funds provided to the people of Bikini Atoll to be used within or outside of the Republic of the Marshall Islands. As a result of nuclear weapons testing by the United States in the northern islands and atolls of the Marshall Islands, Congress, through Public Law 97–257 in 1982, provided the people of Bikini Atoll a relocation and resettlement trust fund to be used by the people of Bikini to resettle from their traditional homeland of Bikini Atoll to other islands within the Marshall Islands. Currently, most members of the

community live on the islands of Kili and Ejit. Today, however, the people on these islands have limited living space, lack suitable sustainable resources to provide water and food for their population, and they are exposed to tidal flooding on an increasingly frequent basis. Under current Federal law, citizens of the Freely Associated States, including the people of Bikini, are able to enter into, reside, work, and study in the United States as nonimmigrants without visas. This section would allow the people of Bikini to use the resettlement and relocation trust funds for relocation and resettlement outside of the Marshall Islands, whether in the United States or elsewhere, if they so choose.

Section 3 seeks to improve air service capabilities in American Samoa. There are currently no U.S. airlines that provide flight service within American Samoa between the islands of Tutuila and Manu'a. The U.S. Department of Transportation has granted a foreign air carrier emergency service capability to provide this service, but that designation must be renewed every thirty days under statutory requirement. This section would amend current statute to allow for a foreign carrier to operate between the islands of Tutuila and Manu'a without the need for an emergency service capability designation.

Section 4 would amend the REAL ID Act of 2005, Public Law 109–13, to allow citizens of the Freely Associated States to document their lawful resident status in the United States in conformance with the Compacts of Free Association between the United States and each of these three nations. Section 141 of the Compact of Free Association Amendments Act of 2003, Public Law 108–188, and the law that implemented the Compact of Free Association with Palau, Public Law 101–219, permits citizens of the FAS to enter into the United States to lawfully engage in occupations and establish residence as nonimmigrants. However, the REAL ID Act of 2005 did not provide a means for FAS citizens to document their lawful status in the United States. As a consequence, FAS citizens are denied anything more than a temporary ID valid only for one year, resulting in practical difficulties in their ability to maintain employment and engage in other lawful activities where they reside. Giving FAS citizens the ability to document their lawful status and obtain a State-issued driver's license or identification card would facilitate employment and provide more stability and certainty as they engage in lawful activity as legal residents in the United States.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 329—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING AN AGREEMENT REACHED AT THE UNITED NATIONS CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE HELD IN PARIS IN DECEMBER 2015

Mr. INHOFE (for himself, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. MANCHIN, and Mrs. CAPITO) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 329

Whereas on May 9, 1992, the Senate gave the advice and consent of the Senate regarding the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, with annexes, done at New York May 9, 1992, and entered into force March 21, 1994 (referred to in this preamble as the ''Convention''), a treaty that was intended to address the global emissions of greenhouse gases;

Whereas the Convention was ratified under the express limitation ''that a decision by the Conference of the Parties to adopt targets and timetables would have to be submitted to the Senate for its advice and consent.'';

Whereas after the Convention entered into force, parties began negotiating a subsidiary agreement to contain binding greenhouse gas emissions reductions, which resulted in the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, done at Kyoto on December 10, 1997;

Whereas the United States is not a party to the Kyoto Protocol;

Whereas the Clinton Administration did not submit the Kyoto Protocol to the Senate for the advice and consent of the Senate;

Whereas on July 25, 1997, the Senate agreed to S. Res. 98 of the 105th Congress by a vote of 95 to 0; and

Whereas the parties to the Convention operating under the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action will convene in Paris in December 2015 to replace the Kyoto Protocol with ''a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force'' aimed at limiting greenhouse gas emissions: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That —

(1) it is the sense of the Senate that any protocol, amendment, extension, or other agreement relating to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, with annexes, done at New York May 9, 1992, and entered into force March 21, 1994, shall have no force or effect in the United States and no funds shall be authorized in support of that protocol, amendment, extension, or other agreement, including for the Green Climate Fund, until that protocol, amendment, extension, or other agreement has been submitted to Senate for advice and consent, if that protocol, amendment, extension, or other agreement—

(A) fulfills mitigation commitments through existing and future regulations that would put our national industries at a disadvantage compared to the industries of developing countries;

(B) includes a financial commitment that will not go into effect without subsequent congressional legislation or authorization;

(C) represents an agreement to be overseen by an international administrative entity covering a wide range of topics, including mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology transfer, capacity building, transparency, implementation, and compliance; or

(D) establishes a mechanism to assess contributions or commitments for future compliance; and

(2) the Senate directs the Secretary of the Senate to transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution to the President.

SENATE RESOLUTION 330—CONGRATULATING THE TUNISIAN NATIONAL DIALOGUE QUARTET FOR WINNING THE 2015 NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. PERDUE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 330

Whereas on October 10, 2015, the Norwegian Nobel Committee (referred to in this Resolution as ''the Committee'') awarded the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet (referred to in this Resolution as ''the Quartet'') the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize for its work in building on the promise of the 2011 Jasmine Revolution and preventing Tunisia's democratic transition from descending into violence in 2013;

Whereas the Jasmine Revolution in January 2011 was the spark that led to the Arab Spring protests across the Middle East and North Africa, ultimately leading to the departure of President Zine El Abedine Ben Ali and the end of his authoritarian rule;

Whereas the Quartet is a coalition of 4 civil society organizations: The Tunisian General Labor Union; The Tunisian Confederation of Industry, Trade, and Handicrafts; The Tunisian Human Rights League; and The Tunisian Order of Lawyers;

Whereas the Quartet offered a path away from violence, political assassinations, and civil unrest by promoting mediation and a peaceful political process led by civil society actors committed to the rule of law and human rights;

Whereas an elected National Constituent Assembly adopted a new, progressive constitution in early 2014, and Tunisia held peaceful and fair elections in late 2014, formally ending a series of transitional governments;

Whereas in response to the March 18, 2015 terrorist attack on the Bardo National Museum that killed 21 people, Tunisian citizens and political leaders have reaffirmed their commitment to dialogue, pluralism, and democracy;

Whereas a terrorist attack on July 26, 2015 on a beach in the town of Sousse, left 38 people, including 30 British nationals, dead, and dealt a blow to tourism in Tunisia, an important industry upon which the Tunisian economy depends;

Whereas President Barack Obama stated on October 9, 2015, ''With the Quartet's support, Tunisians voted in free elections, forged a new constitution that upholds human rights and equality for all people, including women and minorities, and formed a national unity government, including secular and Islamist parties, showing that democracy and Islam can indeed thrive together.'';

Whereas Secretary of State John Kerry stated on October 9, 2015, ''The Tunisian model of inclusivity and respecting fundamental freedoms of all its citizens is the best answer to the violence and extremist ideologies that have torn apart other countries in the region'';

Whereas Tunisian President Beji Caid Essebsi stated on October 9, 2015, that the Nobel Peace Prize signified ''a tribute not only to the Quartet and its organizations but

is also a crowning of the principle of consensual solutions adopted by Tunisia'';

Whereas the Norwegian Nobel Committee stated on October 10, 2015, ''The broad-based national dialogue that the Quartet succeeded in establishing countered the spread of violence in Tunisia . . . the prize is intended as an encouragement to the Tunisian people, who despite major challenges have laid the groundwork for a national fraternity which the Committee hopes will serve as an example to be followed by other countries'';

Whereas Tunisia continues to face serious threats to its security from violent extremist groups operating within Tunisia as well as in neighboring countries;

Whereas a terrorist attack on November 24, 2015 on Tunisia's Presidential Guard killed 12 people and represents another effort to undermine democracy and stability in Tunisia;

Whereas Tunisia faces economic challenges, including high inflation and high unemployment, especially among young Tunisians;

Whereas the United States is committed to continuing a strong economic partnership with Tunisia as it undertakes reforms to transform its economy to meet the aspirations of all of its citizens;

Whereas the United States and Tunisia have enjoyed friendly relations for more than 200 years;

Whereas in accordance with the United States-Tunisia Strategic Partnership, both countries are dedicated to working together to promote economic development and business opportunities in Tunisia, education for the advancement of long-term development in Tunisia, and increased security cooperation to address common threats in Tunisia and across the region;

Whereas in July 2015, President Obama designated Tunisia a Major Non-NATO Ally;

Whereas Tunisia is a member of the Global Coalition to Counter the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL);

Whereas at the second United States-Tunisia Strategic Dialogue in November 2015, Secretary Kerry reaffirmed the historic friendship and growing strategic partnership between the United States and Tunisia and praised the role of civil society organizations in Tunisia's democratic transition;

Whereas the United States Government allocated approximately $580,000,000 in foreign assistance during fiscal years 2011 through 2014, which is 10 ten times the bilateral assistance appropriated for Tunisia during the previous 4 fiscal years;

Whereas the President's Budget Request for fiscal year 2016 included a substantial increase in bilateral assistance to support Tunisia's democratic transition;

Whereas it is in America's interest to see that a pluralist democracy and a vibrant economy develop in Tunisia;

Whereas the United States should provide a level of funding to strongly assist and reinforce Tunisia's transition to democracy, stability, and prosperity:

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet on winning the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize;

(2) commends the leaders of The Tunisian General Labor Union; The Tunisian Confederation of Industry, Trade, and Handicrafts; The Tunisian Human Rights League; and The Tunisian Order of Lawyers for negotiating solutions to political crises;

(3) commends Tunisian political leaders for their willingness to compromise and work together in the interest of the Tunisian people;

(4) encourages the Government of Tunisia to build upon its successes and move swiftly to implement necessary political and economic reforms that will benefit the Tunisian people and consolidate Tunisia's democratic transition; and

(5) reaffirms the commitment of the United States to support the Government of Tunisia and its people as they continue on the path to democracy and fulfill their desire for a stable and prosperous country.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2920. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2393, to amend the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 to repeal country of origin labeling requirements with respect to beef, pork, and chicken, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2920. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2393, to amend the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 to repeal country of origin labeling requirements with respect to beef, pork, and chicken, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. _____. REPEAL OF DUPLICATIVE MANDATORY INSPECTION PROGRAM.

(a) FOOD, CONSERVATION, AND ENERGY ACT OF 2008.—Effective June 18, 2008, section 11016 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–246; 122 Stat. 2130) is repealed.

(b) AGRICULTURAL ACT OF 2014.—Effective February 7, 2014, section 12106 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–79; 128 Stat. 981) is repealed.

(c) APPLICATION.—The Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) and the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1621 et seq.) shall be applied and administered as if the provisions of law struck by this section had not been enacted.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following disposition of the McDonough nomination, the Senate proceed to the consideration of the following nominations: Calendar Nos. 373 and 374; that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc without intervening action or debate; that following the disposition of the nominations, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nominations; that 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.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2015

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Tuesday, December 8; 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 resume consideration of the conference report to accompany S. 1177; finally, that notwithstanding rule XXII, the cloture vote with respect to the conference report to accompany S. 1177 occur at 11:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned after the resumption of legislative session, following the disposition of the Etim nomination.

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Travis Randall McDonough, of Tennessee, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Tennessee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 30 minutes of debate.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today we will vote on the nomination of Travis McDonough to be a Federal district judge in the Eastern District of Tennessee. He was nominated over a year ago, and his nomination was voted out of the Judiciary Committee by unanimous voice vote nearly 5 months ago. Despite having the support of his home State Republican Senators, Mr. McDonough's nomination has nevertheless been held up by Republican leadership for no good reason.

I will further note that, while Mr. McDonough's vote is long overdue, Republican leadership has skipped over Judge Luis Felipe Restrepo—who is ahead of Mr. McDonough on the Executive Calendar. I recall Republican leadership promising regular order when they took over the majority, so they should explain how skipping over a consensus and eminently qualified nominee with bipartisan support is following regular order.

Judge Restrepo was nominated to a judicial emergency vacancy in the third circuit over a year ago. If confirmed, he would be the first ever Hispanic judge from Pennsylvania on the third circuit. Judge Restrepo has the strong support of the Hispanic National Bar Association and has bipartisan support from his home State Senators, Senator TOOMEY and Senator CASEY. Senator TOOMEY has said not only that he strongly supports Judge Restrepo's confirmation, but that he also recommended him to the President. I cannot explain why Senate Republicans are not allowing Judge Restrepo to be confirmed today.

As we approach the end of the year, the Senate Republican majority is coming closer and closer to matching the record for confirming the fewest number of judicial nominees in more than half a century. While most Senators I have served with over the last 40 years would shudder at this fact, the current Republican leadership seems content to accomplish as little as possible when it comes to confirming nominees to our third branch of government.

In the 11 months that Republicans have controlled the Senate, only 11 judges will have received a confirmation vote, including today. When Senate Democrats were in the majority during the seventh year of the Bush Presidency, we had already confirmed 36 judges by this point. We should take action right now and hold confirmation votes on the 19 other judicial nominees pending on the floor. Confirming the remaining 19 nominees would fulfill a basic duty of the Senate and would result in a total of 30 judicial nominees confirmed this year. That number is still short of the 36 nominees that Senate Democrats confirmed at the same point of the George W. Bush administration, but it would mark a significant effort by this Senate to reduce vacancies. There is no reason not to do this. All 19 of the nominees were voted out of the Judiciary Committee by voice vote, but Republicans still refuse to bring them up for a vote.

This obstruction has resulted in needless delays for hard-working Americans who seek justice in our Federal courts. Currently pending on the Senate floor are nominees who would fill judicial emergency vacancies in Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Minnesota, New Jersey, Iowa, New York, and California. Senate Republicans have not responded to the urgent needs of those States to the detriment of their own constituents.

Throughout his tenure, President Obama has worked with Senators to have the Federal judiciary better reflect the people they serve. Today there are more women and minorities than ever before on the Federal bench. This is an accomplishment that helps ensure the public's confidence in their court system. Unfortunately, that meaningful progress has slowed down under the Senate's Republican control. Today, several nominees of color with outstanding qualifications are being held up for no good reason, including Judge Luis Felipe Restrepo.

Senate Republicans are also holding up four exceptional African-American district court nominees and an exceptional Hispanic district court nominee. Two of the African-American nominees—Waverly Crenshaw and Edward Stanton—have been nominated to district court positions in Tennessee. Both have the support of their home State Republican Senators and were unanimously approved by the Judiciary Committee by voice vote; yet they continue to wait for the majority leader to schedule their votes. The three other nominees of color being held up—Wilhelmina Wright to the District of Minnesota, and John Vazquez and Julien Neals to the District of New Jersey—are all nominated to judicial emergency vacancies. They also all have the support of their home State Senators and were voted out of the Judiciary Committee by voice vote.

In addition to the article III nominees, five nominees to the U.S. Court of Federal Claims, who were all nominated more than a year ago, continue to be held up by a single Republican Senator—the junior Senator of Arkansas. The Court of Federal Claims has been referred to as ''the People's Court'' because it allows citizens to seek prompt justice against our government. Of the five nominees, one is a Cuban American who has devoted his entire career to public service at the U.S. Department of Justice; another is an African-American woman who spent over two decades serving as a judge advocate general and as a military judge. All five were voted out of the Judiciary Committee by unanimous voice vote, but Senator COTTON continues to object to any of them receiving an up-or-down vote. He claims to have concerns with the caseload, but a recent letter from the chief judge of the Court of Federal Claims to the Judiciary Committee has indicated that only one of the nine senior judges is willing to be recalled for full-time duty, and the other three would only agree to be recalled on a limited basis. Moreover, the court's overall caseload has increased 9 percent over the last year. There are no good reasons for Senator COTTON to continue blocking these nominees. They deserve to have their confirmation votes scheduled. Senators can vote for or against them, but they should not be denied a simple up-or-down vote.

In a letter dated December 2, 2015, from the American Bar Association to Majority Leader MCCONNELL, the president of the ABA states that ''our courts are unfortunately worse off today than they were at the start of this Congress.'' The letter urges the majority leader to schedule votes on the confirmation of all the article III judicial nominees currently pending on the Executive Calendar. I ask unanimous consent that a copy of this letter be printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks.

The process of confirming judges is about ensuring that the American people have a fully functioning judiciary. Because of Republican obstruction, judicial vacancies have increased by more than 50 percent since they took over the majority, and caseloads are piling up in courts throughout the country. Judicial emergencies have more than doubled since the beginning of this year.

I am concerned that the Republican leadership's refusal to confirm judicial nominations this year is undermining the judicial branch and harming the American people who seek justice. I urge Senate Republicans to conclude this year by showing leadership and by scheduling confirmation votes on the remaining judicial nominees pending on the Executive Calendar.

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

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION,
Chicago, IL, December 2, 2015.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Senate Majority Leader, Capitol Building, Washington, DC.

Hon. HARRY REID,
Senate Democratic Leader, Capitol Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER MCCONNELL AND DEMOCRATIC LEADER REID: On behalf of the American Bar Association, I write to urge you to schedule votes on the confirmation of 15 nominees pending on the Senate floor before the Senate recesses for the year. Seven of the pending nominees have the backing of their Republican home-state senators and all 15 have been reported out of the Senate Judiciary Committee by unanimous voice votes. Most importantly, if confirmed, nine of the pending nominees would fill vacancies that have been declared judicial emergencies by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts. Courts with emergency vacancies have too few judges to handle their workload effectively and deliver timely justice.

Regardless of how one views confirmation data comparisons among recent presidents or the fact that the vacancy rate has not reached crisis proportion, our courts are unfortunately worse off today than they were at the start of this Congress. There are 22 more vacancies (with three more in the pipeline this month) and more than twice the number of judicial emergencies today than there were this past January. In some of our courts with judicial emergencies, litigants have to put their businesses or private lives on hold indefinitely while waiting for their day in court. This is unnecessary and unfair.

Action on the 15 pending nominees has proceeded slowly to date. Most of them received their nominations over 200 days ago and had to wait over 4 months to be voted out of committee without objection.

Even though we appreciate the Senate's full agenda and the short amount of time remaining in the session, we urge you to give

every pending nominee a floor vote before you leave for your recess. Absent legitimate concerns over a nominee's qualifications, we believe that this can best be accomplished over the next few weeks by voting on multiple nominees at a time.

We know from the daily experience of our more than 400,000 members that vacancies must be filled promptly so that courts have the resources to deliver timely, impartial justice. By putting politics aside, an opportunity is provided for the Senate to use its time in the next two weeks to afford considerable relief to the federal courts.

Thank you for the opportunity to present the views of the American Bar Association.

Sincerely,

PAULETTE BROWN,
President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

EMBRACING ALL RELIGIONS

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, earlier today Donald Trump called for the United States to ban all Muslims from entering our Nation. This is the single worst idea I have heard from any Presidential candidate, ever. It is inconsistent with our American values. It is inconsistent with our national history.

The Nation has looked back on events in our past—for example, the Chinese Exclusion Act or the internment of Japanese American citizens—and realized it was a huge mistake to make one significant group our enemy. It is inconsistent with the vision of our Constitution, in which all came to the United States seeking to escape persecution and to be able to practice whichever religion they chose. The Founders of the United States did not seek to make our Nation one in which only a single religion could be practiced. They did not seek to establish one religion as a preeminent religion. They instead wanted a safe haven where people could worship as they pleased, which is the heart of our First Amendment.

This idea is wrong and wrongheaded. It is wrong in the context that we are not at war with Islam. In fact, we are working in partnership with Islamic nations to take on a terrorist group known as ISIS. It is wrong in that all patriotic Americans of every religion are working together to take on this terrorist group known as ISIS. In addition to being wrong, it is wrongheaded in that making Islam the enemy is playing straight out of ISIS's playbook, which wants to create a war between America and Islam. In that sense, this type of irresponsible statement endangers our national security rather than strengthens it.

So let others stand up and embrace our citizens of every religion and recognize the partnership we are in together to take on terrorist forces, that we are working in partnership with a variety of nations that have a whole variety of religions, including Islam, to take on the terrorist force known as ISIS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, in a few minutes we will be voting on the President's nominee to fill a vacancy in the Eastern District of Tennessee. Mr. McDonough is well known to me and is well known to my colleague, Senator CORKER.

Mr. McDonough received his undergraduate degree from Sewanee before going on to law school at Vanderbilt. He was a member of a prominent Chattanooga law firm, Miller & Martin. He was chief of staff to Chattanooga's mayor. He is a well-qualified man. We are fortunate that he is willing to serve, and we are fortunate the President nominated him. I urge my colleagues to vote for him.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the McDonough nomination?

Mr. ALEXANDER. 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 Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 89, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 332 Ex.]

YEAS—89

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

NOT VOTING—11

Blunt	Isakson	Rubio
Coats	Kirk	Sanders
Cruz	Moran	Toomey
Graham	Roberts	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of the following nominations, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nominations of Kenneth Damian Ward, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Executive Service, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as United States Representative to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons; and Linda I. Etim, of Wisconsin, to be an Assistant Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Ward and Etim nominations en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume legislative session.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:05 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, December 8, 2015, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES

CHARLOTTE P. KESSLER, OF OHIO, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE ARTS FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 3, 2018. (REAPPOINTMENT)

ESPERANZA EMILY SPALDING, OF OREGON, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE ARTS FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 3, 2020, VICE LEE GREENWOOD, TERM EXPIRED.

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

MARCELA ESCOBARI, OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO BE AN ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, VICE MARK FEIERSTEIN, RESIGNED.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate December 7, 2015:

THE JUDICIARY

TRAVIS RANDALL MCDONOUGH, OF TENNESSEE, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

KENNETH DAMIAN WARD, OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE, FOR THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR DURING HIS TENURE OF SERVICE AS UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE TO THE ORGANIZATION FOR THE PROHIBITION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS.

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

LINDA I. ETIM, OF WISCONSIN, TO BE AN ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JAIME HERRERA BEUTLER

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 7, 2015

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. Mr. Speaker, the day of December 1st, I am not recorded on seven votes because I was absent due to illness.

If I had been present, I would have voted: yes, on rollcall 646; yes, on rollcall 647; yes, on rollcall 648; yes, on rollcall 649; yes, on rollcall 650; yes, on rollcall 651; and yes on rollcall 652.

INTELLIGENCE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016

SPEECH OF

HON. MIKE POMPEO

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 1, 2015

Mr. POMPEO. Mr. Speaker, I commend Chairman NUNES, Ranking Member SCHIFF, and the entire Intelligence Committee for crafting the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016. This is a strong and bipartisan piece of legislation that will ensure the safety of every American.

For the people of the Fourth District of Kansas, whom I represent, and for many other Americans, this bill represents more than just the three letter agencies it oversees, this bill is about ensuring the U.S. has a robust national security posture to keep Americans safe. When we empower the men and women in the Intelligence Community with the resources, tools, and capabilities they need, they are able to do their jobs and protect our nation.

It is in the finest traditions of Congress that there has been such close cooperation between the House and Senate in undertaking our oversight responsibilities, and also productive collaboration with the Intelligence Community. As always, in the Committee's work of providing guidance to the Intelligence Community, we continue to recommend fiscal responsibility through increased efficiency and the elimination of unnecessary programs. All of this is done with a close eye to protecting every American's Constitutional rights.

I do not need to remind anyone that the threats facing the United States are real and dangerous. I applaud the decision to empower our intelligence agencies with potent tools, all the while focused on protecting privacy, to ensure that our interests and our way of life are protected in these uncertain times.

TRIBUTE TO MAJOR JEFFREY D. SHULMAN, USAF

HON. ROB BISHOP

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 7, 2015

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, for the past year, Major Jeff Shulman has served as an Air Force Congressional Fellow in my personal office, and today marks his graduation from that program. Major Shulman has been selected for promotion to Lieutenant Colonel as he will be accepting a new assignment abroad serving our country in the coming year.

Major Shulman's Air Force career began when he was first commissioned as a Distinguished Graduate from Saint Louis University in 2003. He has served with distinction as an F–16 Instructor Pilot, Mission Commander, and a Flight Examiner in the AT–38C. Additionally he has served as an Aide-de-Camp to two Four-Star General officers as well as a fellow at RAND Corporation. Major Shulman has flown the F–16 operationally during Operation NOBLE EAGLE and Operation ENDURING FREEDOM and has 170 combat hours in the F–16 and over 1,500 hours in fighter aircraft.

Major Shulman quickly became a valued and respected member of my staff, and was responsible for making invaluable contributions to several major legislative projects, including preserving and protecting military test and training ranges in the Western United States against various types of encroachments and undue restrictions.

Major Shulman is truly representative of some of the finest of his generation serving in the United States military, and I believe that his actions and conduct so far in his career have demonstrated a commitment to the Air Force's core values of integrity, service before self, and excellence in all he does.

Our nation is well-served to have individuals of Major Shulman's caliber and integrity serving to defend our freedoms. As he leaves his Capitol Hill fellowship, we can all join in saying to him, job well done.

As he and his loving and dedicated family move on to the next assignment, we send with them our best wishes for a happy and successful future.

RECOGNIZING THE SOCIETY OF INNOVATORS OF NORTHWEST INDIANA

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 7, 2015

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect and enthusiasm that I congratulate Ivy Tech Community College and its regional partners who recently celebrated their 11th Annual Northwest Indiana Innovation Induction Ceremony. At the ceremony, which reflects the "Spirit of Innovation" in Indiana, eleven individuals and fifteen teams were inducted as members of the 2015–2016 Class of The Society of Innovators of Northwest Indiana. Of these individuals, several members were inducted as Society Fellows for their exceptional efforts in innovation. These individuals are Erin Argyilan, Ph.D., Marilyn Brunk, Tom Clark, Joseph Coar, Joseph Ferrandino, Ph.D., and Donald Galbreath. Also honored were two Chanute Prize recipients, the Green Abilities Team at The Arc Northwest Indiana, and Indiana University Health La Porte Hospital. In addition, the "Accelerating Greatness" award was presented to Edgewater Behavioral Health Services and Methodist Hospital, Northlake Campus, for its level III "in the process" trauma center. For their truly remarkable contributions to the community of Northwest Indiana and their continuous efforts to cultivate a culture of innovation, these honorees were inducted at the Horseshoe Casino in Hammond, Indiana, on Thursday, October 22, 2015.

The Society of Innovators of Northwest Indiana was created by Ivy Tech Northwest with the goal of highlighting and encouraging innovative individuals and groups within the not-for-profit, public, and private sectors, as well as building a "culture of innovation" in Northwest Indiana. The importance of innovation in Northwest Indiana, as well as globally, is crucial in today's ever-changing economy.

The fellows selected by the Society of Innovators were chosen for their extraordinary innovative leadership and the impact of their accomplishments throughout Northwest Indiana and beyond. Erin Argyilan, Ph.D., is a geologist at Indiana University Northwest. Dr. Argyilan established a new model of a previously unknown geological hazard in sand dunes. Her discovery is called a "dune decomposition chimney or tunnel," and her extensive research helped to explain why six-year-old Nathan Woessner was trapped in a hole on Mount Baldy in 2013. Marilyn Brunk is a teacher at Griffith High School. Marilyn launched a computer science and programming class involving video games, which is the first of its kind in Northwest Indiana and possibly the entire state. Griffith students are excited about this innovative class and enrollment continues to grow each year. Tom Clark is a teacher at Lake Central High School. Tom started the Gold Star Honor Roll Project thirty years ago, and it is among the longest running experimental learning projects in the state and one of the largest in the nation. The project, which is celebrated by students and faculty, involves learning through the gathering of historic memorabilia, validating records, and visiting families of American soldiers killed in combat. Joseph Coar, of Tonn and Blank Construction, spearheaded a carpenter's apprenticeship program that put Indiana in the forefront of innovative curricula for high school students. In addition, his support led to the implementation of the program at A.K. Smith Career Center in La Porte, the first career center in Indiana to offer this program. Joseph

Ferrandino, Ph.D., associate professor of criminal justice at Indiana University Northwest, founded the Northwest Indiana Public Safety Data Consortium, which transforms how public safety communicates throughout the region. This truly innovative project connects data and imaging among nearly thirty participating agencies and across four counties. Donald Galbreath has been an innovator in the waste handling industry for the past sixty years. He is best known for inventing ''the most user friendly roll-off hoist in his industry.'' The majority of roll-off hoists used in the waste, scrap, and construction hauling industries were influenced by his inventions.

The recipients of the Chanute Prize for Team Innovation should be commended for their contributions. The Green Abilities Team at The Arc Northwest Indiana received this honor for its truly innovative and successful on-site training program in which special needs individuals are taught how to recycle granite remnants into landscaping pavers, tile veneers, and other repurposed products. Indiana University Health La Porte Hospital also received this honor for implementing initiatives that promote a ''fair and just culture'' in which employees are encouraged to report problems. In addition, the hospital launched Rapid Improvement Events in which skilled teams, including physicians, spend a full week focusing on a single opportunity for improvement. These solutions are tested and then implemented within a timeframe goal of thirty days.

The Accelerating Greatness Award for Team Innovation included two recipients. Edgewater Behavioral Health Services is the first in the state to develop a program that helps to provide immediate attention to people in psychiatric crisis. The Rapid Access Center allows adults experiencing these types of problems to get help in a short amount of time regardless of their ability to pay for services. Methodist Hospital, Northlake Campus, was also honored with this award for opening the first level III ''in the process'' trauma center in Northwest Indiana, which is the sixteenth in the state. This has been a goal for Methodist Hospitals for more than a decade.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my distinguished colleagues to join me in commending these outstanding innovators. The contributions they have made to society here in Northwest Indiana and worldwide are immeasurable and lifelong. For their truly brilliant innovative ideas, projects, and leadership, each recipient is worthy of the highest commendation.

VETERANS DAY AND AN AMERICAN POW OF JAPAN

HON. DARRELL E. ISSA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 7, 2015

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the veterans of my district. In particular, I want to call attention to my constituent from Carlsbad, California, Dr. Lester Tenney, 95, a proud member of the 192nd Tank Battalion of the U.S. Army that fought in the defense of Bataan, the Philippines against Imperial Japan in the first battles of World War II.

Surrendered by his commanders on April 9, 1942, he survived the infamous 65-mile Bataan Death March, a Hellship to Japan, and nearly three years of brutal, slave labor in a Mitsui coal in southern Japan that is today an UNESCO World Industrial Heritage site.

On this 70th anniversary of the end of World War II, it is important to call attention to Dr. Tenney's most important achievement. This has been to forgive his capturers and to forge meaningful friendships with Japanese citizens.

In 2008, Dr. Tenney sat down with Japan's ambassador to the United States Ichiro Fujisaki with two simple requests: 1) an official apology to the Allied POWs for the prohibited abuse and slave labor they experienced in the care of Imperial Japan; and 2) a visitation program to Japan to initiate healing and reconciliation. In 2009, the apology was delivered and in 2010 the annual trips began.

The result of efforts and experiences by men like Dr. Tenney is that for 70 years Japan has enjoyed a prosperous peace and the United States and Japan have become unshakeable allies. Dr. Tenney reflects upon this and his POW experiences in his occasional articles for The Wall Street Journal.

For this year's anniversary of surrender on the USS *Missouri*, Dr. Tenney wrote what that time meant to him and the other POWs who had been liberated. He rightly points out that the war and the peace is composed of the deeds and sacrifices of many: foot soldier to general; sailor to fisherman; mother to widow. None should be forgotten.

With profound respect, I submit Dr. Tenney's essay in which he eloquently reminds us to honor our veterans and implores us to pass on and teach future generations of the legacy of World War II in the Pacific.

[From the Wall Street Journal, Sept. 1, 2015]

JAPAN'S WAR LEGACY

THE POSTWAR GENERATION MAY NOW BE THE MAJORITY IN JAPAN, BUT THEY TOO MUST KNOW THE ATROCITIES OF WAR

(By Lester Tenney)

Imperial Japan became history on Sept. 2, 1945. Gen. Douglas MacArthur accepted Japan's unconditional surrender on the deck of the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay, ending World War II. For me, nearly 600 miles south in a prisoner of war camp outside Nagasaki, unaware of these historic events, I simply remember the pure joy of liberation.

What was V-J Day like for POWs? For those of us in Fukuoka No. 17–B POW Camp, the war ended on Aug. 15, when our Mitsui company overseers, without explanation, stopped sending us down into their coal mine. We were returned to camp for an unusual midday meal of limitless rice and recognizable vegetables. We received our first full Red Cross boxes. And the camp guards said ''hello'' in English instead of striking us with their rifle butts for not bowing.

After lunch, the camp commander, flanked by trucks mounted with machine guns, gathered us on the camp's parade ground. He curtly announced, ''America and Japan now friends. War is over.''

There is no accurate way to describe how it feels to be a slave one moment—starved and abused, forced to work long hours in a treacherous mine, beaten daily for not working fast enough or not bowing low enough—and a free man the next.

After more than two years underground in the dark, narrow seams of a coal mine, it was glorious to be in the sun. American planes soon appeared overhead and with them came parachutes carrying 55-gallon drums of food, clothing, medicines and magazines. One parachute failed to open, its cargo of fruit salad spilling out onto the camp yard. We happily and immediately dined on the scattered remains.

Baron Mitsui, a 1915 Dartmouth graduate who owned our coal mine and many others, hosted a series of dinners for senior Allied commanding officers of our POW camp. The baron had often visited his captive village and was aware of the grim conditions. Over the meals, he reportedly asked the officers for their tolerance and thanked them for their efforts. Photos from the dinner series show a wary indulgence in the eyes of the American, Australian, British and Dutch guests.

Fast forward to last month, when Prime Minister Shinzo Abe used the same word—tolerance—in his statement on the 70th anniversary of the war's end. ''How much emotional struggle must have existed and what great efforts must have been necessary . . . for the former POWs who experienced unbearable sufferings caused by the Japanese military in order for them to be so tolerant nevertheless?'' Mr. Abe marveled.

While I welcome any step, however modest, the Japanese make in addressing war crimes committed against POWs, this word stops me short. It makes a war crime a matter of inconvenience. I can tolerate someone cutting me off in traffic. But being a POW was not a matter of tolerance. It was a matter of life or death—mostly death.

The denial of water and food on the Bataan Death March didn't simply inconvenience us; it killed thousands of soldiers. My fellow prisoners and I didn't tolerate nor have we forgotten the beatings and torture, the starvation and broken bones, or the filth and stench of dying men. What tolerance did I have watching my buddy tortured so viciously that he had to have both legs amputated?

And what of today? Our wait for Japan's apology, offered officially in February 2009, wasn't tolerance. It was patience. Patience for justice.

Still, Mr. Abe's awkward statement on Aug. 15 suggests that our patience may not be in vain. His mention of POWs is the only reference in the statement that clearly matches a noun of wrongdoing to a verb of responsibility. He correctly points out that ''unbearable suffering'' was ''caused'' by Imperial Japan's military. Acknowledging the perpetrator of a crime and the crime itself is the first step toward reconciliation.

For me, the war is hard to forget. But as Mr. Abe points out, the postwar generations are now the majority in Japan. Japanese today aren't responsible for what happened more than 70 years ago. But they also cannot forget or distort the past.

Japan owes me, the descendants of its victims and its own citizens the truth. As Mr. Abe said, ''We Japanese, across generations, must squarely face the history of the past. We have the responsibility to inherit the past, in all humbleness, and pass it on to the future.''

Imperial Japan tormented, enslaved and defiled many people. This is a grave legacy to pass on and to teach future generations. But it is vital to keep memories like mine alive. It's one thing to remember great deeds done by great men, like Gen. MacArthur in Tokyo Bay. But World War II's history is composed of the suffering of many individuals in different circumstances. This, too, should not be forgotten, or else the lessons of the war will be incomplete.

A FATHER'S LOVE: IN HONOR OF BRETT FAVRE ''4'' AT THE RETIRING OF HIS NUMBER AT LAMBEAU FIELD

HON. REID J. RIBBLE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 7, 2015

Mr. RIBBLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Brett Favre, who was inducted into the Hall of Fame this past summer, and the halftime ceremony which took place on Thanksgiving retiring his number "4" at Lambeau Field. I submit this poem penned in his honor by Albert Carey Caswell.

A FATHER'S LOVE

(By Albert Carey Caswell)

The heart of a champion,
and from where does it all so come
And how is one so born into this among
And where does such a splendid gift originate from
And how may we pass on these gifts of love,
to our sons
For its only through our love and time,
and life lessons find, what we have won
For our days on this earth,
are the shortest of all ones
So cherish each moment with your sons
For its all about what we leave behind,
when all is said and done
So who will we touch before our last suns
To raise a son and instill in him all his of hopes and dreams,
and values to come
To bestow upon him all your gifts of love,
to help him rise above
One of our Lord's most precious gifts,
is to raise a child of love
No greater blessing on the wings of a dove
Because a child is the brightest of all lights.
Passing onto him all our wisdom and love.
Watching him grow up into a fine man,
is the culmination of all our dreams begun
There was once a little boy sitting on his father's knee,
as his dad spoke to him about his future dreams,
and what he could be.
''listen my son, you are the one, believe''
''And little man, you will go Favre
and football is in your blood and she'll give you all you need!''
And from that first day as was completed,
such a warm bond in hearts to succeed it
A catch with dad, a fine Father and Son,
as such a love story grew on fields of green
Like Father like Son into this winning team
As a father and a coach passed onto him his creed
Showing him what he would need
And what it was to be a man,
hitting pay dirt in The Game of Life . . . TD
A pat on the back, extending a warm hand, and respect to demand,
to lead his heart towards his future dreams
And throughout the years,
those bumps and bruises here
Nights at home with broken bones,
and contusions as a love story grew so dear.
Pop Warner, High School ball,
and then a College comes to call,
and soon the big leagues Brett's name would fear
To be a Pro, at the Top, To Be The Best,
as Brett's leadership they could not contest
As the cream of the crop,
is an almost impossible quest,
to be in The Hall of Fame one day as one of The Very Best
In football,
the very heart of any team is but The Quarterback
The point from which,
all leadership on fields of green attacks
Where the toughest of the tough react
With only micro seconds to counteract,
on coming mammoths of size and speed
As all around you 300lb men come crashing in,
trying to make you bleed
And throughout the years,
many great names have here played on fields of green
Like Johnny Its U, The Young Man too, The Montana Man,
In the Namath of Football whose legend grew, that Shaw of Football
Terry too, and Peyton's Place, Marino, Captain Comeback Stauback,
a Cool Brees, Brady, Rocket Rogers a list of greats he, and Bart a Star of
the who's who
And now its Brave Brett,
that gunslinger with the quad threat history pursued
And when we close the
door on number ''4''
in The Hall of Fame him we will view
A ''4'' threat man who can beat you with his feet,
his arm, his head, and his heart too.
Because on fields of green,
Brett is one of greatest warriors seen
SMASHING ALL KNOWN RECORDS AS HE DEEMED
A gunslinger who could hit any target,
dislocating receivers fingers on his team
And it did not happen by luck or by circumstance,
but because of a Father's Love which gave him the chance
Who helped him shape his future dreams,
as reflections of him in Brett are seen
Because of this great love which convened.
Which helped him weather the storms of life,
when days turned mean.
As he grew up strong and tall,
to compete on those fields of green
For Football is such a splendid game,
where her life lessons with us remain
Where a Father and Son's reflections,
into future generation can be seen
The year was 2003,
as across our country a great love story was about to convene
As the power of a Father and Son's love,
our Nation was about to glean
As Brett went deep on the TV screen
Just like the Gipper of old,
a new love story was about to unfold
As a Nation for his son so grieved
To win one for DAD on fields of green
With tears in eyes, Brett showed us all why,
in life what the most so really means
As we saw what his Dad had given him,
so deep down inside that which gleams
Solid Gold,
molding one of the greatest of all time so.
Bringing tears to eyes
In life, no greater victory can be achieved.
Then the love of a parent and child believe
From end to end,
no greater drive could be conceived
Sadly though, some children will never know such a friend so very deep
To arm a child,
with their love all the while to compete.
To realize his dreams to seek
Up in heaven this day
Brett your Dad is working out a long term
contract with Vince and our Lord for when
you come up to play
Where, you can walk with your Best Friend
and talk football and go fishing once again.
For Heaven my friends,
is the real Super Bowl for all us to contend.
And there can be no greater gift,
then all of this in a child's heart to help him rise above
And that's why In The Game of Life,
Brett always went deep armed with his Father's Love.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 22, SURFACE TRANSPORTATION REAUTHORIZATION AND REFORM ACT OF 2015

SPEECH OF

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 3, 2015

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Conference Report on H.R. 22, The Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act. This agreement is long overdue, as communities across the country have been clamoring for a long-term funding bill that provides certainty to infrastructure projects across the country, rather than trying to pay for these projects with flat-line funding and short-term extensions.

This legislative measure provides $281 billion in guaranteed funding for highway, transit, and transportation safety programs for five years. This funding will keep these programs solvent for the entire five-year period. In addition, the agreement provides $24 billion from the General Fund, including $11.5 billion to be used for transit New Starts projects and $10.4 billion for Amtrak and intercity passenger rail grants. Thanks to this measure, California will receive $19.4 billion in highway funding and $6.8 billion in transit funding over the five-year period.

I am also proud to support the four-year reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank included in this conference report. This bank supports millions of dollars in exports by 40th District businesses, and helps level the playing field for American businesses to better compete in today's ever-growing, interconnected economy. I applaud the bipartisan effort which was so critical to including the bank's reauthorization in this agreement, and I look forward to witnessing the bank's further success and its continued support for American businesses.

However, this package is not perfect. The reality is our country needs an even more robust investment in infrastructure than what is provided through this measure. I also have concerns about the funding provisions in this bill. For example, it indexes Customs User Fees to inflation and uses them to offset the cost of the bill at a time when these fees are needed for expenses related to staffing at our borders.

Nevertheless, I hope that the funding stability this agreement provides will allow us to look ahead to the long-term solvency of the highway and transit programs. Congress should utilize the five-year authorization period to develop a reliable and reasonable funding mechanism to pay for future reauthorizations that eliminates the need for multiple short-term extensions. I believe this bipartisan legislation is a step in the right direction, and I urge all members to support this agreement.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 22, SURFACE TRANSPORTATION REAUTHORIZATION AND REFORM ACT OF 2015

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN C. CARNEY, JR.

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 3, 2015

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, I submit this statement regarding House passage of Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. With many reservations and a sense of frustration, I will vote for this bill. I believe in the bill's core goals—investing in our infrastructure and providing stability to our transportation system. The legislation raises funding levels to meet the needs of our crumbling roads and bridges and avoids the short-term patches that have plagued the bill for years. I'm also glad it's the result of a bipartisan effort, and supports infrastructure projects and programs like the High Density Transit Program and the Export-Import Bank.

That said, once again, Congress missed an opportunity. We had the chance to responsibly and sustainably fund our transportation system with real revenue sources. Instead, we cobbled together one-time funding sources that will put us right back where we are today when the bill expires: in the midst of a funding shortfall and a crisis. I had long advocated for funding our transportation bill by collecting taxes on corporate profits trapped overseas. This would be a step towards fixing our broken tax system and would discourage American companies from moving overseas. Doing so also would have provided a significant source of funding for the bill, and created the momentum to reform our international tax code. Instead, our tax code is still broken, and we no longer have the leverage of a must-pass transportation bill to fix it.

Passage of this bill means we're better off than we were before. States and local transportation agencies have the certainty they need to map out the infrastructure improvement projects our nation sorely needs. And our public transit system will be strengthened. I remain committed to finding a more responsible way to fund these programs and to fixing our tax system.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 22, SURFACE TRANSPORTATION REAUTHORIZATION AND REFORM ACT OF 2015

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 3, 2015

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, the passage of H.R. 22, Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, is a significant accomplishment. It ends the embarrassing string of 37 short-term extensions. It provides five years of certainty with modest, but important, increased spending levels. There are provisions that deal with safety, innovation, and integrating passenger rail into overall surface transportation, among many other notable items.

I am pleased that a number of provisions that I have authored and championed have found their way into the final version of this legislation. One of the unheralded provisions potentially has the most significant, far-reaching consequences—the expansion of work on an alternative user-fee to replace the gas tax. This reflects legislation I have introduced that builds upon the Oregon pilot project on road user charges. There is also a specific title dealing with innovation. The next five years will see unparalleled changes in transportation practices and technology that can have a transformational effect on our way of life, and this bill embraces this.

Unfortunately, Congress continues to refuse to address a Highway Trust Fund that is inadequate and losing purchasing power by the month. Refusing to increase the gas tax for 22 years or to have any other source of revenue has complicated passage of a long-term bill. Instead, the collection of budget gimmicks paying for the legislation are, in many cases, questionable. For example, using private bill collectors to hound low-income taxpayers who run into financial difficulty is a money loser, as well as ineffective and unpopular. This is one of many ways the bill is paid for, basically to disguise the use of the Treasury's general fund instead of the traditional user fee model.

I am hopeful that we can use the next five years to build upon the positive framework of the legislation and for Congress to accept the overwhelming consensus of the people who build, maintain, and use our surface transportation system. They want to increase user fees to adequately fund transportation, and so should we as well.

I will vote for this bill because the positive policy features are compelling and because it gives us an opportunity to use this five-year period of stability to get it right. I will spare no effort to do so, and I hope I'm joined by my colleagues so that the next reauthorization truly enables us to rebuild and renew America, put millions of Americans to work at family wage jobs, and strengthen communities from coast to coast.

CEDAR CLIFF UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 7, 2015

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call to your attention the achievements of an outstanding faith community, the Cedar Cliff United Methodist Church (UMC), which celebrated their ministry's 125th Anniversary of successful service to the community of Haledon on Sunday, December 6, 2015.

Since December 7, 1890, when it first opened its doors, the church has stood in its current location, serving as a house of worship in the town of Haledon, on 18 Zabriskie Street. The church has its own unique piece of history, through their bell which was donated by U.S. Vice President Barret A. Hobart. Many members of the church have also served in the military since World War I.

Cedar Cliff UMC is located in a neighborhood that is ethnically diverse and constantly changing. It has one traditional Sunday morning worship service. Current ministries within the church include the prayer shawl ministry, Bible study, Monday night yoga classes, a food pantry and joint fellowship events with a partner church that shares its facilities. The church has also been home to many Boys & Girls Scout troops throughout the years.

The church has been a place where many babies have been baptized, a place where couples get married, and also a place where family members have laid their loved ones to rest in their sanctuary. But most importantly, many lives have been changed by the people that have called Cedar Cliff UMC home since 1890. The ministry has been a major part of the Haledon community and continues to serve all. The Church members and organizers have worked passionately to build many bridges between different groups within the faith community.

The Cedar Cliff UMC has had many leaders throughout its years. Today, it is led by Reverend Pamela Grant James, who has inspired many to follow the path of faith and kindness. Reverend James has helped shape our society and is deserving of every bit of recognition for her selfless actions.

It gives me pride to recognize the excellence of the Cedar Cliff UMC and I thank them for servicing the residents of Haledon. I am grateful to represent the Church and its congregation within the 9th Congressional District of New Jersey.

The job of a United States Congressman involves much that is rewarding, yet nothing compares to recognizing and commemorating the achievements of faith communities such as the Cedar Cliff UMC.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, and the Cedar Cliff UMC in celebrating their 125th Anniversary and recognizing their leadership, dedication and loyalty to serving the community.

RECOGNIZING PETER H. CRESSY, EDD.

HON. TODD C. YOUNG

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 7, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and commend Dr. Peter H. Cressy, Ed.D., the President and CEO of the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States on his remarkable career and wish him well as he is set to retire from this position in January.

Dr. Cressy has led an impressive career that includes 28 years of service to our nation in the United States Navy which concluded with his retirement as a Rear Admiral. His leadership roles continued with some of the nation's most prestigious academic institutions, and in government service roles where he held senior positions at the State Department, on Capitol Hill, and the Pentagon.

Dr. Cressy's most recent leadership role at the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States has led to a stronger, more responsible, and transparent industry. Under his leadership the distilled spirits industry has grown both domestically and internationally all while placing an emphasis on and commitment to responsible and transparent practices. This commitment is evident in the industry's advertising and marketing Code of Responsible Practices which has been referenced as a model of responsible industry self-regulation as well as the Council's efforts to work with retailers and wholesalers, universities, and

health professionals to support programs to prevent alcohol abuse. Dr. Cressy's leadership has demonstrated the value of transparent and responsible ethics and has resulted in tangible successes across all facets of the industry.

Dr. Cressy's passion for responsible business practices and the expansion of business are tremendous but he also takes great pride in preserving the storied history and heritage of the U.S. distilled spirits industry. One of his most notable successes with respect to historical preservation was his leadership in undertaking the $1.6 million dollar reconstruction of George Washington's Distillery at Historic Mount Vernon. Since the project's completion the Council and the industry have maintained an ongoing relationship with the estate which now carries out a historic preservation and educational mission. In fact it is where they hold their annual industry Spirit of Mount Vernon dinner gala which has raised over $4 million to advance the educational mission at Mount Vernon.

Dr. Cressy's leadership will be sorely missed at the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States and by those who have come to know him through his work, but I know the entire distilled spirits industry and many others join me in recognizing his career full of achievements and wishing him the best as he moves into a new chapter of his life. Again congratulations to Dr. Cressy on his retirement and a job well done.

CONGRATULATING THE ROMEO BULLDOGS FOOTBALL TEAM ON WINNING THE DIVISION 1 MICHIGAN STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. CANDICE S. MILLER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 7, 2015

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct privilege to recognize a special achievement recently accomplished by the Romeo Bulldogs High School Football Team. Romeo capped off a remarkable and extremely memorable 2015 season by taking home to Macomb County the school's first ever Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) Division 1 State Championship. After a hard fought, one loss regular season the Bulldogs charged into the playoffs facing great adversity, challenging weather conditions and tough competition before upsetting the number four ranked Detroit Cass Tech Technicians at Ford Field.

In 2002, Romeo was in need of a football coach. Assistant coaches Curt Rienas and Jason Couch both applied for the job and were named co-coaches. Coaches Rienas and Couch had Romeo Bulldogs football in their veins, first meeting each other as teammates on the field and the friendship grew. The two had made it to the semifinals together, but never further until this team. Coach Curt Rienas and Coach Jason Couch became the first co-coaches in playoff history to win a state championship. The Bulldogs played strong hard-nosed football focusing on the basic fundamentals and taking each play one at a time. This meant each player executing his designated assignment and beating the man in front of him. This also included playing sound defense with solid tackling and implementing an offensive scheme that would make an NFL playbook look elementary. The Bulldogs kept constant pressure on their opponents by blocking a punt, recovering an onside kick and making big plays on offense.

Before making it to the State Championship game, the Romeo Bulldogs played what will probably be remembered as the second most memorable game of the season. The Romeo Bulldogs faced off against Grand Ledge in Brighton, Michigan for a game of the ages. Over a half foot of snow fell during the game and the Bulldogs ended Grand Ledge's historic undefeated season with a 48–21 victory.

With victories against current state champion Clarkston, Lapeer, Detroit Catholic Central and finally Grand Ledge, the Bulldogs were ready for their final challenge against the Detroit Cass Tech Technicians. The team brushed aside any potential distractions and purely focused on winning the game. Despite the best efforts of Detroit Cass Tech, the Romeo Bulldogs would not be denied because this was their day alone.

After an exciting first quarter and a 13–7 Bulldogs lead, the game remained close at the half with the Bulldogs holding on to a 19–14 lead. Romeo started the second half off by recovering the opening onside kick. The Bulldogs would use the favorable field position to drive 48 yards to the end zone putting the Bulldogs ahead 26–14. On Cass Tech's next possession, the Technicians went three-and-out which forced a punting situation. Romeo blocked the punt, again giving the Bulldogs excellent field position. The following play was a 20-yard run for a touchdown to put the Bulldogs in the lead by a score of 33–14. Nearing the end of the third quarter, Cass Tech would put six points on the board and follow it up with a touchdown halfway through the fourth quarter cutting the Bulldogs lead to 33–27. The Romeo Bulldogs would continue to pressure and push the play, resulting in a touchdown with 1:29 left in the game to seal the victory and make school history.

The Bulldogs throughout the year exhibited the intangible ingredients which make up a winning football team: heart, discipline and a positive attitude. As legendary Hall of Fame Green Bay Packers Coach Vince Lombardi once said, "A man can be as great as he wants to be. If you believe in yourself and have the courage, the determination, the dedication, the competitive drive and if you are willing to sacrifice the little things in life and pay the price for the things that are worthwhile, it can be done."

I applaud these young men for remaining both mentally and physically ready to compete. In addition, I want to commend the Bulldogs for staying energized and focused each time they stepped on to the gridiron. I understand this can be an extremely difficult task considering the numerous pressures and distractions high school student-athletes can encounter.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize the hard work and sportsmanship displayed by all the members of this football team. I also want to congratulate administrators, teachers, cheerleaders, parents, students and fans alike for their assistance and for making this an unforgettable season. The Bulldogs proved they had the talent, fortitude and resilience to rise to the challenge and accomplish their ultimate goal—a State Championship. Teamwork, perseverance and friendship all contributed to this title as well. I know the community takes great pride in what these young men were able to achieve.

In closing Mr. Speaker, I share that same pride. I want to offer my personal congratulations and best wishes. All the accolades, awards and trophies are rightfully deserved. Way to go Bulldogs.

HONORING BELINDA ESPINOSA

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 7, 2015

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and honor Belinda Espinosa, the City Manager of Pinole, California. After more than thirty years, Ms. Espinosa is retiring from public service.

Ms. Espinosa's city management career has spanned over four cities and two states. Beginning in the cities of San Antonio and Grand Prairie, Texas, Ms. Espinosa worked on budget and financial issues, managed infrastructure projects, and oversaw hundreds of millions of dollars in bond funds. In 1994, Ms. Espinosa moved to California to become City Manager for the City of Soledad, where she supervised critical water and wastewater projects, the construction of new affordable housing, and the completion of the Soledad Community Library.

In 2000, Ms. Espinosa moved to the City of Pinole, California. Initially hired as the Assistant City Manager, she was promoted four years later to City Manager and Chief Executive Officer, overseeing the police and fire departments, public works planning, wastewater services, recreation and redevelopment. Ms. Espinosa spearheaded several efforts to revitalize Pinole, including the construction of the Pinole Shores Industrial Business Park, the Pinole Valley Shopping Center and the Kaiser Permanente Medical Office. Under her leadership, Pinole voters approved two half-cent sales tax measures, which generate $3.6 million for public safety and other supplemental services. Ms. Espinosa also successfully negotiated Pinole's first Project Labor Agreement, for the $48 million Pinole-Hercules Wastewater Treatment Plant project.

Ms. Espinosa has received numerous accolades for her years of public service, including the 1996 Monterey County Public Administrator Award, the 2007 Contra Costa College Woman of the Year Award, and the 2009 Distinguished Project Award. Ms. Espinosa has also served as President of the Pinole Rotary Club and the International Hispanic Network, and was the first female President of the Grand Prairie Kiwanis Club. Ms. Espinosa has long worked under a philosophy of approaching problems with collaboration, honesty and understanding. She is well-known for being forthright in her dealings, and has always maintained the highest integrity in serving her constituencies.

Mr. Speaker, Belinda Espinosa has had a long and remarkable career in public service. It is fitting and proper that we honor her here today, and wish her the best in retirement.

IN RECOGNITION OF CHERYL JENNINGS

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 7, 2015

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor one of the most recognizable, watched and listened-to women in the Bay Area: Cheryl Jennings has been in the 5 o'clock news anchor chair at ABC7 KGO–TV for 27 years and worked at the station for 36 years. It is safe to say that she is one of the most trusted and admired reporters/anchors in our area and I am one of her staunchest fans. Cheryl is ostensibly slowing down, but not quite. She will continue to host her weekend show Beyond the Headlines and report more long-format stories like the series she recently did in Afghanistan.

Over the decades Cheryl has reported on just about every topic, but all of her stories have one thing in common: she always finds an angle to help people. Cheryl is one of the most giving, empathetic and genuine people I know. The word ''no'' doesn't exist in her vocabulary.

I have had the distinct honor to work with Cheryl on countless occasions. For years, she has been the masterful emcee at Professional Businesswomen of California and other programs. She has been the keynote speaker at my Congressional events for middleschoolers and seniors. As a journalist, she is warm and inviting, but always professional and insistent on the truth. I took on the issue of rape and sexual assault in the military about five years ago. Many stories have been written and produced about this horrendous epidemic, but it was Cheryl Jennings who produced, wrote and reported the most comprehensive and powerful piece on the subject that I have seen.

Cheryl learned the value of hard work, perseverance and public service early on. She was one of seven children born to a father who served in the U.S. Army and a mother who raised her and her siblings. As the oldest, Cheryl had lots of opportunity to change diapers, feed and take care of babies. The military sent Cheryl's family all over the world. By the time she started high school, she had changed schools more than a dozen times. She says that part was tough, but prepared her well for life in TV.

Her original plans to become a teacher changed when she started college at City College of San Francisco. Her advisor told her to look for another career path because there were too many teachers. Cheryl interviewed two very rare women for a story in the college newspaper. They both worked in television, on air—almost unheard of in that era. The rest is history.

Reporting was not an easy path. While she was earning her Bachelor's degree from San Francisco State University, she was rejected for volunteer-entry-level positions at TV stations 19 out of 20 times. Finally, a woman at the local NBC station hired her to work 50 hours a week while she continued to go to school. Her pay? Nothing. But her hard work and perseverance eventually paid off. The NBC station hired her as a paid receptionist, she worked her way into the newsroom, and in 1979, KGO TV hired her as a night reporter. The entire Bay Area became her classroom and she has taught her lessons exceptionally well.

Cheryl has travelled the world to tell stories—Mexico, Kosovo, Afghanistan, South Africa, Korea, Israel and the West Bank. Here at home, one of the most memorable stories she covered was the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. She was the first local reporter on the air thanks to the station's quick power generator. KGO's coverage earned the team two of the most prestigious broadcast awards, a George Foster Peabody Award and the Radio Television News Directors Association Edward R. Murrow Award. Cheryl says this was the moment she understood just how vital television is in providing public service.

Doing good is what drives Cheryl. In 2003, she co-founded the Roots for Peace Children's Penny Campaign, a non-profit that removes landmines in war-torn countries and builds and repairs schools. She works with the Taylor Family Foundation and the Okizu Foundation to help children with life-threatening illnesses. She lends her voice and passion to many non-profit events that raise awareness and funds. All of this amazing work has earned Cheryl many awards, including six Gracie Awards, but what matters most to her are the children and families whose lives she has touched.

Cheryl has been married to the love of her life Richard Pettibone for 29 years. They enjoy sharing adventures together, whether it's a safari in Africa or a hike on a local beach.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to rise with me to honor Cheryl Jennings, a first-rate journalist and extraordinary woman whom I am honored to call a dear friend. I know that she will continue her outstanding work on the air and off the air. Cheryl is a true treasure to her family, our local community and the world.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 7, 2015

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, December 2, 2015, I inadvertently voted No instead of Aye on roll call vote 661, the Tonko Amendment Number 22 to H.R. 8, the North American Energy Security and Infrastructure Act of 2015. I would like to change my vote to reflect my intended Aye vote.

HONORING THE LEGACY AND IMPORTANCE OF HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES (HBCUs)

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 7, 2015

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to rise today to recognize the importance of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

As a graduate of the Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University (FAMU), I know all too well the importance HBCUs play in the fabric of our country. They prepare students for careers that span all disciplines, teach students the value of self-worth, the importance of culture, history, and legacy.

Growing up during a time when colleges were not readily available for African-Americans, HBCUs played a vital role in educating African American youth. They continue to play an important role in educating students from all walks of life. They offer students, regardless of race, an opportunity to develop their skills and talents to serve both domestically and internationally. According to the United Negro College Fund. HBCUs are responsible for producing approximately 70% of all black doctors and dentists, 50% of black engineers and public school teachers, and 35% of black lawyers.

I am extremely proud of all the HBCU Caucus is doing to recognize the importance of HBCUs and proud to be a member of the caucus. As a member of the caucus and an HBCU alumnus, I am committed to continue funding these critical institutions and ensuring our nation's youth have access to quality affordable education.

Mr. Speaker, I once again want to stress the importance of HBCUs and urge my colleagues to continue to support them. They are the bedrock of our nation and symbolic of how our nation came together to ensure all students have access to quality affordable education.

CELEBRATING SIXTY YEARS OF U.S.-LAO DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 7, 2015

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, on December 4th I had the pleasure of attending at the invitation of Ambassador Mai Sayavongs a celebration of both the sixtieth anniversary of diplomatic relations between Laos and the United States and the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the Lao People's Democratic Republic. The event was well attended by ASEAN ambassadors and key U.S. officials including Mr. Ben Rhodes from the White House and Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Daniel Russel.

Over the course of these six decades there have been many difficult passages in the bilateral relationship. Today, I look forward and it is my belief that the relationship between the United States and the Lao PDR will improve, strengthen and grow in importance. For me, U.S-Lao relations has a direct impact on the thousands of Hmong and Lao Americans I represent in St. Paul and the surrounding East metro suburbs. It has been forty years since the first refugees from Southeast Asia arrived in Minnesota, but the family, cultural, and economic ties to Laos continue to be very important. As Laos becomes more engaged in the global economy, respects the rule of law, and embraces human rights for all its citizens my constituents feel more comfortable and more excited about returning to their ancestral homeland.

In the coming year Laos will become chair ASEAN and it is expected that President Obama will be the first U.S. president to visit Laos. It is critical that the U.S. encourage the Lao government to make the necessary reforms that will allow its people to escape poverty and contribute to the long-term success of

their country. The lethal legacy of U.S. dropped unexploded ordinance from the era of the Vietnam War continues to plague the Lao people. UXO are a constant reminder of the obligation we have as a government to clean up a mess that continues to kill innocent Lao citizens and impedes economic development on lands all across Laos.

It is my feeling that dialogue, cooperation, and common interests will allow the U.S.-Lao bilateral relations to improve significantly in 2016. Both the Obama Administration and Ambassador Sayavongs have my full support in this goal.

The following are remarks I delivered at the December 4th celebration of U.S.-Lao Relations.

Good evening. Ambassador Sayavongs and Madam Sayavongs, I am honored to be with you tonight to celebrate sixty years of diplomatic relations between our countries, as well as the fortieth anniversary of the Lao PDR.

My relationship with the people of Laos is very special and I strongly support strengthening our bilateral relations.

My home is Minnesota. In my congressional district, I represent tens of thousands of Hmong and Lao-Americans who call Laos their ancestral home. They have family in Laos. Their traditions come from Laos. And, they care deeply about the future of Laos.

More than anyone, I would like to acknowledge Mr. Chao Lee who has been on my congressional staff since 2001, for guiding me and advising me. He is with us tonight and I would like to thank him for his work on behalf of U.S.-Lao relations.

Over my fifteen years serving in Congress I have taken many steps to strengthen this relationship. I was a supporter of normalized trade relations with Laos at a time when many people were fighting about the past rather than working to build a new future. I have always supported increased U.S. funding for UXO clean—a terrible legacy of war that harms the Lao people. And, in 2006, I had the pleasure of celebrating a very special Christmas in Vientiane during a visit to your beautiful country.

Ambassador, I am committed to working with you to strengthen our future together. We will work as partners to address issues important to both our countries—economic development, increased trade, and access GSP, as well as improving human rights and human development to ensure that all Lao people, including women and girls, are free to live full, productive lives.

Ambassador, I wish your government much success as Laos chairs ASEAN next year. I know the Obama Administration will work as a partner to ensure next year's ASEAN Summit is a success and they will have my full support.

Again, congratulations Mr. Ambassador on your country's 40 years.

Thank you.

HONORING GEORGE BURKE

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 7, 2015

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to remember and honor a dear friend and colleague, George Burke. Full of passion and energy, he dedicated his life to fighting for our progressive Democratic values. A trusted, wise and gifted political mind, George's vision and leadership helped build and grow our Democratic Party of Virginia.

A man of many talents, he was an accomplished journalist, photographer, congressional staffer, senior labor leader with the International Association of Fire Fighters, the Chair of the 11th Congressional District Democratic Committee, and my trusted confidant and Communications Director.

A constituent and friend of both George and mine, Mike Burke Kirby, recently endeavored to interview many of those who knew George and capture what George meant to so many. I submit Mr. Kirby's eloquent tribute to George.

For more than 30 years I have been fortunate to call George my close friend. We will all miss his stories, his unwavering optimistic approach to life, and his love for his friends and family. His loss will leave a great void in all our lives and I will miss him dearly. I ask my colleagues to join me in remembering George Burke.

GEORGE BURKE [1951–2015]

(By Mike Burke Kirby, Former Chair Fairfax County Democratic Committee)

With all of his spirit, I thought George Burke was going to keep beating cancer for another ten years. He certainly had ten more years of wisdom and advice, laughter and courage for all of us.

After centuries of subjugation on their own island, many Irish Americans were conditioned to thrive in politics in this huge nation of democracy. Fighting for their own freedom here, and for the rights of other minorities and women. Those include Gerry Connolly and Jim Moran. George has been a hero in many of those fights.

George was a ''Connector,'' like Paul Revere. Many people rode from Boston to tell people that the British were sending troops west from the city. For weeks, panicky calls were made. Finally, they only listened to Paul Revere because everyone knew and trusted him. George knew 50 times as many people as you and!. They all thought George was one of the best people they ever met.

George never seemed to parse the issue differences among Democrats. He simply thought that any Democrat was more of a democrat than any Republican He fought to make sure the nominating processes were fair. With a nominee, he put his shoulder to the wheel.

The print and broadcast media industries declined early in the 21st Century. When George got young people, journalists, press staff and politicians, into the ''Burke Zone,'' he mentored them into the integrity and responsibility, the professionalism and punctuality from that loss. George's effect on Hill staffers was evident the week after his death—with a hundred young faces gathered outside of Rayburn Building for a memorial.

For those who lived through the 1960s, the memory of Civil Rights, the Viet Nam War, the draft, the Kennedy and King Assassinations, the demonstrations, the politics and music can all come through with just a few words, which mean little to later generations. Many of us shared that with George, especially Gerry Connolly who was with him daily for many years.

George often bragged about his independent ways, including his own travel routes. In the Snowmagedon, George left the office well after Gerry and James. Six hours after they left DC, the two were only at Bailey's Crossroads, and on a radio station by phone. George called to say ''hi.'' He had been home already, far beyond Bailey's, had a coffee from Starbucks and was on his way back to Sears to buy a washing machine on sale. Gerry asked where he was; actually George could see them from his inbound car across the street.

After a broken neck George's hearing suffered enough that he couldn't pick up the vibrator on his phone. So, he never turned off the sound. In a medium sized event with President Obama, George's phone went off. With everybody looking, he answered it. It was Rachel.

An ''8 X 10 Glossy'' Penny called him, with vast brain power, a pure political analyst and tactician. A total friend who always remained common, who persevered with a lot more than grace through four bouts with cancer. He attended all of her weekly campaign staff meetings until he went into the hospital for the last time.

George held court at the Mason District Crab Feast. The next day, he showed up again to help dismantle the ''God awful tent.'' Even with the broken neck he still came to sit under the porch and spin tales.

Rachel pestered him early to write the Mason Precinct Letter. George waited until the issues were ripe. Letters almost always perfect.

Mark Levine got George into Public Access TV, where he covered local politics. The stage may have been small; but George covered it like Dan Rather. He was proud of a large new set, and was completely unfazed when the lighting panel dropped and other parts of the set disintegrated,

George's last student, Jake, was grateful for the little time he was able to spend with George. No conversation, no detail, and definitely no person was too big for George—it all mattered to him. Over their 20 to 30 to 90 to 180 minute phone conversations, everything mattered Every question deserves a well thought out response, every roadblock mandates a thoroughly strategized plan to go around it. George's main lesson, looking back on it, was to ''pay attention'' and not to let any opportunity, no matter how small, be wasted.

George hosted the debate among the seven Democratic candidates for the 8th Congressional District nomination in 2014. On the race, he gave political advice to all of them.

George spent 16 years as head of Communications at the International Association of Fire Fighters, a job he loved and talked about all the time. Even after he left the IAFF, at every big political dinner, no matter what other hat he was wearing, he always sat at the Fire Fighters table. He served with the Fire Fighters through September 11.

In Fairfax County, the Fire Fighters called George a mastermind. After years of failing to get a federal grant for the Safety for an Adequate Fire Emergency Response, George and Gerry Connolly stepped in. They now have a grant for millions of dollars that gives the County 49 additional staff on ladder trucks.

George took care of any issue, knew how the legislatures work and could always find a way to fix any problem. John Niemiec, said as a friend, George even helped people get recommendations.

Dan Duncan was Communications Director for the Seafarers Union, while George was president of the International Labor Communications Association. George worked hard to get labor press respected both within the union movement and among the general media. They were all propagandists of one kind or another because, if they didn't promote their members, they certainly could not expect any one else to do so. George understood that and worked hard to transition labor media from membership newspapers and magazines to the emerging world of what would become social media.

Dan Duncan knew George when he was on the 11th District Democratic Committee,

which George chaired. When Dan presided at the NoVA Labor Federation, George knew the numbers and he knew the people. He worked hard for consensus, but allowed those with opposing views about candidates and/or issues to get their points across without folks becoming alarmed or challenged.

Long discussions with Cathy Hoffman, a boss at Liberty Mountain Resort in near Gettysburg, of the triumphs and challenges of their teenage kids. Many stories of George, the very patient instructor of the most timid skiers. Many ski instructors are prima donnas, but not George. George's name is still on the instructor schedule at Liberty for this winter They can't seem to take it off.

Kelly Kurtyka also instructed at Liberty. She tried her son, Spenser, at skiing at the age of three. His response of ''It's really cold, Mommy'' devastated her. The next year, Cathy put Spencer with George Burke. ''Mr. George'' worked on his own time and waved his magic wands, and Spencer joined his family as a great skier. George brought him stuff from skiing in Switzerland, and Spencer drew pictures of him in school.

After George travelled across the U.S., he met Sharon the Nurse, who, ''took him into the woods.'' Great couple for hiking, kayaking, camping in New England. Not many spouses are blessed with a partner who loves the outdoors so. That worked really well for Sharon and George for 45 years.

With different knee and ankle strengths, Sharon lost her downhill ability, but cross country skied a lot. George was better at downhill and loved it, and taught it. Still, he often cross country skied with Sharon.

None of us can quite remember what George was like before he had two cell phones, on in any environment. With the blue tooth in his ear in New England, a little kid walking down the beach noticed that his arm was raised: George's hand with the phone in it, way up to get better reception. An hour later the kid came back and noticed that George's arm was still in the air.

George and Sharon were a team, and you could see that whenever and wherever they were together, more often at Labor events than political ones.

While folks in local politics never knew where he got the time, George was a five star dad. He changed the diapers. Mom nursed on the weekends and dad was full time. Skiing of course, but also an indulgence in swimming, crew, marching band at Jeb Stuart. The Burke kids loved the outdoors with their parents.

None of George's kids got the political infection. But they did get his love of music: the Allman Brothers, Eric Clapton, B.B. King. They still mostly do the music. The youngest however follows more rap and ski boarding.

Family holidays were always a very big event with them. Sharon will especially miss the big holiday related events.

In the spring, Sharon will take Georges' ashes on a two hour hike to his favorite ravine in New England.

When you get the vocation for public service, it can be joyful and rewarding. But you will miss a lot, mostly your wife and kids; and they'll miss you. This is a great country for public service: on the Hill, for the union, and in state and local politics. For almost 250 years, this nation has followed the path to ever more democracy. Rarely as good as spending all your time with your family, and certainly better than leaving your family a fortune, you can leave them a better country to live in. George Burke very much did that.

After he last got out of the hospital, George wanted a party, sort of an early Irish Wake. Some said he wanted his kids to know what he did; some that he wanted to critique whatever we all said. His editing eyes are very much on my shoulder. We will still have George's party, maybe in January. Lots more of the best we know of him and very little of grief. Do you know many people who had such a good run?

Whenever I needed advice or had a question for 30+ years, every voice mail or e-mail got an immediate answer. Nobody else ever does that.

In writing this, I spoke to more than 30 people. Not all were included specifically here; but they brought a flood of great adjectives. Everyone said ''true friend.''

The list of candidates and campaigners who got great advice from George would take many pages. If you are reading this, you are probably one of them.

Whatever you think about after death, the memory of George is softly etched in all of our hearts. He will continue to live in each of us as we remember him almost every day.

Susie Warner with photo of smiling, skiing George on mountain in the west: ''I love to remember George like this.''

HONORING MR. JOSE HURTADO

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 7, 2015

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Jose Hurtado, a faculty member at Napa Valley College, who is retiring this month after 38 years of service.

Mr. Hurtado's family immigrated to the United States in 1958. I had the pleasure of growing up with Jose, who went on to earn degrees from Napa Valley College, UC Davis, and Sacramento State College. He was the first in his family to earn college degrees, and his younger siblings quickly followed his lead.

In 1977, Mr. Hurtado began work as a counseling assistant at Napa Valley College. In 1980, he became the first Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) Counselor hired to a tenure-track position. Nine years later, in 1989, Mr. Hurtado moved to the Counseling Department. He subsequently served as Division Chair of Napa Valley College's Counseling Department, before working temporarily as the school's Coordinator of the non-Credit Matriculation Program. In 2003, Mr. Hurtado moved back to General Counseling on the Napa campus, and began working with the school's student-athletes in 2010. In 2013, Mr. Hurtado became Coordinator of the combined Career and Transfer Programs at Napa Valley College.

Over the course of his 38-year career, Mr. Hurtado earned numerous awards and accolades. He was elected to the Napa Valley Unified School District Governing Board in 2004, and in 2011, he joined Community Action Napa Valley, an organization of which he is currently Chairman. Last year, Mr. Hurtado was appointed by California Governor Jerry Brown to the Napa Valley Expo Board of Directors, and in 2015, he became a member of the Napa County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

Looking back, Mr. Hurtado is especially proud of his children and grandchildren, his U.S. citizenship, and his election to the school board. His children's weddings remain among Mr. Hurtado's happiest moments. He remains lovably quirky to the community, reading four newspapers every Sunday and cheerfully interacting with Napa Valley students on a daily basis. Next year, Mr. Hurtado plans to complete a 500-mile trek on Spain's ancient Camino de Santiago trail.

Mr. Speaker, Jose Hurtado has devoted nearly 40 years to his community and to the education of our young people. He has demonstrated exceptional character, confidence, and compassion, and his community has benefitted enormously from his efforts. For these reasons and others, it is fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

PEARL HARBOR REMEMBRANCE DAY

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 7, 2015

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the victims who were killed during the devastating attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941—a date which will live in infamy. Seventy-four years ago today, more than 2,000 American citizens lost their lives and more than 1,000 others were injured in a surprise attack by the Imperial Japanese Navy.

The attack on Pearl Harbor shook our nation to its core. Up until this point, the United States had largely remained neutral during the Second World War. However, as a testament to our strength and our resolve, the United States declared war against the Japanese and entered World War II just one day following the attack. Contrary to what the Japanese had intended, the attack had only emboldened our nation to forge our own path to victory.

Tragedies such as the attack on Pearl Harbor serve as a stark reminder of the great personal sacrifices that our men and women in uniform must make in the service of protecting our nation. While many soldiers are fortunate enough to return from service, plenty of others have given up their lives in the act of duty. We are forever indebted to these men and women who have given their lives to protect our freedoms and way of life.

Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day is also about paying tribute to those who served—and survived—during the attack. Petty Officer Doris ''Dorie'' Miller was one such American who fought bravely during the conflict. Petty Officer Miller displayed remarkable courage when his ship, the USS *West Virginia*, came under attack. As the fighting occurred, Miller dragged his ship's commander, who was mortally wounded by shrapnel, out of the line of fire to safety. He then manned a 50-caliber Browning anti-aircraft machine gun and shot down at least three of the 29 Japanese planes that went down that day until he was ordered to abandon ship. While Petty Officer Miller survived the attack on Pearl Harbor, he sadly lost his life during a second attack during the Battle of Makin Island when a Japanese submarine and aircraft attack sunk his ship.

Mr. Speaker, the attack on Pearl Harbor was a defining moment in United States history. Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day helps to remind us of the importance of defending our freedoms and the heavy cost of doing so. We are reminded on this day of those who lost their lives, but also the countless other veterans—such as Dorie Miller—who have made

invaluable contributions to our success during the Second World War.

CONGRATULATING AND HONORING ALAN NAKANISHI

HON. JEFF DENHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 7, 2015

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and honor Mr. Alan Nakanishi for receiving the Lodi Distinguished Citizen Award from the Greater Yosemite Council, and the Boy Scouts of America. I would also like to personally thank him for his years of service working to better the city of Lodi and the state of California.

Raised in California's state capitol, Sacramento, Alan attended Lincoln School and Jr. High School. In 8th grade, he joined the Boy Scouts of America where he learned many valuable life lessons including always being prepared. Alan successfully reached the rank of First Class and desired to become an Eagle Scout; however, he chose to be involved in sports instead. With much respect for the Boy Scouts of America program, Alan still actively participates by being a speaker for several clubs.

After receiving his Bachelor of Arts degree from Pacific Union College in 1961, Alan continued on to study at the Loma Linda University graduating in 1965 with his Medical Degree. He completed both his medical internship and Ophthalmology Residency from the University of Southern California Medical Center. He later received his Masters of Health Administration from the Virginia Commonwealth University and the Medical College of Virginia in 1990 and 1991.

During Alan's early life, he served as a Captain in the United States Army where he was stationed in Texas. After earning his medical degree he served another two years as Major and led the surgical department as Chief of Ophthalmology for the McDonald Army Hospital in Fort Eustis, Virginia.

Alan Nakanishi had many extensive roles during his medical career including Chief of Ophthalmology, Retinal Fellowship at the Pacific Medical Center, Chief of Staff at Dameron Hospital, President of Dameron Hospital, co-founder of Delta Eye Medical Group and a significant member of the American Board of Ophthalmology,

Alan's political career in California has been substantial. In 2001, he was elected to the Lodi City Council and was selected Mayor of Lodi by his fellow Council members. In 2002, Alan was elected to the California State Assembly and was a member of several committees. He served as the vice-chair of Health, Labor and Employment. Alan was also a member of Appropriation, Higher Education, Rural Caucus, and the Legislative Sporting Caucus. His time in Assembly ended in 2008, and in 2010, Alan was elected to rejoin the Lodi City Council. Only two short years later he was selected again to serve as the Mayor of Lodi.

While Alan's accomplishments are outstanding in the work force, it's his community involvement that is tremendous. He served as a Rotarian, church school board member, church officer, member of the country Ground Basin Authority, alternate member of the Delta Protection Commission, and a member of the Delta Coalition Committee.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring and recognizing Alan for his unwavering leadership and many accomplishments and contributions. He has a great dedication for the people and community he has worked so hard to help.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 7, 2015

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was $10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is $18,787,992,446,946.88. We've added $8,161,115,398,033.80 to our debt in 6 years. This is over $8 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

BECAUSE WE ALL NEED MORE HUMAN CONNECTION: HONORING THE WORK OF LILLIAN ROYBAL ROSE

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 7, 2015

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to my sister, Lillian Roybal Rose, who made a career of leading nationally acclaimed cross-cultural leadership awareness seminars and workshops which fostered greater understanding between people of diverse backgrounds, and helped lay a foundation for a more peaceful multicultural future.

For over 35 years, Lillian taught her workshops to academic, corporate, civic, and community groups. Her ultimate goal was to increase participants' self-awareness and help them establish mutual understanding and respect for others. She did this by creating a safe and supportive environment for participants to learn how internalized oppression affects thinking and attitudes, and how the resulting patterns of behavior affect communication between individuals, within groups, and between groups.

When Lillian developed this workshop in the late 1970s, it turned the then-current diversity training model of "blame and shame" on its head. Her workshops relied on practical theoretical models based on psychology and ethics, and on interactive and experiential activities that allowed participants not merely to engage their minds but to open their hearts.

This workshop approach, coupled with Lillian's ability to see and bring out the best in people, helped participants build powerful frameworks for effective long-term cooperation and communication, and enabled them to reclaim pride in their roots through the exploration of shared experiences.

Lillian understood that the key to appreciating others is developing a better understanding of ourselves. When we can define and recognize forms of oppression that affect all of us, we can begin to relate to each other as individuals and build alliances.

Over and over again, I have met individuals from across the country who have expressed their gratitude for my sister's work. Those who have participated in her workshops have told me countless times, "She has changed my life and made me a better person."

While my sister is retired and no longer presents her workshops, she has been convinced by many of those same participants to give a farewell presentation. On December 12th and December 13th on the campus of the University of California at Santa Barbara, Lillian will present an encore workshop. People from different parts of the country will again be there to experience Lillian's brilliance, compassion, authenticity, and humility as she takes this final opportunity to share her life's work.

Lillian has said of the people who participated in her workshops, "We gave, and continue to give each other support and hope that we can reach a fair and just society, where all can be treated with dignity and respect, have equal opportunity, and where we can love and celebrate our differences. My love and thank you to all."

Mr. Speaker, I have been blessed to have Lillian as my sister, and I am proud to join Lillian's colleagues and friends for her encore workshop and in honoring her life's work.

HONORING GEORGE H. RYDER

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 7, 2015

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor George H. Ryder, of the Lake County Board of Education, who is retiring after 39 years of dedicated public service.

In 1974, Mr. Ryder joined the Konocti Unified School Board of Trustees, a post he held until 1979. Subsequently, on December 10, 1981, he assumed office as a member of the Lake County Board of Education. In his 34 years on the Board, Mr. Ryder served numerous times as both President and Vice-President, and consistently provided the board with tremendous leadership, unshakeable poise and thoughtful recommendations.

In total, Mr. Ryder has dedicated 39 years of service to the children of Lake County and the surrounding areas. He has demonstrated an unmatched commitment to education, children, and community service, and has touched the lives of countless young people. Mr. Ryder's community has benefitted enormously from his efforts.

Mr. Speaker, George H. Ryder has had a long and uncommonly distinguished career in public service. December 9, 2015 marks his final day as a member of the Lake County Board of Education, and it is fitting and proper that we honor him here today. We wish him the best in retirement.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all

meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, December 8, 2015 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

DECEMBER 9

Time to be announced

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship

Business meeting to consider the nomination of Darryl L. DePriest, of Illinois, to be Chief Counsel for Advocacy, Small Business Administration.

S–216

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the United States strategy to counter the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant and United States policy toward Iraq and Syria.

SD–106

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine United Nations peacekeeping and opportunities for reform.

SD–419

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Business meeting to consider S. 2171, to reauthorize the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act, S. 2127, to provide appropriate protections to probationary Federal employees, to provide the Special Counsel with adequate access to information, to provide greater awareness of Federal whistleblower protections, S. 1915, to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to make anthrax vaccines and antimicrobials available to emergency response providers, S. 1492, to direct the Administrator of General Services, on behalf of the Archivist of the United States, to convey certain Federal property located in the State of Alaska to the Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska, H.R. 1557, to amend the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 to strengthen Federal antidiscrimination laws enforced by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and expand accountability within the Federal government, an original bill entitled, ''Federal Asset Sale and Transfer Act'', an original bill entitled, ''Federal Real Property Management Reform Act of 2015'', and an original bill entitled, ''Administrative Leave Act of 2015''.

SD–342

10 a.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Business meeting to consider S. 571, to amend the Pilot's Bill of Rights to facilitate appeals and to apply to other certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration, to require the revision of the third class medical certification regulations issued by the Federal Aviation Administration, S. 2276, to amend title 49, United States Code, to provide enhanced safety in pipeline transportation, H.R. 2843, to require certain improvements in the Transportation Security Administration's PreCheck expedited screening program, S. 1886, to reauthorize the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2009, S. 1935, to require the Secretary of Commerce to undertake certain activities to support waterfront community revitalization and resiliency, S. 2058, to require the Secretary of Commerce to maintain and operate at least one Doppler weather radar site within 55 miles of each city in the United States that has a population of more than 700,000 individuals, S. 2319, to amend the Communications Act of 1934, an original bill entitled, ''Airport Security Enhancement and Oversight Act'', the nomination of Jessica Rosenworcel, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Federal Communications Commission for a term of five years from July 1, 2015 (Reappointment), and routine lists in the Coast Guard.

SR–253

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

SD–226

10:30 a.m.

Committee on the Budget

To hold hearings to examine moving to a stronger economy with a regulatory budget.

SD–608

2 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Marcel John Lettre, II, of Maryland, to be Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, Gabriel Camarillo, of Texas, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Air Force, John E. Sparks, of Virginia, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces for the term of fifteen years to expire on the date prescribed by law, and the following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601: Vice Adm. Kurt W. Tidd, to be Admiral, all of the Department of Defense.

SD–106

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Susan Paradise Baxter, Robert John Colville, and Marilyn Jean Horan, each to be a United States District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania, Mary S. McElroy, to be United States District Judge for the District of Rhode Island, and John Milton Younge, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

SD–226

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Foreign Relations

Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health Policy

To hold hearings to examine the political and security crisis in Burundi.

SD–419

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

Business meeting to mark up S. 290, to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the accountability of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and S. 425, to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for a five-year extension to the homeless veterans reintegration programs and to provide clarification regarding eligibility for services under such programs.

SR–418

Special Committee on Aging

To hold hearings to examine sudden price spikes in off-patent drugs, focusing on perspectives from the front lines.

SD–G50

DECEMBER 10

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine increasing effectiveness of military operations.

SD–G50

10 a.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold an oversight hearing to examine terrorism and global oil markets.

SD–366

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine independent South Sudan, focusing on a failure of leadership.

SD–419

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management

To hold hearings to examine the importance of following through on GAO and OIG recommendations.

SD–342

Committee on the Judiciary

Business meeting to consider S. 247, to amend section 349 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to deem specified activities in support of terrorism as renunciation of United States nationality, S. 1318, to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide for protection of maritime navigation and prevention of nuclear terrorism, H.R. 1428, to extend Privacy Act remedies to citizens of certified states, S. 483, to improve enforcement efforts related to prescription drug diversion and abuse, S. 1890, to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and the nominations of Dana J. Boente, to be United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia for the term of four years, Robert Lloyd Capers, to be United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York for the term of four years, John P. Fishwick, Jr., to be United States Attorney for the Western District of Virginia for the term of four years, and Emily Gray Rice, to be United States Attorney for the District of New Hampshire for the term of four years, all of the Department of Justice.

SD–226

2:30 p.m.

Select Committee on Intelligence

To hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters.

SH–219

DECEMBER 11

2 p.m.

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

To receive a briefing on human rights violations in Russian-occupied Crimea.

RHOB–B318

JANUARY 20

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support

To hold an oversight hearing to examine Task Force for Business and Stability Operations projects in Afghanistan.

SR–232A

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S8427–S8444

Measures Introduced: Three bills and three resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 2360–2362, S.J. Res. 27, and S. Res. 329–330. **Page S8438**

Measures Reported:

S. 2109, to direct the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to develop an integrated plan to reduce administrative costs under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 114–173) **Page S8437**

Conference Reports:

Every Child Achieves Act—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that at approximately 10 a.m., on Tuesday, December 8, 2015, Senate resume consideration of the conference report to accompany S. 1177, to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to ensure that every child achieves; and that notwithstanding rule XXII, the vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the conference report to accompany the bill occur at 11:30 a.m. **Page S8441**

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nominations:

By a unanimous vote of 89 yeas (Vote No. EX. 332), Travis Randall McDonough, of Tennessee, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Tennessee. **Pages S8441–43**

Kenneth Damian Ward, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Executive Service, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as United States Representative to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

Linda I. Etim, of Wisconsin, to be an Assistant Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development. **Pages S8443–44**

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

Charlotte P. Kessler, of Ohio, to be a Member of the National Council on the Arts for a term expiring September 3, 2018.

Esperanza Emily Spalding, of Oregon, to be a Member of the National Council on the Arts for a term expiring September 3, 2020.

Marcela Escobari, of Massachusetts, to be an Assistant Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development. **Page S8443**

Messages from the House: **Page S8437**

Measures Referred: **Page S8437**

Measures Placed on the Calendar: **Pages S8432, S8437**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Pages S8437–38**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S8438–39**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S8439–41**

Additional Statements: **Page S8437**

Amendments Submitted: **Page S8441**

Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—332) **Page S8443**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 2 p.m. and adjourned at 6:05 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Tuesday, December 8, 2015. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S8441.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

No committee meetings were held.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 1 public bill, H.R. 4184; and 1 resolution, H. Res. 554 were introduced. **Page H9025**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H9025–26**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 158, To clarify the grounds for ineligibility for travel to the United States regarding terrorism risk, to expand the criteria by which a country may be removed from the Visa Waiver Program, to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to submit a report on strengthening the Electronic System for Travel Authorization to better secure the international borders of the United States and prevent terrorists and instruments of terrorism from entering the United States, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 114–369, Part 1);

H.R. 2795, to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to submit a study on the circumstances which may impact the effectiveness and availability of first responders before, during, or after a terrorist threat or event, with an amendment (H. Rept. 114–370); and

H.R. 1321, to prohibit the sale or distribution of cosmetics containing synthetic plastic microbeads, with amendments (H. Rept. 114–371). **Page H9025**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Byrne to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H9015**

Recess: The House recessed at 12:05 p.m. and reconvened at 2 p.m. **Page H9015**

Recess: The House recessed at 2:19 p.m. and reconvened at 3:46 p.m. **Page H9018**

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

Federal Improper Payments Coordination Act of 2015: S. 614, to provide access to and use of information by Federal agencies in order to reduce improper payments; **Pages H9018–21**

Microbead-Free Waters Act of 2015: H.R. 1321, amended, to prohibit the sale or distribution of cosmetics containing synthetic plastic microbeads; and **Pages H9021–22**

Agreed to amend the title so as to read: "To amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to prohibit the manufacture and introduction or delivery for introduction into interstate commerce of rinse-off cosmetics containing intentionally-added plastic microbeads.". **Page H9022**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appears on page H9017.

Senate Referral: S. 2032 was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. **Page H9022**

Discharge Petition: Representative Thompson (CA) presented to the clerk a motion to discharge the Committee on the Judiciary from the consideration of the bill, H.R. 1076, to increase public safety by permitting the Attorney General to deny the transfer of a firearm or the issuance of firearms or explosives licenses to a known or suspected dangerous terrorist (Discharge Petition No. 3).

Quorum Calls—Votes: There were no yea-and-nay votes, and there were no Recorded votes. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 12 noon and adjourned at 4:12 p.m.

Committee Meetings

No hearings were held.

Joint Meetings

TRADE FACILITATION AND TRADE ENFORCEMENT ACT

Conferees met to resolve the differences between the Senate and House passed versions of H.R. 644, to reauthorize trade facilitation and trade enforcement functions and activities, but did not complete action thereon.

NEW PUBLIC LAWS

(For last listing of Public Laws, see DAILY DIGEST, *p. D1259)*

H.R. 22, to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs. Signed on December 4, 2015. (Public Law 114–94)

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2015

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Armed Services: to hold hearings to examine improving the Pentagon's development of policy, strategy, and plans, 9:30 a.m., SD–G50.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Subcommittee on Space, Science, and Competitiveness, to

hold hearings to examine promoting open inquiry in the debate over the magnitude of human impact on earth's climate, 3 p.m., SR–253.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: to hold hearings to examine S. 2257, to prepare the National Park Service for its Centennial in 2016 and for a second century of protecting our national parks' natural, historic, and cultural resources for present and future generations, 10 a.m., SD–366.

Committee on Foreign Relations: business meeting to consider S. Res. 189, expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the 25th anniversary of democracy in Mongolia, an original resolution celebrating the 135th Anniversary of the United States and Romania Diplomatic Relations, and routine lists in the Foreign Service; to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine the Millennium Challenge Corporation, focusing on lessons learned after a decade and outlook for the future, 10 a.m., SD–419.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: to hold hearings to examine opioid abuse in America, focusing on facing the epidemic and examining solutions, 10 a.m., SD–430.

Committee on Judiciary: Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights, to hold hearings to examine the AB InBev/SABMiller merger and the state of competition in the beer industry, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, hearing entitled ''Prompt Global Strike: American and Foreign Developments'', 2 p.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled ''An Overdue Checkup Part II: Examining the ACA's State Insurance Marketplaces'', 10 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Oversight of the Financial Stability Oversight Council'', 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Full Committee, markup on H.R. 2187, the ''Fair Investment Opportunities for Professional Experts Act''; H.R. 2205, the ''Data Security Act of 2015''; H.R. 2287, the ''National Credit Union Administration Budget Transparency Act''; H.R. 3700, the ''Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2015''; H.R. 3784, the ''SEC Small Business Advocate Act of 2015; H.R. 3791, to raise the consolidated assets threshold under the small bank holding company policy statement, and for other purposes; H.R. 4168, the ''Small Business Capital Formation Enhancement Act''; and Task Force to Investigate Terrorism Financing Resolution of 2016, 2 p.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade, hearing entitled ''Civil Nuclear Cooperation with Pakistan: Prospects and Consequences'', 2 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations, hearing entitled ''Drug Resistant Tuberculosis: The Next Global Health Crisis?'', 2 p.m., 2200 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Transportation Security, hearing entitled ''Examining TSA's Global Efforts to Protect the Homeland from Aviation Threats and Enhance Security at Last Point of Departure Airports'', 1 p.m., 311 Cannon.

Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources, hearing entitled ''Ensuring Certainty for Royalty Payments on Federal Resource Production'', 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Subcommittee on Indian, Insular and Alaska Native Affairs, hearing on H.R. 3764, the ''Tribal Recognition Act of 2015'' (Part II), 11 a.m., 1334 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Review of the New London Embassy Project'', 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on the Interior; and Subcommittee on Health Care, Benefits and Administrative Rules, joint hearing entitled ''Examining the Stream Protection Rule'', 2 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Transportation and Public Assets, hearing entitled ''Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP–21) Program Consolidation'', 2 p.m., 2247 Rayburn.

Committee on Rules, Full Committee, hearing on H.R. 2130, the ''Red River Private Property Protection Act'', 3 p.m., H–313 Capitol.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Subcommittee on Research and Technology, hearing entitled ''The Future of Biotechnology: Solutions for Energy, Agriculture and Manufacturing'', 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Health, hearing on H.R. 3262, to provide for the conveyance of land of the Illiana Health Care System of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Danville, Illinois; H.R. 3484, the ''Los Angeles Homeless Veterans Leasing Act of 2015''; H.R. 4056, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to convey to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs all right, title, and interest of the United States to the property known as ''The Community Living Center'' at the Lake Baldwin Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic, Orlando, Florida; draft of a bill to amend the Veterans' Benefits Programs Improvement Act of 1991 to authorize VA to sell Pershing Hall; and VA's legislative proposal regarding fiscal year 2016 construction projects, 10 a.m., 334 Cannon.

CONGRESSIONAL PROGRAM AHEAD

Week of December 8 through December 11, 2015

Senate Chamber

On *Tuesday*, at approximately 10 a.m., Senate will resume consideration of the conference report to accompany S. 1177, Every Child Achieves Act, and vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the conference report to accompany the bill at 11:30 a.m.

During the balance of the week, Senate may consider any cleared legislative and executive business.

Senate Committees

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Committee on Armed Services: December 8, to hold hearings to examine improving the Pentagon's development of policy, strategy, and plans, 9:30 a.m., SD–G50.

December 9, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the United States strategy to counter the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant and United States policy toward Iraq and Syria, 9:30 a.m., SD–106.

December 9, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Marcel John Lettre, II, of Maryland, to be Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, Gabriel Camarillo, of Texas, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Air Force, John E. Sparks, of Virginia, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces for the term of fifteen years to expire on the date prescribed by law, and the following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601: Vice Adm. Kurt W. Tidd, to be Admiral, all of the Department of Defense, 2 p.m., SD–106.

December 10, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine increasing effectiveness of military operations, 9:30 a.m., SD–G50.

Committee on the Budget: December 9, to hold hearings to examine moving to a stronger economy with a regulatory budget, 10:30 a.m., SD–608.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: December 8, Subcommittee on Space, Science, and Competitiveness, to hold hearings to examine promoting open inquiry in the debate over the magnitude of human impact on earth's climate, 3 p.m., SR–253.

December 9, Full Committee, business meeting to consider S. 571, to amend the Pilot's Bill of Rights to facilitate appeals and to apply to other certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration, to require the revision of the third class medical certification regulations issued by the Federal Aviation Administration, S. 2276, to amend title 49, United States Code, to provide enhanced safety in pipeline transportation, H.R. 2843, to require certain improvements in the Transportation Security Administration's PreCheck expedited screening program, S. 1886, to reauthorize the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2009, S. 1935, to require the Secretary of Commerce to undertake certain activities to support waterfront community revitalization and resiliency, S. 2058, to require the Secretary of Commerce to maintain and operate at least one Doppler weather radar site within 55 miles of each city in the United States that has a population of more than 700,000 individuals, S. 2319, to amend the Communications Act of 1934, an original bill entitled, ''Airport Security Enhancement and Oversight Act'', the nomination of Jessica Rosenworcel, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Federal Communications Commission for a term of five years from July 1, 2015 (Reappointment), and routine lists in the Coast Guard, 10 a.m., SR–253.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: December 8, to hold hearings to examine S. 2257, to prepare the National Park Service for its Centennial in 2016 and for a second century of protecting our national parks' natural, historic, and cultural resources for present and future generations, 10 a.m., SD–366.

December 10, Full Committee, to hold an oversight hearing to examine terrorism and global oil markets, 10 a.m., SD–366.

Committee on Foreign Relations: December 8, business meeting to consider S. Res. 189, expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the 25th anniversary of democracy in Mongolia, an original resolution celebrating the 135th Anniversary of the United States and Romania Diplomatic Relations, and routine lists in the Foreign Service; to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine the Millennium Challenge Corporation, focusing on lessons learned after a decade and outlook for the future, 10 a.m., SD–419.

December 9, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine United Nations peacekeeping and opportunities for reform, 9:30 a.m., SD–419.

December 9, Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health Policy, to hold hearings to examine the political and security crisis in Burundi, 2:30 p.m., SD–419.

December 10, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine independent South Sudan, focusing on a failure of leadership, 10 a.m., SD–419.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: December 8, to hold hearings to examine opioid abuse in America, focusing on facing the epidemic and examining solutions, 10 a.m., SD–430.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: December 9, business meeting to consider S. 2171, to reauthorize the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act, S. 2127, to provide appropriate protections to probationary Federal employees, to provide the Special Counsel with adequate access to information, to provide greater awareness of Federal whistleblower protections, S. 1915, to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to make anthrax vaccines and antimicrobials available to emergency response providers, S. 1492, to direct the Administrator of General Services, on behalf of the Archivist of the United States, to convey certain Federal property located in the State of Alaska to the Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska, H.R. 1557, to amend the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 to strengthen Federal antidiscrimination laws enforced by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and expand accountability within the Federal government, an original bill entitled, ''Federal Asset Sale and Transfer Act'', an original bill entitled, ''Federal Real Property Management Reform Act of 2015'', and an original bill entitled, ''Administrative Leave Act of 2015'', 9:30 a.m., SD–342.

December 10, Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management, to hold hearings to examine the importance of following through on GAO and OIG recommendations, 10 a.m., SD–342.

Committee on Judiciary: December 8, Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights, to

hold hearings to examine the AB InBev/SABMiller merger and the state of competition in the beer industry, 10 a.m., SD–226.

December 9, Full Committee, to hold an oversight hearing to examine the Federal Bureau of Investigation, 10 a.m., SD–226.

December 9, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Susan Paradise Baxter, Robert John Colville, and Marilyn Jean Horan, each to be a United States District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania, Mary S. McElroy, to be United States District Judge for the District of Rhode Island, and John Milton Younge, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, 2 p.m., SD–226.

December 10, Full Committee, business meeting to consider S. 247, to amend section 349 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to deem specified activities in support of terrorism as renunciation of United States nationality, S. 1318, to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide for protection of maritime navigation and prevention of nuclear terrorism, H.R. 1428, to extend Privacy Act remedies to citizens of certified states, S. 483, to improve enforcement efforts related to prescription drug diversion and abuse, S. 1890, to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and the nominations of Dana J. Boente, to be United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia for the term of four years, Robert Lloyd Capers, to be United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York for the term of four years, John P. Fishwick, Jr., to be United States Attorney for the Western District of Virginia for the term of four years, and Emily Gray Rice, to be United States Attorney for the District of New Hampshire for the term of four years, all of the Department of Justice, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship: December 9, business meeting to consider the nomination of Darryl L. DePriest, of Illinois, to be Chief Counsel for Advocacy, Small Business Administration, Time to be announced, S–216, Capitol.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: December 9, business meeting to markup S. 290, to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the accountability of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and S. 425, to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for a five-year extension to the homeless veterans reintegration programs and to provide clarification regarding eligibility for services under such programs, 2:30 p.m., SR–418.

Select Committee on Intelligence: December 8, to receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

December 10, Full Committee, to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

Special Committee on Aging: December 9, to hold hearings to examine sudden price spikes in off-patent drugs, focusing on perspectives from the front lines, 2:30 p.m., SD–G50.

House Committees

Committee on Agriculture, December 9, Subcommittee on General Farm Commodities and Risk Management, hearing entitled ''Commodity in Focus: Stress in Cotton Country'', 10 a.m., 1300 Longworth.

December 9, Subcommittee on Biotechnology, Horticulture, and Research, hearing on oversight of USDA's use of Census of Agriculture authority to acquire farmers' personal financial information, 2 p.m., 1302 Longworth.

Committee on Armed Services, December 9, Subcommittee on Military Personnel, hearing entitled ''Concurrent Receipt of Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC)'', 2 p.m., 2118 Rayburn.

December 9, Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces, hearing entitled ''Game Changing Innovations and the Future of Surface Warfare'', 3:30 p.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Committee on Education and the Workforce, December 9, Subcommittee on Workforce Protections, hearing entitled ''How the Administration's Regulatory Onslaught is Affecting Workers and Job Creators'', 10 a.m., 2261 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, December 9, Subcommittee on Health, hearing entitled ''Examining Legislation to Improve Health Care and Treatment'', 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, December 9, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 1654, to authorize the direct provision of defense articles, defense services, and related training to the Kurdistan Regional Government, and for other purposes; H.R. 3654, the ''Combat Terrorist Use of Social Media Act of 2015''; and H.R. 4154, the ''Taiwan Naval Support Act'', H. Res. 346, condemning the use of toxic chemicals as weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic; and H. Res. 536, supporting freedom of the press in Latin America and the Caribbean and condemning violations of press freedom and violence against journalists, bloggers, and individuals exercising their right to freedom of speech, 10 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

December 9, Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, hearing entitled ''Year in Review: U.S. Policy Toward a Changing Western Hemisphere'', 2 p.m., 2200 Rayburn.

December 9, Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations, hearing entitled ''Fulfilling the Humanitarian Imperative: Assisting Victims of ISIS Violence'', 2 p.m., 2255 Rayburn.

Committee on the Judiciary, December 9, Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security, hearing entitled ''Oversight of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services'', 1 p.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, December 9, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''The Department of the Interior's Role in the EPA's Animas Spill'', 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

December 9, Subcommittee on Federal Lands, hearing on H.R. 1838, the ''Clear Creek National Recreation Area and Conservation Act''; and H.R. 3668, the ''California Minerals, Off-Road Recreation, and Conservation Act'', 2 p.m., 1334 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, December 9, Full Committee, markup on committee report entitled ''United States Secret Service: An Agency in Crisis''; H.R. 4180, to improve Federal agency financial and administrative controls and procedures to assess and mitigate fraud risks, and to improve Federal agencies' development and use of data analytics for the purpose of identifying, preventing, and responding to fraud, including improper payments; S. 1698, the ''Treatment of Certain Payments in Eugenics Compensation Act''; H.R. 1132, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1048 West Robinhood Drive in Stockton, California, as the ''W. Ronald Coale Memorial Post Office Building''; H.R. 2458, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 5351 Lapalco Boulevard in Marrero, Louisiana, as the ''Lionel R. Collins, Sr. Post Office Building''; H.R. 3735, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 200 Town Run Lane in Winston Salem, North Carolina, as the ''Maya Angelou Memorial Post Office''; and H.R. 4046, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 220 East Oak Street, Glenwood City, Wisconsin, as the Second Lt. Ellen Ainsworth Memorial Post Office, 9 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

December 9, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''A Casino in Every Smartphone—Law Enforcement Implications'', 1 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

December 10, Subcommittee on National Security; and Subcommittee on Health Care, Benefits and Administrative Rules, joint hearing entitled ''Terrorism and the Visa Waiver Program'', 9 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, December 10, Subcommittee on Environment; and Subcommittee on Oversight, joint hearing entitled ''An Overview of the Nation's Weather Satellite Programs and Policies'', 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, December 9, Subcommittee on Contracting and Workforce, hearing entitled ''Supporting Success: Empowering Small Business Advocates'', 11 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, December 9, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Fact Check: An End of Year Review of Accountability at the Department of Veterans Affairs'', 10:30 a.m., 334 Cannon.

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, December 10, Full Committee, meeting on Member access request, 9 a.m., HVC–304.

Joint Meetings

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: December 11, to receive a briefing on human rights violations in Russian-occupied Crimea, 2 p.m., B318, Rayburn Building.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Tuesday, December 8

Senate Chamber

Program for Tuesday: Senate will resume consideration of the conference report to accompany S. 1177, Every Child Achieves Act, and vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the conference report to accompany the bill at 11:30 a.m.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Tuesday, December 8

House Chamber

Program for Tuesday: Consideration of the following measures under suspension of the rules: 1) H.R. 3842—Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers Reform and Improvement Act of 2015; 2) H.R. 3859—HSA Technical Corrections Act; 3) H.R. 3578—DHS Science and Technology Reform and Improvement Act of 2015; 4) H.R. 2795—FRIENDS Act; 5) H.R. 3869—State and Local Cyber Protection Act of 2015; 6) H.R. 3875—Department of Homeland Security CBRNE Defense Act of 2015; 7) H.R. 158—Visa Waiver Program Improvement Act of 2015; and 8) H.R. 3766—Foreign Aid Transparency and Accountability Act.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE

Bishop, Rob, Utah, E1713
Blumenauer, Earl, Ore., E1716
Carney, John C., Jr., E1716
Coffman, Mike, Colo., E1721
Connolly, Gerald E., Va., E1719
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