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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 10, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JODY B. HICE 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 5, 2016, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

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

DEDICATED WATER INFRASTRUCTURE TRUST FUND

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I came to Congress committed to helping the Federal Government do a better job dealing with water and sanitation. We have had great success internationally raising the profile and directing more money in a more effective way to deal with water and sanitation in poor countries, making a difference in millions of lives.

In the United States, we often take those conditions for granted. But as has been demonstrated recently in Flint, Michigan, we do so at our peril because we have serious problems right here in the United States. It is not just Flint, Michigan. There are up to 10 million lead water lines that remain where even a slight change in the water chemistry, even from just repairing it, can damage lead pipes enough to start contaminating people's water. What is underground and out of sight is actually in worse condition than our crumbling roads and bridges. America leaks more water than we drink every day.

In the aftermath of the recession, we have seen States cut drinking water budgets and staff. The Federal Government had cut our investment in drinking water infrastructure by more than 80 percent by 1980. This, despite the fact that ours is a growing country with aging infrastructure that was rated a D by the American Society of Civil Engineers in their latest report.

Now, I am pleased that the administration in its budget would put a little extra money to help replace lead pipes. Sadly, that is being financed by cutting even more from the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, essentially at the expense of keeping water clean in the first place.

We should look at our water infrastructure as an entire system and increased Federal investment is long overdue. We would have to increase our funding 500 percent to reach the level of spending during Jimmy Carter's presidency.

I have long advocated the development of a water infrastructure trust fund. We have reintroduced a bipartisan, budget-neutral solution to create a dedicated water infrastructure trust fund to provide additional revenue to State and local water and sanitation projects. It is financed by a voluntary program where businesses that rely heavily on clean water, like the beverage industry, for example, that have a keen interest in maintaining water infrastructure would, on a voluntary basis, pay a miniscule fee. In exchange, they would be designated as supporting the clean water trust fund.

It is estimated that this could generate up to $7 billion annually in new revenue that could go to State and local governments as grants and loans, which in turn could leverage even more money.

This legislation would also give direction and resources for the EPA to deal with the affordability gap. We can actually finance much of the needed water and infrastructure improvements, but we are hamstrung because there is understandable reluctance to raise rates that fall too much on the poorest of citizens. Thus, we are in a cycle of unpaid water and sewer bills that leaves nobody with satisfactory alternatives.

This legislation would give more money to State and local governments, allowing them to leverage additional money and to focus on ways to deal with a very substantial problem of low income for whom access to safe drinking water and sanitation is every bit as fundamental a human right as what we are doing to help poor people overseas achieve.

Mr. Speaker, I celebrate Secretary Clinton and a number of our colleagues going to Flint, Michigan, to focus on the problem. I applaud people who are looking at where the system failed, but I would hope we would pay as much attention to the systematic failure of Congress and at the State level to attach priority to this fundamental building block for a livable community.

I hope my colleagues will join me, not just in cosponsoring H.R. 4468, but enacting the trust fund and fighting for budgets that represent the resources this crisis demands.

DEDICATED WATER INFRASTRUCTURE TRUST FUND

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, next week marks an important milestone in the history of North Carolina's Piedmont region—the 250th anniversary of the founding of the town of Salem.

In 1752, Moravian Church leaders purchased a 100,000-acre tract in North Carolina from the British Lord Granville. On February 19, 1766, twelve Moravian brethren from nearby settlements made an 8-mile journey to establish the town of Salem, a new community that would serve as the tract's commercial center.

Moravian Church leaders decided that the new town should have the convenience of running water to the buildings. The town built a waterworks, which was constructed by burying hollowed logs from springs located about a mile away. This addition to Salem's infrastructure attracted the attention of President George Washington, who visited in 1793.

However, Washington was not the first famous visitor to Salem. In 1767, the royal Governor William Tryon heard about the building going on in North Carolina's northwest wilderness. He and his wife made the long journey from New Bern to examine the Moravians' new settlement firsthand.

Along with its advanced plumbing, Salem was also at the forefront of innovative medicine and was home to the first university-educated physician in western North Carolina. In addition, Salem was known across the colonial South as a place of commerce and trade, renowned for its pottery, furniture, silver, and other artistic trades.

In 1913, the town of Salem, with its focus on craftsmanship, sustainability, education, and religion merged with the fast-paced industrial town of Winston, thus becoming Winston-Salem.

Today, Winston-Salem is the fifth largest city in North Carolina. It is home to six colleges and universities, including Salem College, the oldest continuously running women's college in the United States, as well as the prestigious Wake Forest University and Winston-Salem State University.

Reaffirming this time-honored tradition of forging boldly ahead, the city continues to build a diverse business space leading in the areas of nanotechnology research, finance, and manufacturing.

The original settlement is a living history museum that engages visitors in an educational, historical experience about those who lived and worked in the early South.

During the yearlong anniversary celebration, the Moravian Church, Old Salem, the City of Winston-Salem, and Forsyth County will honor important milestones in the town's 250-year history, such as George Washington's two-night visit to Salem in 1739 and the Nation's first public July 4th celebration that took place in 1783. Most importantly, the local community will come together to celebrate and reflect on how Salem's past informs its present and shapes its future.

FORTHCOMING LEGISLATION ON PUERTO RICO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. PIERLUISI) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Speaker, Congress will hold its eighth hearing on Puerto Rico later this month. At the direction of Speaker RYAN, the Natural Resources Committee will then lead an effort to craft legislation for the territory. The record will demonstrate that there is not a single crisis in Puerto Rico, but a series of intertwined crises. It is an economic crisis, a fiscal crisis, a liquidity crisis, a debt crisis, an immigration crisis, and a public administration crisis.

If you visualize Puerto Rico as a tree and each crisis as a withering branch, the root of the tree is Puerto Rico's unequal and undignified political status. While the immediate aim is to mend the branches, ultimately, we will need to attack the problem at its root and that means Puerto Rico must become a State or a sovereign nation.

Last week, Antonio Weiss, a senior Treasury Department official, stated as follows:

> There is no question that status is vitally important. Why are we proposing that restructuring authorities and the earned income tax credit and fair Medicaid treatment be provided to Puerto Rico? Well, as a territory, Puerto Rico's status does not afford it adequate tools in those three areas. So we believe that we need to afford the Commonwealth those tools that it needs so it can navigate this crisis. And we agree that over a long period of time, status has contributed to this crisis.

Since the problem in Puerto Rico has multiple dimensions, the legislative solution should as well. First, the bill must empower Puerto Rico to restructure a meaningful portion of its debt. The bill could provide a period in which consensual negotiations between bond insurers and their creditors, mediated by neutral experts, can take place. If those negotiations do not bear fruit, the Puerto Rico Government should be empowered to authorize its instrumentalities to adjust their debts under chapter 9 of the Federal Bankruptcy Code, a right that every State has and that Puerto Rico used to have.

Puerto Rico's congressionally approved constitution provides that bonds issued or guaranteed by the central government receive priority payment. What binds us together as Americans—and Puerto Ricans are proud American citizens—is our commitment to the rule of law.

While I do not believe that Congress should override Puerto Rico's constitution, I do expect all creditor classes, including GO bondholders, to make concessions for the public good that will ultimately benefit all stakeholders. I sense that a bipartisan consensus is finally emerging in support of reasonable debt restructuring authority for Puerto Rico.

Second, the bill should address the outrageous disparities that Puerto Rico faces under key Federal programs, a main driver of our deficits and debt. Consider that historically, Puerto Rico received $300 billion in annual Medicaid funding, while the similarly sized Oregon receives $5 billion. I challenge any State to run a decent Medicaid program with that insulting sum without overborrowing in the capital markets. Impossible.

Finally, the Puerto Rico Government has a record of fiscal mismanagement. This is a painful fact, but a fact nonetheless. We must face up to it, resolve to do better, and welcome some temporary assistance. I would support the creation of an independent board to approve Puerto Rico Government's financial plan and annual budgets and to help ensure they are adhered to.

The past is not always a prologue. There is no reason why future Puerto Rico leaders cannot embrace fiscal discipline, as distinct from austerity, and rapidly put the oversight board out of business. And Congress should be careful about casting moral judgment on Puerto Rico since the Federal Government has a $14 trillion debt that is 75 percent of the GDP. We, in Puerto Rico, are responsible for our actions, but Congress is responsible for its actions and inaction as well.

A balanced board will obtain buy-in from government, business, and labor leaders in Puerto Rico and can serve as a bridge to a brighter future. However, a punitive board that disrespects my constituents and tramples on the principle of states' rights will transform me from an ally to an adversary very quickly.

□ 1015

DEBT CEILING BILL IS FINANCIALLY IRRESPONSIBLE

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

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, America entrusted Republicans with the House in 2010 and the Senate in 2014.

Democrats lost Congress because their financially irresponsible conduct and trillion-dollar deficits threaten America with a debilitating insolvency and bankruptcy.

House Republicans inherited a $1.3 trillion deficit in 2011. They cut it to $1.1 trillion in 2012, cut it to $680 billion in 2013, cut it to $485 billion in 2014, and cut it to $439 billion in 2015.

House Republicans did what the American people elected them to do. In each election thereafter, we were entrusted with 2 more years of a House Republican majority.

Unfortunately, newly released data from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office reveals America's financial condition has taken a sharp turn for the worse.

According to the CBO, the first quarter fiscal year 2016 deficit deteriorated by $36 billion compared to 2015's first quarter deficit. If extrapolated to a full year, America's FY 2016 deficit would be $583 billion. That is $144 billion worse than in fiscal year 2015.

Out-of-control spending was the problem, not taxes. During the first quarter, tax revenues were up 4 percent, but spending was up even more, at 7 percent.

Now, for the first time since I have been in Congress, Republican compromises and surrenders to Obama and Democrats have made America's deficits worse, not better.

This Congress broke open our kids' piggy banks, stole money we cannot pay back, and used it to pay for a trillion-dollar omnibus spending bill that adds tens of billions of dollars to 2016's deficit. I am proud I voted against the financially irresponsible omnibus.

Mr. Speaker, America's Comptroller General and the CBO repeatedly warn that America's financial path is ''unsustainable,'' meaning America faces a debilitating insolvency and bankruptcy unless we get our financial house in order.

Further, the CBO warns that, absent correction, America's debt service costs will increase by $600 billion per year within a decade, roughly what America spends on national defense, which begs the question: Where will the money come from for an additional annual $600 billion debt service payment?

America's total debt approached $14 trillion when I was elected to Congress in 2010. We have blown through the $19 trillion mark. Now the CBO projects America will blow through the $29 trillion debt mark in a decade.

For emphasis, Washington is engaged in the worst generational theft in American history. Washington steals from our children and grandchildren with a callous devil-may-care attitude so that we can today live high on the hog, even though it forces our children into hardship and poverty.

Economic principles don't care if you are a family, a business, or a country. If you borrow more money than you can pay back, you go bankrupt. Time is running out. Washington must balance the budget before America's debt burden spirals out of control, before it is too late to prevent the debilitating insolvency and bankruptcy that awaits us.

Mr. Speaker, Americans are rightfully angry at Washington elected officials who care more about special interest campaign contributions than American voters or America's future.

Will the American people channel their anger in the 2016 elections and elect Washington officials who both understand the threat posed by deficits and debt and have the backbone to fix it? The answer to that question determines whether America continues as a great nation and world power or declines into the dustbin of history.

Mr. Speaker, I can't speak for anyone else, but as for me, MO BROOKS from Alabama's Fifth Congressional District, I fight for financial responsibility and prosperity and against an American bankruptcy and economic depression.

EMERGENCY REQUEST FOR $1.8 BILLION TO FIGHT ZIKA VIRUS

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

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to strongly urge my colleagues to support the President's emergency request of $1.8 billion to fight the spread of the Zika virus, a dangerous, mosquito-borne illness that has surfaced in my home State of Hawaii and in at least 12 other States across the country.

The symptoms and effects of the Zika virus, which have prompted an international public health emergency from the World Health Organization, are not dissimilar to another mosquito-borne disease, Dengue fever.

Dengue fever is spread through the very same Aedes aegypti mosquito as carries the Zika virus, as well as other mosquito variations. Like the Zika virus, Dengue fever symptoms include fevers, rashes, joint and muscle pains, severe headaches, and other painful symptoms.

The CDC has reported the harmful symptoms and effects of both Zika and Dengue and the ability of both of these diseases to spread very rapidly through mosquitos present in many regions of the United States, including in my home district.

So far, there have been around 50 cases of Zika virus confirmed in the United States. But in the past 16 weeks, there have been 252 known cases of Dengue fever on Hawaii Island alone.

Now, Mayor Billy Kenoi, Hawaii County's mayor, on Monday announced a state of emergency for the county to deploy more resources to battle this Dengue fever outbreak.

I have asked our Governor to declare a state of emergency in response to this outbreak so that the people of Hawaii can receive every resource available to protect themselves, to eradicate this mosquito and its breeding grounds, and stop the spread of Dengue fever, which has quickly become the largest outbreak in the State of Hawaii since the 1940s.

The CDC has activated its emergency operations center to level 1 status. Now, to put this level 1 status in context, the CDC has only raised the emergency operations center to level 1 three times in the past: during the Ebola outbreak in 2014, during the H1N1 pandemic in 2009, and after Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

The President's leadership and emergency request on this urgent issue is warranted and necessary to respond aggressively to the Zika virus early on. He is treating this with the seriousness it deserves, recognizing this global public health threat, the impacts, and long-lasting effects of which still are not fully known.

At the end of last year, Congress came together and passed a bipartisan omnibus spending bill that increased funding for public health preparedness and response by more than $52 million than the previous fiscal year, but this additional emergency funding request is necessary now in communities like mine on Hawaii Island and in different parts of the country to combat disease-transmitting mosquito viruses like Zika and Dengue fever.

It is imperative that Congress, Federal agencies, local governments, and private sector partners partner together to take action now to deal with the outbreaks we already have and prevent something far worse from occurring.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to push this critical public health funding forward.

PFC JOSEPH P. DWYER VETERANS PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM

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

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, this week I introduced legislation in the House to expand the PFC Joseph P. Dwyer Veterans Peer Support Program to the national level.

PFC Joseph Dwyer was from Mount Sinai, New York, located in my home district of Suffolk County.

PFC Dwyer served in Iraq and received nationwide recognition for a photograph that went viral, showing him cradling a wounded Iraqi boy while his unit was fighting its way up to the capital city of Baghdad.

Sadly, after returning home and struggling with PTSD, PFC Dwyer died in 2008 and left behind a young widow, Matina, and a 2-year-old daughter, Meagan.

In 2012, while serving in the New York State Senate, I created the Dwyer Program as part of the 2012–2013 State budget. Originally in four counties, including Suffolk, this program has since expanded to over a dozen counties throughout New York.

The Dwyer Program is a peer-to-peer support program for veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury. The program provides a safe, confidential, and educational platform where all veterans are welcome to build vet-to-vet relationships, supporting each other's transition from service to post-service life.

During the first year alone, we were able to conduct 148 group sessions, serving 450 veterans just within Suffolk. Since 2013, the program has

helped over 1,500 veterans in New York State battling PTSD and TBI.

With the success that we have had in New York, I know that, if we make this program national, we will ensure that every veteran across America will eventually have access to a peer-to-peer support group.

With the VA reporting that an estimated 22 veterans a day commit suicide, this national effort is long overdue. We must ensure that all veterans across America receive the proper care they need and deserve.

I will be working hard to spread awareness of my bill, gather cosponsors and the support of veteran groups and mental health organizations from all across the country so that we can pass this bill as soon as possible.

WE MUST ACT NOW ON THE ZIKA VIRUS

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, shifting gears, on a completely separate topic, I also rise today to discuss the mosquito-borne Zika virus, which has spread at rapid rates across South America, Central America, and the Caribbean, infecting individuals in more than 25 countries.

Zika has caused widespread alarm across the global community after Brazil reported a rise in the reported cases of microcephaly, a disease that leads tragically to a baby being born with an unusually small head and brain damage.

What is so concerning about the Zika virus is how easily it can spread. The virus is spread not only through a mosquito bite, but also by contact with infected blood or sexual contact.

Furthermore, there is currently no vaccine to prevent or any medicine to treat the virus. All these factors have led the World Health Organization to declare the Zika virus a public health emergency.

Confirmed cases of the Zika virus have been popping up across the U.S., including at least three confirmed cases in my home district of Suffolk County, Long Island.

With the recent outbreaks and the number of Zika cases among travelers visiting or returning to the United States, it is only a matter of time before this becomes a widespread epidemic right here at home. This is why we must act now.

I recently introduced legislation, the Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act of 2016, H.R. 4314, which passed the House Committee on Foreign Affairs with bipartisan support.

One key aspect of this legislation is that the bill would put in place a monitoring system that would screen for infectious diseases abroad to contain and prevent any potential outbreaks.

The bill also helps quarantine the virus, authorizing the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide equipment and supplies to mitigate the risk or threat of infectious diseases such as Zika.

This is a measure that is long overdue to protect not only our homeland from terrorism, but also to ensure that we are prepared to combat the spread of any infectious diseases. With this bill's passage out of committee, it is clear that my colleagues in Congress share my view.

I will continue to push for full passage of my Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act in the House and urge my colleagues to bring this bipartisan bill to the House floor for a vote.

COMBATING BDS ACT OF 2016

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

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, in recent years, the boycott, divestment, and sanctions movement, more commonly known as the BDS movement, has been employed as a hateful weapon to delegitimize the State of Israel and all those who stand with her.

The BDS movement has neither brought Israelis and Palestinians closer to peace nor advanced the laudable goal of improving dialogue between the supporters of both sides. Instead, it has served as a means to demagogue Israel and inflame tensions in communities and college campuses around our Nation.

Rather than sit back and react to the BDS movement's aggressive efforts to foment hatred for Israel, it is time to take charge and simply say: ''Enough.'' It is time to go on offense against the BDS movement's ongoing economic warfare targeting Israel.

That is why I am proud to announce the Combating BDS Act of 2016, bipartisan legislation that I am introducing with the gentleman from California (Mr. VARGAS), a courageous leader in the anti-BDS movement.

The Combating BDS Act of 2016 affirms on the Federal level the authority of State and local governments to divest public funds or entities that engage in commerce or investment-related boycott, divestment, or sanctions activity targeting Israel.

Here is why this idea is so important. Similar to previous local efforts to divest from companies doing business with Iran, we are now seeing a growing movement in State and local governments throughout the Nation to enact measures to divest public funds from entities participating in anti-Israel BDS.

□ 1030

The Combating BDS Act of 2016 strengthens these efforts by affirming the legal authority of State and local governments to act on divestment without running afoul of any potential Federal limitations.

This important legislation empowers community leaders and individuals who seek to counter the hateful targeting and delegitimization against Israel, and it sends an unquestionable message about where the United States Congress stands on BDS.

This is not about left versus right. This is about right versus wrong. It must remain bipartisan. As the author of the Combating BDS Act of 2016, I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to advance this powerful and important legislation.

IRAN'S HOSTILITY MUST BE COMBATED

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

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the Islamic Republic of Iran—its past and its future.

February 11 is just an ordinary day for Americans, but in Iran, tomorrow is anything but ordinary. Military parades and massive state-sponsored celebrations fill the streets of Tehran and cities across the Islamic Republic. In just a few hours, it will be Islamic Revolution's Victory Day in Iran. The regime celebrates 37 years since the violent coup that brought the Ayatollah Khomeini to power and transferred Iran into a fundamentalist Islamic theocracy and the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism.

It is a dark period of history, Mr. Speaker. Thousands of innocent people were killed as the revolutionaries consolidated power. The U.S. Embassy was overrun and more than 50 Americans were held hostage for 444 days.

The United States has seen six Presidents since 1979, reflecting a broad range of leadership styles and governing philosophies. The Islamic Republic has been led by two Supreme Leaders, both zealots fanatically committed to the revolutionary ideas they espouse being celebrated on the streets of Tehran on this day. Make no mistake, Mr. Speaker, we are dealing with the same Iran today as we were in 1979.

The only day being celebrated by some Americans at the moment is implementation day, as President Obama's dangerous nuclear deal has now come and gone. The world is much more dangerous because of it.

Iran, the leading patron of global terrorism, just received a $100 billion check. The mullahs continue to foment violence and chaos across the Middle East, and their nuclear structure remains intact. The Obama administration has long argued that we would only be giving them $50 billion, but even they have conceded that it is closer to $100 billion or more.

We were also told that Iran would moderate its behavior as a result of this capitulation. Just in the past few weeks, Iran captured and humiliated American sailors, illegally launched ballistic missiles, fired rockets within 1,500 yards of U.S. ships, and flew a drone over a U.S. aircraft carrier. The list goes on and on.

Iranian Special Forces continue to assist al-Assad in his slaughter of innocents in Syria. Over 200,000 have been killed so far. Iranian-backed militias are likely responsible for kidnapping three American contractors in Iraq.

It doesn't take much imagination to figure out what Iran will do with another $100 billion, which is the windfall that they are about to receive based on this bad deal. As President Obama and Secretary Kerry have both begrudgingly admitted, it is nearly certain that the Iranians will use this money to sow the seeds of even more death and destruction. Think about that. They are nearly certain that part of this $100 billion will go there.

The Islamic Republic is not our friend, Mr. Speaker. It is a dangerous geopolitical foe. It is led by a cult of extremists that are hellbent on our annihilation. Yet President Obama will do nothing to stem the tide of the Ayatollah's ambitions.

When faced with an adversary whose theology and eschatology are fundamentally incompatible with peace and world order, the United States, under President Obama's leadership, chose a path of appeasement. I truly believe President Obama has made perhaps the most dangerous foreign policy blunder in our lifetime. We are now facing a newly emboldened, cash-rich, radical Islamic regime fully committed to weakening our Nation, terrorizing the West, and destroying our way of life.

Mr. Speaker, it is up to Congress to do everything in our power to keep as much of this money as possible out of the hands of Iran's terrorist proxies. The Congress must move swiftly to strengthen terrorism- and human rights-related sanctions against Iran and its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. The Congress must maintain strict oversight over Iran's nuclear program as its infrastructure remains intact.

Iran's hostility must be combated, Mr. Speaker, and this body should not abrogate that responsibility, even if our President already has.

SARACINI AVIATION SAFETY ACT

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, in light of recent reports of ISIS entering Europe disguised as refugees and a terrorist having just tried to take down an aircraft, I think it is important to understand the threats we face, but also to learn from the past.

In the 9/11 Report, al Qaeda mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed told al Qaeda terrorists to watch the cockpit doors at takeoff and landing to observe whether the captain went into the lavatory during the flight and to note whether the flight attendants brought food into the cockpit.

We all know what happened when these attackers stormed the flight deck and turned our airliners into weapons of war. But today, more than 14 years after the attacks of September 11, the FAA still admits the cockpit is vulnerable when the reinforced door has to be opened. That is unacceptable.

We know that terrorists study our vulnerabilities and make their plans accordingly. Yet, even after the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission emphasized the importance of ''a layered security system,'' we have not taken the simple, cost-effective step to protect the skies above us with the installation of secondary barrier doors.

These lightweight, wire-mesh gates can be closed whenever the cockpit door is opened and effectively protect against a terrorist—or team of terrorists—rushing the cockpit by providing the pilot enough time to recognize the threat and reenter and lock the reinforced cockpit door. They are easy to deploy and stow, and provide the ''layered protection'' that experts agree is needed.

That is why I have introduced the Saracini Aviation Safety Act. This is a one-page bill named after my constituent, United Airlines pilot Victor J. Saracini, whose life was taken when his aircraft was hijacked and flown into the South Tower of the World Trade Center on September 11. It requires that these cost-effective secondary barriers be included on large passenger aircraft.

We promised to never forget those lost on 9/11 and the lessons learned by all of us on that tragic day; yet after many years and more than 40 hijacking attempts around the world, including five that were successful, we are still not taking this threat seriously.

Mr. Speaker, I will continue to advocate for the adoption of this commonsense policy, both as a stand-alone bill or as part of a larger piece of legislation like the FAA reauthorization, and I urge my colleagues to join me.

GTMO

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

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, one of the most oft-repeated campaign promises from President Obama's 2008 campaign was his determination to close the U.S. Guantanamo Bay detention facility.

Congress, a coequal branch of government representing each citizen and reelected every 2 years, hasn't come to the same conclusion as President Obama about the status of GTMO moving forward. Because of this, we have blocked funding for its closure year after year after year.

We have strong reasons for concern. Last September, the Director of National Intelligence reported that 117 transferred detainees are confirmed to be reengaging in terrorist activities, with another 79 suspected to have done so. Disturbingly, this amounts to a full 30 percent of transferred detainees either confirmed or suspected of reengaging in terrorist activities.

The Director's report clearly shows that the detainee transfer process is obviously deeply flawed and poses a significant unnecessary and unacceptable risk to the security of our Nation and, quite frankly, the world.

The high percentage of reengagement clearly exposes the fact that we have just simply failed to properly identify the threat posed by transferred detainees and provide necessary safeguards to protect our citizens—safeguards that should have been in place before one single transfer ever took place.

Given the dire national security implications posed by these detainee transfers, I, along with 23 of my colleagues in this House, sent a letter last week to President Obama requesting to see the terms of agreements made with countries where detainees have and will be transferred.

There are 55 countries, by the way, including the likes of Yemen, Somalia, Pakistan, Libya, Iraq, and Iran. Yemen, really? Libya is a failed state—which we may have had a great part in creating—and we are sending terrorists there to be detained? Think about it. What incentive would it take for you to bring a terrorist to your country? to your neighborhood? to your home?

In particular, I am interested in the agreements' provisions to mitigate the inherent danger posed by detainee transfers. Specifically, what were the provisions aimed at preventing reengagement? Were there any? How did we ensure accountability by the home countries? What did these nations do to prevent contact with known terrorists, especially in countries that are full of terrorists, like Yemen or Somalia? How did we ensure these countries offer no form of aid and assistance to terrorist organizations?

The President says detaining these people is a recruiting magnet. Well, I wonder if we shouldn't detain gang members in our country. It is a right of passage to go to prison if you are in a gang. Should we let them all out, too? According to that logic, incarcerating them creates more of them.

He also says that detaining them indefinitely, without a trial, violates America's principles. You know what? He is right. You ought to ask yourselves as taxpayers: Why did we pay millions of dollars for a state-of-the-art court facility for sensitive and top-secret information during a trial, and yet no one has been put on trial? It is right there next to the detention facility. I walked through it myself. Why can't the military tribunals take place so we can find out what the deal is with these people and have them incarcerated correctly or set them free? It doesn't happen at all.

President Obama declared to America in 2013 that his administration is ''the most transparent administration in history.'' I will take some issue with that. Despite that fact, the President has clearly not lived up to this standard recently.

I sincerely hope that the President will give his promise of transparency higher priority than the priority given to unilaterally closing GTMO as part of a final-year, legacy-driven agenda. It is

not about his agenda. It is about the security of our Nation. It should be about the security of the world. These folks should not be let out. They should be given due process. They certainly shouldn't be sent to countries that are terrorist in nature.

Finally, the American people should know what the deal is. How much is this costing? Are we sending arms to these countries? What are the arrangements? There are 55 countries. Why would they take these terrorists?

RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL BOY SCOUTS DAY

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, this past Monday, February 8, is recognized by many as National Boy Scouts Day, marking the incorporation of the Boy Scouts of America 106 years ago.

I have spent close to four decades as a scoutmaster, Juniata Valley Boy Scout Council executive board member and council president, and as a scouting dad. My wife and I are scouting parents, with three sons we are very proud of who are Eagle Scouts today.

In my own scouting experience, I was honored to become one of just 2,000 people, since 1969, to receive the national Distinguished Eagle Scout Award.

It was my experience in scouting that first sparked my interest in public service—in the vein of the Boy Scout promise, which urges us, in part, to do our duty to God, to our country, and in the service of other people.

Scouting got its start around the turn of the last century, thanks to the efforts of British Army Officer Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell.

As Scouting history has it, in 1909, a Chicago businessman, a publisher, William D. Boyce, who actually grew up in western Pennsylvania, lost his way in a dense fog in London.

□ 1045

A young boy came to his aid, guiding Mr. Boyce to his destination. And in the end, when Mr. Boyce offered that young boy a tip, a coin, the boy refused the tip offered by Mr. Boyce stating: Sir, I am a Scout, and Scouts do not take rewards for doing good turns.

Well, that young boy was a Scout. We don't know his identity today, but he certainly has changed our country. That single act of volunteerism gave birth to what became the Boy Scouts of America, incorporated in 1910.

In 2013, there were more than 2.6 million members of the Boy Scouts of America. The program today serves not just boys, but also girls in our Scouting Venturing program.

In a time which has, in many ways, been highlighted by a decline of volunteerism and criticism of perhaps our younger newest generations, I know that our Nation's future is in good hands with those who live and dedicate themselves to the Scout Oath or the Scout Promise, which they state at the beginning of every meeting and they end with. The words since that time are:

''On my honor, I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law; to help other people at all times; to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.''

Scouting prepares youth to be productive and successful members of the workforce. The program introduces our youth to countless career opportunities, including the STEM fields.

As a Scout Master for almost three decades, I have seen these 11-year-old youths, until the time they become 18 and go on into life, the career paths they were exposed to for the first time—whether it was medicine, or teaching, or professional fire fighting, or across the board—through the Scouting experience. What employer would not benefit from an employee with practical exposure from an organization that emphasizes values, service, and leadership?

Scouting fosters the values that make communities strong and preferred for families to set down roots and to contribute.

Scouting offers the world's finest leadership training for adults and youth, leadership training that can be generalized to any occupations, including the United States House of Representatives.

As frequently said, ''Scouting is outing.'' Scouting is the youth leadership program that is grounded, not just in values, but in the beauty and the nature of the outdoors, building appreciation and respect for God's creation and for active lives, for being physically active, that is so desperately needed today.

Now it is my hope that this wonderful organization continues to contribute to the lives of young men and young ladies for generations to come.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG EPIDEMIC IN WEST VIRGINIA

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

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, every morning, countless West Virginians wake up fearing that they lost a loved one to drugs the night before; and every morning, far too many West Virginians find this fear has come true.

The prescription drug abuse epidemic in our State is a tragedy that we cannot afford to ignore. It ravages our communities, rips families apart, stunts the development of our youth, and further ruptures our State's already ailing economy.

Overuse of prescription pain medication is one of the leading causes of opioid addiction. When a patient has more narcotic pain medication than they need after a medical event, this excess medication can fall into the wrong hands; and a narcotic pain medication in the wrong hands often leads to addiction. In fact, the National Institute on Drug Abuse has found that 1 in 15 people who take nonmedical prescription pain relievers will try heroin.

Last year, the number of fatal overdoses from prescription painkillers increased by 16 percent and, from heroin, 28 percent in the United States. In West Virginia, the story is even worse. According to a recent study by the Trust for America's Health, the Mountain State has the highest rate of overdose deaths in the entire United States.

This issue is above party politics. It is a plague that all Americans must come together to solve. That is why, yesterday, I introduced H.R. 4499, the Promoting Responsible Opioid Prescribing Act. This bipartisan bill strikes a harmful provision of ObamaCare that places unnecessary pressure on doctors and hospitals to prescribe narcotic pain medicine.

This concern was brought to my attention while meeting with doctors and other healthcare professional workers in Charleston, West Virginia, who are active in our State's medical society. In other words, this was their idea. I thank them for bringing this to my attention, and I encourage others to bring any ideas to help fight back against the opium epidemic to your local Congressman.

In 2006, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS, and the Department of Health and Human Services developed a survey called the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems, pronounced ''H-caps,'' for short. HCAHPS is a standardized survey used to measure patient perspectives and satisfaction on the care they receive in hospital settings.

At first, hospitals used this survey on an optional basis. However, when ObamaCare became law in 2010, it put in place ''pay for performance'' provisions that use these survey results as a factor in calculating Medicare reimbursement rates for physicians and hospitals on quality measures.

This provision of ObamaCare was intended to save money and to force improvements on hospital performance. However, it has led to unintended consequences in the area of pain management.

The HCAHPS survey contains three questions on pain management:

One, during this hospital stay, did you need medicine for pain?

Two, during this hospital stay, how often was your pain well-controlled?

Three, during this hospital stay, how often did the hospital staff do everything they could to help you with your pain?

Because of the tie to reimbursement, hospitals and physicians are pressured

to perform well under HCAHPS, including the pain management questions. However, doctors, not the Federal Government, know how best to treat patients, and that includes the question of how best to use narcotic pain medication.

The PROP Act would remove these pain management questions from consideration when CMS is conducting reimbursement analysis. However, the patient would still answer the survey questions so that hospitals can monitor patient satisfaction.

By severing the relationship between HCAHPS questions on pain management and reimbursement, doctors would no longer feel the undue pressure to overprescribe opioid narcotics to people they believe may be abusing it. This simple change will help reduce access to narcotic pain medication for patients who do not need it, thereby reducing the risk of addiction.

I would like to take the time to thank the bipartisan cosponsors of this bill: ANNIE KUSTER, Chairman HAL ROGERS, STEPHEN LYNCH, FRANK GUINTA, TIM RYAN, and BARBARA COMSTOCK.

Our bill has been endorsed by the American Medical Association and the American Society of Addiction Medicine.

I encourage my colleagues in the House to consider cosponsoring my bill, H.R. 4499, the PROP Act.

DISAPPEARANCE OF DAVID SNEDDON

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

Mr. STEWART. Mr. Speaker, on August 14, 2004, David Sneddon, a student at Brigham Young University, disappeared without explanation while hiking in the Yunnan province of southwest China.

David is an outstanding young man who speaks fluent Korean and had spent the summer studying Mandarin in Beijing, with plans to return to the U.S. in August to finish his degree in Chinese. He had already paid a housing deposit and registered to take the Law School Admission Test.

The U.S. State Department and the Chinese Government eventually concluded that David fell into a gorge while hiking, but David's family conducted their own exhaustive investigation, with David's father and two older brothers flying to China shortly after his disappearance to retrace his steps.

In the course of talking with numerous eyewitnesses, David's family discovered facts which contradict the official explanation and which, I believe, are compelling evidence of another possibility, which I will get to in just a moment.

My staff and I met David's family and heard his story soon after I was elected 3 years ago. The Sneddons are remarkable people of great faith who have continued to pursue an explanation for David's disappearance for the past 11 years.

The resolution I am introducing today regarding David's disappearance is a result of the hard work and diligence of David's parents, siblings, and cousins. They deserve answers. They deserve to have their government do everything possible to determine what happened to David.

I should also add that David's story is personal to me. He was a close friend of my oldest son, Sean. In fact, following David's 2-year missionary service in South Korea, David taught my son Sean the Korean language as he was preparing to begin his own missionary service in South Korea. Though I have not met David, I am grateful for the impact he had on Sean's life.

Over the past 3 years, I have had various opportunities to meet with State Department personnel to discuss David's disappearance. They are good people, and I commend them for their help, particularly in the immediate aftermath of his disappearance when they repeatedly pressured the Chinese Government to pursue the various leads identified by David's family.

However, I am concerned that bureaucratic inertia has made the State Department complacent in this case. I am concerned the State Department leadership has not done all they can do to pursue all of the possible explanations for his disappearance.

One of the unexplored possibilities is that David was abducted by agents of the North Korean regime, something which a number of respected experts on North Korea have advanced in recent years. While this may sound like an outlandish theory to those unfamiliar with North Korea's history, it is becoming very plausible when you understand the regime's long history of abducting foreign citizens to use in training their own foreign agents.

For many years, North Korea systematically kidnapped Japanese citizens and used captives to train their intelligence operatives in Japanese language and culture. The regime finally admitted to the abductions in 2002 and returned five of the Japanese citizens.

There are numerous other facts which, when combined, make North Korea's involvement conceivable.

North Korean agents are known to operate in Yunnan Province, a common area for those escaping North Korea into Southeast Asia.

David disappeared during a long time of heightened tensions between the U.S. and North Korea, just weeks after this House passed the North Korean Human Rights Act.

And David disappeared 1 month after North Korea released Charles Jenkins, an American deserter from the Korean war being held and used precisely as the abducted Japanese citizens: as a language teacher for North Korean military cadets and spies. Jenkins was the last of the known Americans being held for this purpose, and it is possible the regime needed a replacement for him.

Just this past Sunday, North Korea's rocket launch, in defiance of sanctions and against explicit counsel of the international community, reminded us that North Korea doesn't operate on the same norms that guide diplomacy for most of the rest of the world. They are a criminal enterprise more than a government, and they can do nothing for their own people, let alone for other nations.

Mr. Speaker, I don't raise the possibility regarding David Sneddon's disappearance lightly, and I didn't sponsor this resolution lightly. I recognize the words we speak on foreign policy have consequences far beyond this room. But David is the only American to disappear in China without explanation since the normalization of relations during the Nixon administration.

This is not a fact to be taken lightly. My resolution lays out the facts of his disappearance and asks three essential actions by the State Department and intelligence community:

First, that they continue to investigate and consider all possible explanations for David's disappearance, including potential abduction by North Korea;

Second, that they coordinate their efforts with the Governments of Japan, South Korea, and particularly China, the country known to have at least some influence over North Korea;

And finally, that they keep the Congress and the Sneddon family informed of these efforts.

I would like to thank Senator LEE for sponsoring the companion bill in the Senate, and the rest of the Utah delegation for joining me as cosponsors. I think I can speak for the delegation when I say that David's family deserves a thorough effort from their own government to discover what happened to him. This is the very least that we can ask.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 58 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

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

PRAYER

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

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

May Your special blessings be upon the Members of this assembly as results from another primary election reverberate through our political landscape. Give them wisdom and charity, that they might work together, with needed focus, for the common good.

As the candidates now move on to other contests, may all Americans hear the call to responsible citizenship, learning the substance of candidates' positions and plans for the future of our Nation. May we all do our homework so that our experiment in representative democracy might flourish and all would take pride in the government to be constructed from our votes.

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

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from California (Mr. PETERS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. PETERS 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

OUR BORDER IS NOT SECURE

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, new reports from the Department of Homeland Security show a surge in illegal immigration, 30 percent, actually. Last Friday I returned to McAllen, Texas, to tour the Rio Grande River by boat and see our security challenges firsthand, something President Obama has refused to do.

Let me be clear. Our border is not secure. Obama's amnesty is devastating for Texas, particularly its border cities, but the problems far exceed our border. This affects the whole country. It undermines the safety of all Americans and hurts law-abiding taxpayers.

My most sacred duty is to protect our homeland and every citizen in it. I spent 29 years as a fighter pilot and 7 as a POW doing just that. Rest assured, I will continue to fight to keep America safe.

GUN VIOLENCE MYTHS

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

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, last Sunday 5 people were killed and 25 injured in four mass shootings in New York, Florida, Illinois, and Mississippi. Yet, Congress has done nothing to reduce gun violence in America.

While this is happening, opponents to commonsense, responsible gun safety legislation are spreading misinformation and sharing myths, myths such as: criminals don't exploit loopholes to buy guns; there is no gun show loophole; the assault weapons ban that was previously in place didn't work; and strong gun laws don't reduce gun crimes.

It is time that we start calling out these myths and correcting the record with the facts. In the coming days, I will be doing just that on my Web site and through social media to help build support for commonsense, responsible gun safety legislation.

After all, Mr. Speaker, facts should guide us in doing our work and doing all that we can to reduce gun violence in America.

HONORING PASTOR MICHAEL MOORE

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

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor Pastor Michael Moore for his many years of service to the Manteca community. After 29 years at Crossroads Grace Community Church, Pastor Mike is retiring from his role as senior leader.

Almost 50 years ago, Pastor Mike married the love of his life, Grace, and together they started a church where everyone could feel welcome.

In 1987, Crossroads Grace Community began with a Bible study group led by Pastor Mike made up of 17 members. The church grew to encompass Pastor Mike's and Grace's vision of a casual atmosphere, practical and relevant teachings, with contemporary worship.

Pastor Mike led the congregation in working with local churches to establish the Hope Family Shelter and provide housing to homeless families. The church also established a mobile medical clinic to provide free medical service for those in need and has sent teams to respond to global disasters such as Hurricane Katrina, the tsunami in Asia, and the Oklahoma tornadoes. The church has also sent missionaries to many corners of the globe.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing Pastor Michael Moore and his unwavering leadership in our community and many accomplishments around the globe.

VICTIMS OF GUN VIOLENCE

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

Mr. PETERS. Spanish Fork, Utah, January 16, 2014:

Marie King, 55 years old.
Kelly Boren, 32.
Joshua Boren, 7 years old.
Haley Boren, 5.

Holly Hill, South Carolina, July 15, 2015:

Jerome Butler, 50 years old.
Krystal Hutto, 28 years old.
Shamekia Sanders, 17.
Tamara Perry, 14.

Saco, Maine, July 26, 2014:

Heather Smith, 35.
Jason Montez, 12 years old.
Noah Montez, 7.
Lily Smith, 4 years old.

Culpeper, Virginia, August 3, 2014:

Shauna Washington, 35 years old.
Onesha Washington, 13.
Onya Washington, 6.
Olivia Washington, 4.

Callison, South Carolina, October 29, 2013:

Richard Fields, 51 years old.
Melissa Fields, 49.
Chandra Fields, 26.
William Robinson, 9 years old.
Tariq Robinson, 9 years old.

BLUE RIBBON STUDY PANEL

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last week I was grateful to chair the Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities hearing to receive outside views on biodefense for the Department of Defense and review the bipartisan report of the Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense.

Chaired by former Senator Joe Lieberman and former Governor and Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge, the panel evaluated the status of prevention, deterrence, preparedness, detection, response, attribution, recovery, and mitigation of our Nation's biodefense.

The report was clear. Our Nation faces a complex threat from both biological weapons and naturally occurring diseases. For example, the recent response to the Ebola outbreak demonstrates the importance of the Department of Defense's biodefense contributions to broader government and global efforts.

I am grateful that the former Attorney General Ken Wainstein and Dr. Gerald Parker, both members of the panel, were there testifying before the subcommittee. I look forward to working with the Department of Defense to implement the findings and recommendations.

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

PEOPLE OF FLINT, MICHIGAN, ARE STRONG

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, my hometown is Flint, Michigan. When we leave here at the end of every week, I fly home to Flint. This is a very proud community. It is the birthplace of General Motors. It is where the UAW workers sat down in 1936 to get the first UAW contract to help build the middle class.

The last few decades have been tough for my community. We have taken a lot of hits, a lot of poverty, high unemployment, but we have always been able to get back up again as a community because there are strong people in Flint, Michigan.

What has happened now in Flint is because of careless actions by State officials who put dollars and cents ahead of the health of people, ahead of the health of 9,000 children.

We can get back up again in Flint, but we need a State response far more robust than what has been recommended by Michigan's Governor and we need help from the Federal Government. These people are American citizens.

If the State won't act to make it right for the people of Flint, we need our Federal Government to do everything in its power to help these people and help Flint get back up again.

HAMILTON CITY, CALIFORNIA, LEVEE PROTECTION

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, it is budget season in Washington, D.C., and one of the things that should be in the budget is infrastructure. I am glad to hear that the President has included $8.5 million in funding to replace the badly degraded levees on the Sacramento River near Hamilton City, California.

Flood danger has forced evacuation of Hamilton City six times since 1980. The existing levee project provides only 10-year flood event protection when the standard really should be 200-year flood event protection.

Working with local residents who have contributed their own money and resources to the project, we secured over $12 million in Federal funding so far.

Mr. Speaker, this year's additional funding will allow major progress on a project that will protect the homes and families of over 200 north State residents, finally giving Hamilton City some peace of mind.

AUTOMATED COLLECTION OF USER FEES AT THE PEACE BRIDGE

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, the budget that President Obama sent to Congress yesterday contained a number of important proposals: more cancer research funding, more treatment for prescription painkiller and heroin addiction, and making permanent the solar investment tax credit and the new market tax credit.

While these initiatives generated headlines, one small and simple provision could have a significant impact on the economy of western New York.

Beginning this year, at the Peace Bridge in Buffalo, Customs and Border Protection will automate the collection of user fees for commercial vehicles. Currently fees are collected manually, which increases congestion and deters Canadians from traveling to western New York.

I called for the implementation of this policy last year and am happy to see the Department of Homeland Security moved so quickly on it. By automating fee collection, hiring more Customs and Border Protection officers, this budget will benefit the western New York economy that is dependent on commerce via the Peace Bridge.

CONGENITAL HEART FUTURES REAUTHORIZATION ACT

(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, as February is recognized as Heart Month, I rise on behalf of the nearly 40,000 babies born each year with congenital heart defects, CHD. CHD is the most common birth defect and the number one cause of birth defect-related deaths.

A few decades ago babies born with CHD were not living into adulthood. Now, due to continued investment and research and a series of medical breakthroughs, 90 percent of babies born with CHD are living into adulthood. Let's makes it 100 percent.

There is still work to be done, and we must ensure these efforts to improve the lives of those with CHD continue. This is why I introduced the Congenital Heart Futures Reauthorization Act, to spend CHD research, raise awareness of the importance of specialized care, and ensure important research continues.

We must advance this legislation for the millions of Americans who need our help.

□ 1215

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

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

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to highlight the success of the Affordable Care Act.

The numbers are in and, once again, millions of Americans signed up for quality affordable health coverage. More than 12.7 million Americans selected plans through the health insurance marketplaces—4 million, or 42 percent, of whom were new customers this year.

People want coverage. And, thanks to the ACA, millions can now have the security of knowing they won't go bankrupt if they get sick or have an accident, can't be denied coverage because of a preexisting condition, and have access to preventative and primary care services at little to no out-of-pocket cost.

In the 29th District that I am proud to represent, 55,000 residents fall into the expansion gap and have no insurance because States haven't expanded Medicaid. It is time for Texas and other States to do the right thing and recognize that health care is essential for some of our poorest families by expanding Medicaid.

The Affordable Care Act is here to stay. I hope Congress will move past repeal attempts and start talking about how we can make the Affordable Care Act work even better for the American people. I stand ready to work with my colleagues on this critical issue.

IT IS TIME TO RELEASE ZHU YUFU ONCE AND FOR ALL

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

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today yet again in need of bringing the world's attention to the plight of Zhu Yufu.

Four years ago today, this democracy advocate was unjustly sentenced by the Chinese Government to 7 years behind bars, following previous imprisonments. His tireless advocacy for democratic rights, freedom of speech, and the rule of law is worthy of praise. Yet the Chinese Government has harassed and jailed him numerous times on faulty charges.

Yufu is in poor health. He is not able to stand without support. He has coronary heart disease and a coronary artery tumor, in addition to other ailments. Yet Chinese authorities refuse to provide him with medical care or medication. Further, they have forced him to do hard labor and have caused the job losses of his family members.

This Saturday, Zhu Yufu turns 63 years old. The least the Chinese Government can do is provide him with proper medical treatment, improve his living conditions, and leave his family alone. If China is serious about demonstrating any legitimate leadership, it should release him and the hundreds of others like him immediately.

MURDERED FOR THEIR FAITH

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

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, today marks 1 year since three young Americans were killed, I believe, for their faith. I think the evidence supports that.

On February 10, 2015, Deah Barakat, Yusor Abu-Salha, and Razan Abu-Salha were murdered in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. They were shot and killed because of their faith. They were Muslim.

Yusor was a graduate of North Carolina State University, and planned on enrolling at UNC Chapel Hill School of Dentistry, where her husband, Deah, was studying to become a dentist. Razan, Yusor's sister, was a student at NCSU as well. She was only 19.

These murders are heartbreaking. They should be heartbreaking to every American. They show us the stark reality that bigotry is alive and well and that good people have to stand against it. Hate speech and scapegoating have real life consequences.

Children are bullied in school, houses of worship are vandalized, and people are killed for the way they dress or how they pray. This should end now.

HONORING VERNITA TODD, CEO OF HEART CITY HEALTH CENTER

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

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and pay tribute to a champion of public health in my district as she moves to California to continue her work serving the public.

As chief executive officer of Heart City Health Center in Elkhart, Indiana, Vernita Todd has tirelessly advocated on behalf of others. Over the last 10 years, she has led the Center in achieving its mission of contributing to the health of our community by providing access to high-quality and accessible health care.

Vernita has received national recognition for her role in prioritizing advocacy as a crucial component to Heart City Health Center's mission. Whether at the city, State, or Federal level, the impact of her work can surely be felt by thousands.

On behalf of the people of Indiana's Second Congressional District, I thank Vernita Todd for her contributions to improving thousands of lives throughout the northern Indiana community and the country as a whole. I wish her the best of luck in her future endeavors.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENHAM) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 10, 2016.

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 February 10, 2016 at 9:25 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 2109.

That the Senate passed with an amendment H.R. 1428.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

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 the motion 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.

Any record vote on the postponed question will be taken later.

SAFE DRINKING WATER ACT IMPROVED COMPLIANCE AWARENESS ACT

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4470) to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act with respect to the requirements related to lead in drinking water, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4470

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 ''Safe Drinking Water Act Improved Compliance Awareness Act''.

SEC. 2. ENFORCEMENT OF DRINKING WATER REGULATIONS.

Section 1414(c) of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300g–3(c)) is amended—

(1) in the header, by inserting ''STATES, THE ADMINISTRATOR, AND'' before ''PERSONS SERVED'';

(2) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in subparagraph (C), by striking ''paragraph (2)(E)'' and inserting ''paragraph (2)(F)''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(D) Notice of any exceedance at the 90th percentile of a lead action level in a regulation promulgated under section 1412.'';

(3) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''subparagraph (D)'' and inserting ''subparagraph (E)'';

(B) in subparagraph (C)—

(i) in the header, by striking ''VIOLATIONS'' and inserting ''NOTICE OF VIOLATIONS'';

(ii) in the matter preceding clause (i)—

(I) by inserting '', and each exceedance described in paragraph (1)(D),'' after ''for each violation''; and

(II) by inserting ''or exceedance'' after ''Each notice of violation'';

(iii) by inserting ''or exceedance'' after ''the violation'' each place it appears; and

(iv) in clause (iv)—

(I) in subclause (I), by striking ''broadcast media'' and inserting ''media, including broadcast media,'';

(II) in subclause (II)—

(aa) by striking ''in a newspaper of general circulation serving the area'' and inserting ''for circulation in the affected area, including in a newspaper of general circulation serving the area,''; and

(bb) by striking ''or the date of publication of the next issue of the newspaper''; and

(III) in subclause (III), by striking ''in lieu of notification by means of broadcast media or newspaper'';

(C) by redesignating subparagraphs (D) and (E) as subparagraphs (E) and (F), respectively; and

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

''(D) NOTICE BY ADMINISTRATOR.—If, after 24 hours after the Administrator's notification under subsection (a)(1)(A), the State with primary enforcement responsibility or the owner or operator of the public water system has not issued a notice that is required under subparagraph (C) for an exceedance described in paragraph (1)(D), the Administrator shall issue such required notice pursuant to this paragraph.'';

(4) in paragraph (3)(B)—

(A) by striking ''subparagraph (A) and'' and inserting ''subparagraph (A),''; and

(B) by striking ''subparagraph (C) or (D) of paragraph (2)'' and inserting ''subparagraph (C) or (E) of paragraph (2), and notices issued by the Administrator with respect to public water systems serving Indian Tribes under subparagraph (D) of such paragraph'';

(5) in paragraph (4)(B)—

(A) in clause (ii), by striking ''the terms'' and inserting ''the terms 'action level',''; and

(B) in clause (iii), by striking ''and (IV)'' and inserting ''(IV) the action level for the contaminant, and (V)''; and

(6) by adding at the end the following:

''(5) EXCEEDANCE OF SAFE LEAD LEVEL.—

''(A) STRATEGIC PLAN.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this paragraph, the Administrator shall, in collaboration with owners and operators of public water systems and States, establish a strategic plan for how the Administrator, a State with primary enforcement responsibility, and owners and operators of public water systems shall conduct targeted outreach, education, technical assistance, and risk communication to populations affected by lead in a public water system, including dissemination of information described in subparagraph (C).

''(B) EPA INITIATION OF NOTICE.—

''(i) FORWARDING OF DATA BY EMPLOYEE OF EPA.—If the Environmental Protection Agency develops or receives, from a source other than the State or the public water system, data, which meets the requirements of section 1412(b)(3)(A)(ii), indicating that the drinking water of a person served by a public water system contains a level of lead that exceeds a lead action level promulgated under section 1412, the Administrator shall require an appropriate employee of the Agency to forward such data to the owner or operator of the public water system and to the State in which the exceedance occurred within a time period established by the Administrator.

''(ii) DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION BY OWNER OR OPERATOR.—If an owner or operator of a public water system receives a notice under clause (i), the owner or operator, within a time period established by the Administrator, shall disseminate to affected persons the information described in subparagraph (C).

''(iii) CONSULTATION.—

''(I) DEADLINE.—With respect to an exceedance at the 90th percentile of a lead action level in a regulation promulgated under section 1412, if the owner or operator of the public water system does not disseminate, in the time period established by the Administrator, the information described in subparagraph (C), as required under clause (ii), not later than 24 hours after becoming aware of such failure to disseminate, the Administrator shall consult, within a period not to exceed 24 hours, with the applicable Governor to develop a plan, in accordance with the strategic plan, to disseminate such information to affected persons within 24 hours of the end of such consultation period.

''(II) DELEGATION.—The Administrator may only delegate the duty to consult under this clause to an employee of the Environmental Protection Agency who is working in the Office of Water, at the headquarters of the Agency, at the time of such delegation.

''(iv) DISSEMINATION BY ADMINISTRATOR.—The Administrator shall, as soon as reasonably possible, disseminate to affected persons the information described subparagraph (C) if—

''(I) the Administrator and the applicable Governor do not agree on a plan described in clause (iii)(I) during the consultation period under such clause; or

''(II) the applicable Governor does not disseminate the information within 24 hours of the end of such consultation period.

''(C) INFORMATION REQUIRED.—Information required to be disseminated under this paragraph shall include a clear explanation of the exceedance of a lead action level, its potential adverse effects on human health, the steps that the owner or operator of the public water system is taking to correct the exceedance, and the necessity of seeking alternative water supplies until the exceedance is corrected.

''(6) PRIVACY.—Any notice under this subsection to the public or an affected person shall protect the privacy of individual customer information.''.

SEC. 3. PROHIBITION ON USE OF LEAD PIPES, SOLDER, AND FLUX.

Section 1417 of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300g–6) is amended—

(1) by amending subsection (a)(2)(A) to read as follows:

''(A) IN GENERAL.—

''(i) IDENTIFICATION AND NOTICE.—Each owner or operator of a public water system shall identify and provide notice to persons who may be affected by—

''(I) lead contamination of their drinking water where such contamination results from—

''(aa) the lead content in the construction materials of the public water distribution system; or

''(bb) corrosivity of the water supply sufficient to cause leaching of lead; or

''(II) an exceedance at the 90th percentile of a lead action level in a regulation promulgated under section 1412.

''(ii) MANNER AND FORM.—Notice under this paragraph shall be provided in such manner and form as may be reasonably required by the Administrator. Notwithstanding clause (i)(II), notice under this paragraph shall be provided notwithstanding the absence of a violation of any national drinking water standard.'';

(2) in subsection (b)(2)—

(A) by striking ''The requirements'' and inserting the following:

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The requirements''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following: ''Enforcement of such requirements shall be carried out by a State with primary enforcement responsibility or the Administrator, as appropriate.

''(B) NOTIFICATION BY ADMINISTRATOR.—In the case of an exceedance described in subsection (a)(2)(A)(i)(II), if the public water system or the State in which the public water system is located does not notify the persons who may be affected by such exceedance in accordance with subsection (a)(2), the Administrator shall notify such persons of such exceedance in accordance with subsection (a)(2), including notification of the relevant concentrations of lead. Such notice shall protect the privacy of individual customer information.''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(f) PUBLIC EDUCATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall make information available to the public regarding lead in drinking water, including information regarding—

''(A) risks associated with lead in drinking water;

''(B) the likelihood that drinking water in a residence may contain lead;

''(C) steps States, public water systems, and consumers can take to reduce the risks of lead; and

''(D) the availability of additional resources that consumers can use to minimize lead exposure, including information on how to sample for lead in drinking water.

''(2) VULNERABLE POPULATIONS.—In making information available to the public under this subsection, the Administrator shall carry out targeted outreach strategies that focus on educating groups within the general population that may be at greater risk than the general population of adverse health effects from exposure to lead in drinking water.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO) 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 wish we weren't here today. I wish this bill was not necessary, but it is. Our hearts go out to the folks of Flint, Michigan. The system let them down at every level. That is, frankly, unacceptable.

All folks want is the peace of mind that their government is looking out for their best interest and that their water is safe. This bill is the first step.

Imagine if you went to draw a cup of cold water from your kitchen faucet and suddenly had to think about whether it is safe to drink or not. Now put yourself into the shoes of a parent whose son or daughter has already taken a drink from that faucet. Or, you made coffee or infant formula. What health risk has your child already been exposed to? What do we do now? How can we expect a family to live life day-to-day without safe drinking water? And, after all those initial concerns, you begin asking yourself: How is this situation possible in the 21st century in the United States of America?

We have been seeking answers to that question from EPA, from the State of Michigan, and from others. In the meantime, we know that part of the answer—certainly, not the whole story—is that there was a terrible breakdown in communication at every level of government.

It is sickening and it breaks your heart that thousands of kids indeed could be at risk, being poisoned from faucets that they thought were safe.

Government officials knew there was serious cause for concern and failed to inform the people of Flint. Many of those officials did not even seem to be effectively communicating and sharing data among themselves.

The EPA regional office was not telling headquarters about everything, the State was not telling EPA everything, and we don't know yet what the city of Flint was telling the State or EPA. That has got to be fixed—and it has got to be fixed now.

□ 1230

The Safe Drinking Water Act Improved Compliance Awareness Act ensures that the public learns of excessive lead levels in their drinking water by setting forth how and when States, EPA, and public water utilities communicate their findings.

The bill also strengthens public notification rules when lead levels are exceeded. Individual consumers will be told when their own house tests positive for lead problems. And if the community or States fail to notify the public, EPA will step in and do so. They are required to do that.

The bill also requires EPA to create a strategic plan for handling and improving information flow among water utilities, the States, EPA, and affected drinking water consumers before there is an enforceable lead exceedance in drinking water. Let me repeat that: before lead levels get too high.

Finally, this bipartisan bill requires consumer notification when water being transported in a lead pipe is so corrosive that, in fact, it could leach into public drinking water.

I want to thank all Members of the House for their support, especially my Michigan colleagues, every one of which, from both parties, signed as an original cosponsor of this legislation.

I want to particularly thank Mr. KILDEE, a friend, who led this effort.

I thank my colleagues on the Energy and Commerce Committee, particularly FRANK PALLONE, JOHN SHIMKUS, and PAUL TONKO, for their advice, collaboration, and support.

I also want to thank two McCarthys, KEVIN MCCARTHY, for scheduling this at almost a moment's notice, and my lead counsel on this legislation, Dave McCarthy, who helped write and improve the bill as it was originally introduced.

What is said on this floor today will not do anything to ease the mind of a

parent in Flint. The entire situation breaks your heart, but we have a responsibility, working together as Republicans and Democrats, to fix the problem. This bill is an important step.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise today in support of H.R. 4470, the Safe Drinking Water Act Improved Compliance Awareness Act, introduced last week by our colleague Representative KILDEE, with the support of other members of the Michigan delegation.

This bill would strengthen requirements to have the EPA notify the public when concentrations of lead exceed Federal standards. That is notifying the public.

While I support this legislation and urge my colleagues to support it, far more than this is needed to address the many failings that led to the tragic circumstances that are still being experienced by the residents of Flint, Michigan, a situation that has drawn the Nation's attention and drawn compassion for children and their families. This should never have occurred in any city in our Nation.

As with any such tragic failure, there is an attempt to assess blame. Well, accountability is important. Those who failed in their responsibility should be held accountable.

But no one here has yet taken responsibility for our part, Congress' part, in this event. Collectively, this Congress as well as many previous Congresses have failed to maintain Federal support for the maintenance and improvements of our water infrastructure.

We have been underfunding these systems for decades. The poor condition of the water treatment and distribution system in Flint set the stage for this tragedy.

We are doing this in an attempt to save money. Well, in fact, we are wasting many millions of dollars more by allowing essential infrastructure to deteriorate to the extent where a constant stream of emergency responses and repairs are required to keep these systems working.

Finally, we need to do something for the people of Flint. The State of Michigan and President Obama's administration have both begun to mobilize resources to deal with the immediate need for safe drinking water, and they are working to eliminate lead from the water distribution system. But we still don't know if essential corrosion control can be reestablished.

And bottled water does not solve Flint's problems. The residents of Flint need a fully functioning public water system that delivers safe, clean water to their homes, to their schools, and to their businesses. We need to work with the State of Michigan to make that happen.

We need to care for the people who were exposed to lead, especially our children, who are most vulnerable to lead exposure. They need treatment and sustained assistance to deal with the health problems they may experience as a result of this manmade disaster.

The conditions that enabled this crisis to happen are not unique to Flint. And while this bill is a first step to help communities that may face these problems in the future, it cannot be our last step. We must embrace our responsibility to support Federal investment in drinking water systems.

The public health and future prosperity of the people of Flint and thousands of other communities across our great Nation are continuing to suffer from the concerns and are counting on our progressive actions. I look forward to continuing this discussion.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG), a cosponsor of the bill.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I want to start by thanking my friends, DAN KILDEE and Chairman UPTON, for their work on this bipartisan legislation and ensuring a swift congressional response to the ongoing water crisis in Flint, Michigan.

What have we learned, and what will we do both now and into the future, Mr. Speaker, is the question.

What happened in Flint is not a natural disaster. It is a human disaster and a failure of government at every level.

In my questioning at last week's Oversight and Government Reform Committee hearing, it became very clear that individuals with the EPA knew about the high lead levels in the drinking water for months but failed to communicate this information to the people of Flint, even under repeated Freedom of Information Act requests.

The bill we are considering today takes important steps to strengthen Federal requirements on the EPA to notify the public when concentrations of lead in drinking water are above Federal requirements.

I am glad the entire Michigan delegation is backing this bill; and I am committed to continuing to work together to get answers and help the families in Flint who need clean water and, for that matter, Mr. Speaker, learning from this for the families in the entire United States to make sure that this doesn't happen to them as well.

Mr. Speaker, in America, in the 21st century, children should not have to worry about safe and clean drinking water. The Flint water crisis never should have happened, and we must take action to ensure it never happens again.

Making things right must be a cooperative effort at every level, and this bill takes important steps to ensure proper coordination going forward.

I offer all of my support, all of my assistance, all of my help and my votes to make sure this happens.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE), who has carried the concern and the emotion of this situation as the Representative in the House of Flint, Michigan. His energetic efforts, his determination, his obvious passion for getting this done, getting some relief, the relief essential for Flint done, is tremendously moving.

Mr. KILDEE. I thank Mr. TONKO for his comments and his support and leadership on this issue.

And I would like him to please extend my thanks to Ranking Member PALLONE for his effort and his support. I know he is dealing with a difficult time himself right now, and we extend our best wishes to him.

I want to thank all of my Michigan colleagues for joining as original cosponsors of this legislation; and I particularly thank Chairman UPTON for his help, his guidance, his assistance and, really, collaboration on getting a piece of legislation put together that we think is very helpful in preventing another situation such as what has occurred in my hometown from ever happening again in the United States.

I again thank Mr. UPTON for his assistance and leadership on this.

Flint is my home. The people I represent are the people I grew up with in Flint, Michigan. It is a great community. It has been through some struggles, for sure, in the last few decades, but we have never dealt with anything quite like this, something so fundamental as safe drinking water that we take for granted.

You turn on the faucet, as Mr. UPTON said, you expect the water that comes out of that faucet to be safe for yourself, for your children, to make formula, to cook food, to drink. And because of a series of decisions that really are almost incomprehensible in their impact, people in Flint, Michigan, can't drink their water; 100,000 people can't drink the water.

The thing that makes me most upset—sad, yes, but also angry—is that this crisis, this situation, which will last for decades in its impact, was completely avoidable.

Unlike a lot of other struggles that my hometown has faced as a result of big changes in the economy—development patterns, et cetera—this was a series of decisions that we can easily identify that could easily have been prevented with just more thought and more care and, in this case, a stronger set of requirements for disclosure when lead levels are elevated in a drinking water system.

So this legislation is one step. It is not the total solution. We really have to deal—and I hope my colleagues will also join us—with putting together a response to the crisis being felt by the people in Flint right now.

This bill, unfortunately, is too late to help them, but it can help the next Flint, perhaps. This would require the EPA to provide notice if the State agency responsible for enforcement of the clean drinking water laws does not act to provide notice to the citizens affected and to the water system.

Let me just be clear on that. The State of Michigan, in the case of the Flint situation, has primacy in terms of enforcement of these laws. It is their obligation to ensure that the clean drinking water laws are enforced, to collect data, to do sampling and testing, and to provide remediation, to provide intervention, if, in fact, it is not the case.

So, yes, there has been a failure of government, but I think we have to take care not to attempt to create some sort of false sense of equivalency of responsibility.

The city of Flint, for example, which is the most local level of government and where the water system is operated, was under the control of an emergency manager, a State official appointed to overtake operation of the city of Flint. So to the extent that the city was responsible, the city was the State in this regard.

In terms of the Federal role, there was apparent confusion or disagreement as to whether the EPA had authority, absent State notification to the public of the data that they had, whether the EPA had authority to go public, to make it clear that there was a problem. This legislation addresses that.

This legislation strengthens the hand of those who work at the EPA and actually requires them—not simply allows, but requires them—to provide notice to the public and to a water system operator in the event that the State fails to do so. Had that happened, it would not have prevented the bad decisions that led to this crisis, but it would have prevented them from going on for months and months and months with no action to protect the people in Flint.

This is important legislation. We need more. We need help for the people of Flint. But this is a step in the right direction in preventing what happened in Flint from happening to another community.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, might I inquire as to how much time I have remaining on my side.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) has 13½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO) has 11½ minutes remaining.

□ 1245

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BISHOP), again, an original cosponsor of the bill.

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I would first like to begin by thanking the gentleman from Flint, Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) for his leadership in this matter and for raising our attention to this.

Also, I would like to thank Chairman UPTON for his leadership for the Michigan delegation in bringing us together and putting aside any partisan differences to address a need of our great State and, also, for the children and families across our country.

I have spent my entire life in the State of Michigan. I was born there and raised there. Many generations before me were the same, born and raised in Michigan. My current family, my wife and my three kids, also live in Michigan and will also, I am sure, see to it that their children live there as well.

When I learned what happened in Flint, I was absolutely heartbroken. Frankly, it frightens me to think that a failure of this magnitude could happen in the 21st century and in our State.

Can you imagine not being able to drink the water from your own tap? What if you weren't able to bathe or take a shower because of fear of what might be in the water? The anger and the frustration is palpable, and it should be.

My district borders on Congressman KILDEE's, and I can tell you firsthand the crisis not only affects and impacts the community of Flint, but the entire Great Lakes State.

For weeks I have seen local high schools, veterans groups, and concerned citizens—you name it—people from all over Michigan, rising up to address the crisis and to help the residents, the families, and children of Flint.

When it comes to local, State, and Federal leadership, we must do everything possible to help as well. Every single one of us here today has a duty to ensure families and children are safe and have access to the essentials, the most basic of which is clean drinking water from household faucets.

Sure, we can point fingers and play the blame game. But when it comes down to fixing it, we must do so fast. We need more action than words. We need solutions.

What Chairman UPTON and Congressman KILDEE have proposed is a first-step solution to ensure this won't happen again.

First and foremost, this legislation makes sure the EPA will step in and notify the public when they know concentrations of lead in drinking water are above Federal requirements. It also streamlines communication between utilities, the States, the EPA, and the affected customers.

The entire delegation of the State of Michigan and Congress agree that this is a crisis. But to be clear, this is not a Democratic or Republican issue. I would say shame on anyone who attempts to capitalize on this issue or use the families of Flint in this crisis to further their own personal agenda. This is about common sense and delivering solutions to these children and families.

I ask my colleagues on behalf of both sides of the aisle to join Michigan and help us take action.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE). She is another member of the Michigan delegation.

Representative BRENDA LAWRENCE has shown great leadership in her role on the Oversight and Government Reform Committee and, again, has been a passionate voice to address the families of Flint.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I want to say that the crisis in Flint demands action. I ran for Congress after serving as a mayor because I felt strongly that our government has a responsibility.

When you ask for a vote, you are asking for the trust in our government. We betrayed the trust of our citizens when we did not provide a human need, and that is clean water.

I stand here today encouraged. I ran on the premise that we need to work together as a government. I can tell you that this crisis in Flint is not a political issue. It is a moral issue. It is why each of us in Congress sit here today on the vote of the people's trust, and that is to take care of this great country.

It is a moral issue, and it calls for all of us in Congress to act. Today I am standing here with a sense of hope being fulfilled that we have eliminated the aisle, and we are standing here together.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4470, the Safe Drinking Water Act Improved Compliance Awareness Act. This bill will ensure that EPA notifies communities of lead contamination if State or local agencies fail to do so. That clearly is what happened in Flint.

Local water authorities will have to provide notification to the public when lead contamination is a result of lead from pipes and other infrastructure leaching into the water supply. This notice will have to be provided to affected residents, regardless of whether any drinking water standards were violated.

If the operator does not notify the public—in this case, it was Michigan Environmental Quality—if they do not notify the public, then the EPA must do so. This is precisely what happened in Flint.

State officials repeatedly ignored the pleas of the residents and those we are calling civic heroes from outside and experts about the lead levels.

Passing this bill today will ensure that the situation in Flint—and I am joining with my Republican colleagues and Democratic—never happens again in our United States. The decision to share that type of critical information should not be based on political judgment.

H.R. 4470 will ensure that residents acquire the information they need about their drinking water systems and give EPA the ability and responsibility to step in and notify residents if a State or water system fails to act.

H.R. 4470 is just the first step, as we heard, in addressing our country's drinking water infrastructure issue. I hope that we can continue to work together in a bipartisan manner to ensure that Flint never happens again.

This is the first step in fixing our infrastructure in America because other

Members of Congress have talked about lead water crises in their communities. So this is a first step.

For me, this is a fulfilling day to stand here and support my colleagues, regardless of our political affiliation, and take care of the people of America.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MOOLENAAR). Again, he is a cosponsor of Mr. KILDEE's bill.

Mr. MOOLENAAR. Mr. Speaker, I also want to join my Michigan colleagues as a cosponsor of this legislation and thank Representative KILDEE and Chairman UPTON for bringing this legislation forward.

Our hearts go out to the people of Flint who are enduring so much and persevering during this time. It is heartwarming to see the way people across the country have come together in support of the people of Flint.

The sad thing is that this situation could have been prevented and should have been prevented. The legislation we are discussing today here in the House of Representatives is because of failures in local, State, and Federal Government.

The fact is that the officials at the EPA knew last April—10 months ago—that the Flint Utilities Department was not using corrosion controls, putting water safety at risk.

Instead of alerting the public, the EPA stayed silent. When an EPA employee tried to speak out, he was silenced. The EPA deferred to a State agency, the MDEQ, which also failed to tell the public.

Last month the EPA administrator sent a memo creating a formal policy on the importance of assessing and responding to critical public health issues. That the administrator had to remind employees of the importance of public health speaks to the misplaced priority of the EPA and its officials.

So today we have to pass a law requiring the Agency to notify the public when water quality is unsafe and constitutes a public health threat. This legislation is a reminder to the EPA that it needs to focus on its core responsibility with safe drinking water, using its authority appropriately, rather than overreaching outside of its jurisdiction.

This is an example of one community that has been adversely affected. Flint is not alone in this challenge, and this has ramifications all across our country.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I am waiting for another individual to offer testimony.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. TROTT), another cosponsor of the legislation.

Mr. TROTT. Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank Chairman UPTON and Representative KILDEE for their important, bipartisan work on this issue.

I rise today in support of the Safe Drinking Water Act Improved Compliance Awareness Act. This bill is a step in the right direction to preserve and protect the health of our citizens.

The legislation requires the EPA administrator to work with States and local water authorities to develop a strategic plan for addressing lead contaminants in drinking water. This important legislation will ensure that the complete failure to notify people of a health risk, which occurred in Flint, does not happen again.

This is an issue that many communities across our country will have to deal with as our water system infrastructure ages. We must ensure that the public is aware, our citizens are informed, and that our water authorities and agencies identify and take steps to prevent this level of failure from happening again.

Mr. Speaker, on the Federal level, it is unacceptable that the EPA, an agency with a budget of over $8 billion, did not escalate its concerns over the presence of lead contaminants.

This is an agency that is literally paid to protect the public health and environment, and it failed. This failure may not happen again. All Americans should feel safe drinking water from their kitchen sink.

This legislation is a commonsense solution. I urge its immediate passage.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SANFORD).

Mr. SANFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this act. I thank the chairman for his hard work and the committee's hard work on this bill.

I will be exceedingly brief because certainly, as has been outlined by any number of different speakers, this is about a failure of government at a multitude of different levels, at the State, local, and Federal levels, a real failure and real consequences to the people of Flint.

It is also, I think, a reminder to all of us of the significance of bracket creep in government; wherein, if everybody is involved, nobody is involved; if everybody is accountable, nobody is accountable.

That is true of a government at a government level. It is true of a regulatory body. The importance of clearly defined missions I think is part of what your strategic plan really gets at in this act, and I admire your work on that.

I also want to just reference that this is also a reminder, a wake-up call, if you will, on the importance of watching out for unsustainable political promises.

I say that because, if you look at the general budget and the general fund within Flint, basically one-third of their revenue goes to pay for retiree benefits.

That number by the year 2020 is going to rise to essentially 40 percent, 40 percent. I bring that up because it is indeed a wake-up call to the unsustainability of our Federal promises as you look at the numbers going forward at the Federal level.

So my heart goes out to the people of Flint. I think that this is an important measure going forward, but it is also an important reminder to every one of us here at the Federal level to watch out for the unsustainable promises here in Washington.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, might I inquire how much time remains?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YODER). The gentleman from Michigan has 5½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from New York has 8 minutes remaining.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE).

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding. I appreciate all the comments and the support, especially the sympathy and, really, unity with the people of my hometown of Flint.

I do want to ensure, though, that we are properly characterizing the legislation, its reasoning, and its impact.

The legislation would actually not just require EPA to provide notice, but would require the local jurisdiction, the State agency, to provide them with the opportunity to do what they should do anyway, that is, to provide notice. Absent their willingness to do so, the EPA would then be required.

It is an important distinction because, in this case, the State of Michigan has primacy in enforcement of these rules.

The EPA in the case of Flint did take action when they learned of the elevated lead levels. The action was to repeatedly reach out to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and insist that they enforce the lead and copper rule.

Actually, they went so far as to insist that they initiate corrosion control, which is the mechanism by which lead leaching would have been prevented.

□ 1300

Not only did the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality fail to act, they actually told the EPA almost a year ago that they actually had initiated corrosion control when they had not.

I think it would be a mistake to create some sort of equivalency between the role of the EPA and the role of the State of Michigan in this. It was the State of Michigan that had prime responsibility that failed.

The EPA, while I would have preferred that they had shouted from the mountaintop that they were having this problem getting the lead agency to enforce the rule, there was at least confusion as to whether or not they had the authority to do so. Even today, the State of Michigan continues to push back on the EPA's attempts to

test water to insist on enforcement. It is an important distinction to make.

Regarding my friend Mr. SANFORD's comments, I appreciate his reflection on the financial situation within the city of Flint. While that is a set of questions that clearly needs attention, the truth of the matter is, had the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality insisted on the use of corrosion control in the Flint water system, as the law would require, the cost would have been $140 a day. All of this could have been prevented by the State simply requiring that $140 a day be spent.

This legislation is important in preventing this from happening again so that an agency of a State that refuses to enforce the law at least can't do so in the dark; and if the State won't give public notice, it would require the EPA to do so. This is an important step. We have crafted this legislation to make sure that each level of government is transparent when it comes to these issues.

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

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

In closing, let me again offer my appreciation to Chairman UPTON and our ranking member, Representative PALLONE, for their leadership on this and for working in a spirit of bipartisanship to bring this measure to the floor and in working with the Michigan delegation and, in particular, Representative KILDEE, who has been directly impacted on behalf of Flint, Michigan, which he represents.

I would also make certain that we remember that under the Safe Drinking Water Act, as Representative KILDEE indicated, States have primacy, an important issue for Members who frequently talked about empowering our State and local governments. It is a State's responsibility when they accept that role of primacy to run these systems and comply with Federal standards.

Before we point fingers at the EPA, let's remember that Congress has cut its budget year after year. We want them to do more with less. We have passed the point of achieving efficiency, we have cut valuable staffing, and we have cut valuable programs.

We can point to failures by all levels of government in this situation, but the public doesn't want to hear us blame anyone. They want and deserve real solutions and financial assistance to address the crisis at hand.

We need to help the people of Flint and better protect our public health going forward.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I encourage all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. TONKO said this bill is not about a blame game. We are trying to fix a problem so it doesn't happen again anyplace.

I just might note that the House was out 2 weeks. We had Martin Luther King week, then we had the snowstorm, and we couldn't come back.

Our committee held a number of briefings. I expanded it to include certainly all of the members—Republican and Democrat—on the Energy and Commerce Committee, but I also extended that out to all of the members of the Michigan delegation, both our Senators, as well as the Oversight and Government Reform Committee majority and minority staff.

Mr. KILDEE mentioned about Mr. PALLONE not being here. His father died earlier this week, so he is where he should be. But he cares deeply about this legislation as well.

I know when I sat down with my friend Mr. KILDEE last week to talk about the intent of this legislation and where he was, we were able to, I think, make some important, constructive changes that strengthen the bill. It was a no-brainer for us to get every Member on both sides of the aisle from Michigan to be an original cosponsor, and I congratulate him for that initiative.

But I must say, too, this is a first step. I know in the future our committee is going to be looking at how we can better expand flexibility, I think, of States as it relates to their safe drinking water fund, and the State revolving fund as well. We are looking to hear from the States what we might be able to do on the Federal response. Again, the primacy is at the State and local level, particularly when a State, like we have seen here, actually has been given an emergency declaration, as our Governor sought.

I encourage all of my colleagues to support this bill, and I commend Mr. KILDEE.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Safe Drinking Water Act Improved Compliance Awareness Act and am proud to be a cosponsor of this bill, which will strengthen public notification requirements in the event of lead contamination.

The situation in Flint is unacceptable—it is a violation of the right to clean water and a breakdown of the basic responsibility of government to its citizens. And it was completely preventable—we know the damaging impacts of lead and we know how to protect people from lead poisoning. We need an aggressive response, both for the people in Flint and for every community that faces lead exposure.

Today's bill is just a first step to address this problem by ensuring that when contamination occurs, communities will be informed of what is happening and what will be done to fix it. We should follow this action with support for the Flint community and robust funding for lead poisoning prevention and clean water programs. I look forward to our continued work to protect children and communities from the dangers of lead.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Safe Drinking Water Act Improved Compliance Awareness Act, as amended. This bill will allow more transparency and increase education and outreach efforts to communities about their drinking water systems.

Communities are entitled to information about their drinking water, and we should make every effort to ensure that Americans receive clear, concise and timely information about the safety of that water. This bill addresses a concern raised during the Flint water crisis about the significant delay in informing Flint residents about the dangerous levels of lead in their water. I greatly appreciate the work of Mr. KILDEE and the Michigan Delegation in coming together and quickly pufting forward this legislation. It is a good place to begin our efforts to help Flint and I support its passage.

Yet, this is a small, first step and does not address the imminent and long-term problems facing our nation's water systems. I know my friend from Michigan, Mr. KILDEE, agrees with me on this and has put forward legislation focusing on immediate and long-term investments for Flint to address both its health and infrastructure needs. We must do more for Flint and more to ensure that our nation as a whole receives safe, clean drinking water at the tap.

As I have stated time and again, our drinking water systems are deteriorating. Transparency is important, but we need to follow this effort with a reauthorization of the Safe Drinking Water Act that increases the investment in our drinking water systems.

We must invest in our drinking water infrastructure to repair, maintain, and replace aging pipes. We also must equip communities with the resources to ensure the delivery of safe drinking water, safeguard systems from vulnerabilities such as climate change, and encourage good financial and environmental management of water systems. There is no doubt that this will be a large task, but we cannot shy away from it. The longer we delay, the more costly the investment.

This should be a wakeup call that we cannot continue to stand by watching as Flint—and far too many other American communities—are exposed to unsafe drinking water. We must take action now.

Again, I commend Mr. KILDEE and the cosponsors for their efforts on this legislation. I thank the Gentleman and his staff for working with me and my staff to ensure this bill will truly increase transparency for communities.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill and look forward to additional opportunities to work in a bipartisan fashion in the remaining months of this Congress on the pressing issue of safe, reliable drinking water for all Americans.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4470, the Safe Drinking Water Act Improved Compliance Awareness Act. This bill is a good first step to helping ensure the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) never again allows an intransigent state government endanger the public welfare.

Let there be no mistake. The blame for what happened in Flint lies directly at the feet of Governor Snyder who ignored Flint's democratic rights, his appointed Emergency Managers who wanted to save a buck, and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) that was too timid to protect the public from haphazard changes to the Flint water system.

But the EPA needs to take some blame for not dismissing out of hands the efforts of the Governor, his Emergency Managers, and MDEQ to delay addressing the crisis in Flint.

The EPA let the endless echo of "EPA overreach" prevent them from doing their job—which is telling anti-regulatory special interests that the public's health comes first.

This bill is a start to fixing that problem, but we have a long way to go. My colleagues across the aisle need to stop fighting EPA on behalf of special interests, and start fighting alongside EPA in the public interest.

Because if they don't, there will be more Flints, there will be more mothers who can't sleep because their children are sick, and there will be more "bi-partisan" bills expressing hindsight support for EPA action.

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. 4470, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3442, DEBT MANAGEMENT AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT OF 2015, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3293, SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST ACT

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, by the direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 609 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 609

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3442) to provide further means of accountability of the United States debt and promote fiscal responsibility. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. No amendment to the bill shall be in order except those printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. At any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3293) to provide for greater accountability in Federal funding for scientific research, to promote the progress of science in the United States that serves that national interest. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. No amendment to the bill shall be in order except those printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of a rule and the underlying bills, both of which will enhance accountability and create better processes for our Federal Government.

Necessary legislation is what we are talking about today. Legislation that will help the Federal Government not only in its processes, but that will allow the American people to have confidence in what their government does not only on their behalf, but for a better future for the American citizens, including our children and grandchildren.

We are here today because these are important issues, and we are addressing them. That is what Speaker RYAN wants this body to be doing. Speaker RYAN wants us to bring our best ideas to the floor, to make sure the American people understand what they are, to fully debate them, and to have all the open processes that are necessary to make sure that we are bringing to the American people the best ideas of their elected representatives. That is why we are here today.

I also want to point out that the Rules Committee, of which I am chairman, asked Members to submit their ideas and amendments regarding these bills, and 14 amendments were made in order. That means that the Rules Committee met, we looked, and we had discussions with Members about the ideas that they have. Fourteen were made in order last night by the Rules Committee, and I am proud of that.

As a result, our resolution provides that H.R. 3442, the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2015, which was altered and supported by the gentleman from Coppell, Texas, Congressman KENNY MARCHANT, and H.R. 3293, the Scientific Research in the National Interest Act, which was brought to the committee by the young chairman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, LAMAR SMITH from San Antonio, Texas, will both be considered today under a structured rule.

Mr. Speaker, I would normally run through my opening dialogue that I would have about what is in these bills, why they are important, and what they would do. But because of time considerations today, one of our newest Members of Congress wants to speak. He has got a meeting in a few minutes. I would like to ask him if he would at this time take part in my opening statement.

I yield to the gentleman from Windsor, Colorado (Mr. BUCK).

□ 1315

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, for years, our Nation has limped along from debt crisis to debt crisis. Every time, we say to ourselves "just a little more spending today, and we will fix this mess tomorrow," but tomorrow never seems to come, and the ocean of red ink gets deeper and deeper with each passing day. Thanks to this "spend now" and "save never" mentality, the national debt has soared to $19 trillion, and there is no end in sight. The Federal Government has been overspending for so long that we are financially bankrupt. If we continue to pass this debt on to our children and grandchildren, we are also morally bankrupt. We need a solution to our constant budget busting.

H.R. 3442 will help our Nation address this fiscal crisis. By requiring the administration to testify before Congress,

we are requiring them to bring realistic, serious solutions to the table. We are calling on them to offer a plan for actually reducing our debt, and—this is key—we are requiring these solutions before we reach the point of no return.

What we have wrought in debt and deficit isn't merely a fiscal challenge or an economic problem—it is poisonous to our human potential. It is time for the Federal Government to start making the same tough choices that small businesses and folks in Colorado are making every day, and this bill is a good start.

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

The original intent also of a piece of legislation that we have goes back to 1950. The legislation that created the National Science Foundation was there at the time to support science that was in the national interest. Unfortunately, the NSF has funded too many wasteful projects under the ideas that have been presented to us by the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, the purposes of which were probably nebulous at best, which would be the argument that Chairman LAMAR SMITH made with us, and which were, clearly, not necessarily in the national interest.

We heard testimony that every single project that the National Science Foundation handled was in the American people's best interest. We think that our discussion with Members of Congress today will show them that we need to change the wording to where the national interest is obligatory to a proposal before a proposal is given. You have to prove it is in the Nation's best interest to spend money. Examples of such projects include $700,000 to create a climate change-themed musical, $38,000 to study prehistoric rabbit hunting on the Iberian Peninsula, and—perhaps my favorite of all—$605,000 to study why people around the world cheat on their taxes.

Mr. Speaker, this is hard-earned money that was spent that I do not believe was in the national interest. ''In the interest of the Nation'' means that it needs to be prioritized and that it needs to be something that would produce an outcome that would, from the National Science Foundation, benefit the American people.

H.R. 3293 directly benefits the American people by promoting greater accountability—a mission statement, so to speak—in funding scientific research, not only at the NSF, but that also ensures that the research conducted is always in the national interest.

This is, I believe, a commonsense, bipartisan answer. Certainly, LAMAR SMITH, as the chairman of the committee, brought forth the ideas on a bipartisan basis to ensure that what we would do is not get in the way of any projects that are currently out there. Instead, anything that is in the future would have to subscribe to the conditions of the national interest.

Reckless and mandatory spending has placed our national finances and our economy—including our jobs, our infrastructure, and our future—in peril. Today, the total debt is subject to the limit, which includes Treasury securities held by Federal trust funds and other accounts, which stand at over $19 trillion. Additionally, the Congressional Budget Office projects that the 2016 deficit will be $544 billion. You can see that we are not just at $19 trillion but that we are adding to that.

Mr. Speaker, you know and I know, in just a matter of weeks, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. TOM PRICE), the chairman of the Budget Committee, will be bringing forth to this floor bills that address what our year is going to look like in 2017. The President of the United States has a chance to do this. Every year, the President submits his budget. It is $1 trillion more a year in spending. It is more government. It is more spending. It adds more things to our debt. Republicans, since 2011—since we have been in the majority—have tried to submit budgets that have held us in place; but by holding us in place, which is the best we can do, it does not mean that we were addressing creating a surplus, which would be required not to add to that debt.

So where we are is back to the American people again with an opportunity for them to understand our processes—a budget, an opportunity to get to where we do not add to the debt. Yet what we are here to do today is not the budget but to address what we do under a circumstance when we have a debt limit by which we have met the constitutional constraints, the legal constraints, and what we are going to do in moving forward.

We are taking a bill that comes directly from KENNY MARCHANT, who is a member of our Ways and Means Committee, who has spent a number of years in thinking through how we can put a spotlight—how we can put the light of day—on this issue to the point at which we can talk about it, understand more about it, and do something about it. That is also the second bill: the National Science Foundation, what is in the national interest, and, clearly, looking at the debt.

If we are going to have a debt limit increase, how do we as Members of Congress, under our constitutional powers, understand not just the issue but also the obligation that we have when we take votes so that we know what is at risk, what the plan would be, and, perhaps more importantly, how we can work together with the administration—Republicans and Democrats—to make sure we get a better answer.

Now, there is one last point that needs to be made, and I think it was made yesterday in the committee, not just by the gentleman TOM COLE, not just by VIRGINIA FOXX from North Carolina, and not just by me, which is that we don't know who the President is going to be next year. We don't know who the Secretary of the Treasury is going to be next year. The gentleman, the author of the bill, thinks that that is a prime reason his legislation should be a bipartisan, commonsense piece of legislation so that we are saying whoever it is has the authority and the responsibility to come to Congress and give us the insight.

Let's work together so that we avoid debt, so that we avoid making a mistake, and, mostly, so that we are on the same page together. That is why we are here today, Mr. Speaker.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

(Mr. MCGOVERN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS), my good friend and distinguished chairman of the Rules Committee, for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

I rise in strong opposition to this rule, which provides for the consideration of H.R. 3293, a bill to hamstring the National Science Foundation and its gold standard review process; and I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 3442, a misnamed debt management bill that provides Congress with no new information about the debt limit and that does nothing to actually prevent default.

Despite a promise from Speaker RYAN and House Republican leadership for an open and deliberative process, this rule makes in order only 14 of the 47 amendments that were submitted on both pieces of legislation to our committee—only six amendments for the Science, Space, and Technology Committee's bill and eight for the debt limit bill. Democrats on the Rules Committee offered an open rule so that both Democratic and Republican Members could have an opportunity to make their views known on this bill, but as has become the custom, the Democrats voted for an open process, and every single Republican voted against an open process.

Members should have the opportunity to offer their ideas on the House floor, and we should be having a robust debate on these issues. Here is a crazy idea, Mr. Speaker: Maybe, if we actually opened up the process and allowed for a full debate, we could actually pass bipartisan legislation that would move through the legislative process and then go on to the President's desk where he would then sign it into law. Yet, for the most part, my friends on the other side of the aisle don't seem interested in working with Democrats to advance common goals that will actually help the American people, and the legislation before us today is no exception.

H.R. 3442 requires the Secretary of the Treasury to appear before Congress and submit a report on the administration's debt reduction proposals. I have got some good news for my friends. The

Treasury Secretary already regularly meets with Congress to discuss the debt limit, and the President offers proposals to address the debt and the deficit in his annual budgets. I would say to my colleagues on the Republican side that it is okay—you can ask questions. That is what hearings are for. You can ask questions about the debt and deficit reduction.

In fact, just yesterday, President Obama sent his fiscal year 2017 budget request to Congress, which included over $2.9 trillion in deficit reduction over the coming decade—this on top of the $4 trillion to $5 trillion in deficit reduction already achieved since 2010. If my friends are interested in hearing about these proposals to reduce our deficit, perhaps they should reconsider their unprecedented and insulting decision to exclude the OMB from testifying on the administration's budget proposal. Such a contemptuous attitude demeans Congress and the American people.

In addition to its annual budget, the administration also provides the information requested by H.R. 3442 in the form of the Mid-Session Review, of the Daily Treasury Statement, of the Monthly Treasury Statement, of the Monthly Statement of the Public Debt, of the Schedules of Federal Debt, and of the Financial Report of the United States Government.

The Treasury manages our debt, but it is Congress that holds the power of the purse. It is our responsibility to raise the debt limit when it is reached, and I would point out that it is the legislative decisions made by Congress that determine the level of debt.

I say to my Republican friends, if you don't want to deal with the issue of raising the debt limit, then don't accumulate all of these bills. The debt limit debate is about making sure we live up to our financial obligations, the obligations that this Chamber agreed to.

Last night in the Rules Committee, we had a debate about deficit reduction and how to deal with the debt. Members on both sides of the aisle offered suggestions on ways to reduce our deficit, and that is an important discussion we should be having because it is a big issue. Yet this bill is not about deficit reduction; it is not about trying to get our debt under control; and it is not a serious attempt to help us avoid future default. The Republican majority has threatened default on at least three separate occasions: in 2011, when default was narrowly avoided with the Budget Control Act; in 2013, when Republican extremism led to a government shutdown, costing our fragile economy $24 billion and 120,000 private sector jobs; and this past fall, when Democrats helped to pass the bipartisan budget agreement despite opposition from two-thirds of the Republicans in this Congress.

I would like to point out what is missing in this bill that we are going to be talking about later on this week. The report required by this legislation would exclude the most important information Congress needs when the debt limit is reached, which is an analysis of the catastrophic consequences of default. If this were a serious attempt to address our debt, I would think that the majority would want to know which bills the Treasury would need to stop paying if Congress failed to raise the debt limit. Would veterans stop receiving their benefits? Would Medicare providers stop being reimbursed? Would students stop receiving Pell grants? The chairman of the Rules Committee said in his opening statement that the American people want us to do something. I agree.

□ 1330

This is not doing something. This is trying to point the finger somewhere else so that we can avoid responsibility for doing our job.

If we were serious about this issue, maybe we ought to think about actually passing legislation that would help reduce our deficit and pay down our debt. Maybe we ought to be talking about comprehensive immigration reform. CBO says that we would save hundreds of billions of dollars for our National Treasury if we actually did that, did something positive to resolve our immigration crisis and, in doing so, we would save all this money that could go to reducing our deficit.

Maybe one of the things we ought to be talking about here is actually not passing tax breaks for wealthy people that we don't pay for because that adds to the bills that we accumulate here in Congress. If you want to give Donald Trump another tax cut, pay for it. That is all.

Maybe we ought to talk about dealing with the issue of these war costs. I mean, we can't even come together and actually debate and vote on an AUMF as these new wars are popping up all over the world.

By the way, if we did, maybe we could talk about the cost, which, by the way, a big chunk of these war costs aren't even paid for. They are put on our credit card. I mean, the only people sacrificing in these wars are the men and women who we put in harm's way and their families. The rest of us do nothing. We don't even ask the American people to pay for it.

Well, here is an idea: if people don't want to pay for these wars, maybe we ought not to go. Just putting them on our credit card should not be an answer. Those are the kinds of things we should be talking about here today if we were serious about getting our budget under control.

Simply put, Mr. Speaker, this legislation is duplicative, unnecessary, and a waste of time. It does nothing to prevent future Republican threats of default, and I strongly oppose this effort.

This week, also, Mr. Speaker, House Republicans are bringing to the floor H.R. 3293, another antiscience piece of legislation. Now, some might call this a thinly veiled attempt by the majority to dictate what the National Science Foundation spends their funding on, but there really isn't even a thin veil trying to cover up what this is. This is a blatant attempt to coerce the NSF into only funding projects that fit into the Republican political messaging agenda.

The NSF receives upwards of 50,000 proposals a year. Out of all these proposals, only about 20 percent end up receiving funding. The NSF puts the applications through a rigorous process of peer review in order to determine which proposals they will fund.

I would like to emphasize the fact that this is a peer review, not a congressional review. It is a peer review. Congress does not review these applications because the vast majority of us are not scientists. I am not a scientist. I don't think many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are scientists.

The NSF review process is also designed to be confidential in order to protect against any internal or external bias. Injecting congressional interference and disruption into a well-functioning process will have a drastically negative effect.

Now, it should come as no surprise that a big part of the Republican majority's argument is that the NSF is focusing too much of its funding on projects studying climate change. I tried to figure out what the hook was, and I found that that is it.

I have said this here before, and I will keep saying it until we stop debating these ridiculous bills. We know that climate change is real. We see it. We live it. The scientific community overwhelmingly has verified it. Climate change is not a theory. It is not a hoax. It is not some silly fantasy. The NSF should be funding research that is directed toward understanding and mitigating the effects of climate change.

The majority on the Science Committee has been on a crusade to inject itself into NSF's independent grant review process. The committee has demanded an explanation on how roughly 40 studies could possibly serve our national interests. Now, we have seen time and time again that basic research leads to positive, life-changing outcomes never imagined by researchers.

Congress certainly does not have the experience or the knowledge to predetermine the future value of a research project. Just because the title of a project doesn't sound particularly overwhelmingly impressive doesn't mean it isn't, and we have a gazillion examples of that in the research that has been done in the NSF.

It is best to leave the scientific review process in the hands of our world-class scientists who resoundingly oppose efforts to interfere with NSF's rigorous review process. I join them in strong opposition to this bill.

Now, once again, Mr. Speaker, we are on the floor debating two bills that are going nowhere. Each bill has received a

veto threat from the White House because this is not serious legislation. Mr. Speaker, this is just more political fodder for the right wing of the Republican Party, sound bites for my friends on the other side of the aisle to use while on the campaign trail to attempt to sound like they are dealing with issues in a serious manner when, in fact, they are not. It doesn't matter what year it is. The American people elected us to solve problems, not pad Republicans' political talking points.

I ask my colleagues to oppose this restrictive rule and the two partisan pieces of legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Rules Committee made in order more amendments than Senator HARRY REID did as majority leader over 2 years—in just 1 day. In just 1 day, more amendments were made in order in the United States House of Representatives. So I get it. I do.

I think I would be on the defensive, also, if I were my colleagues, my friends that are Democrats, because what they are doing to this country doesn't work, and they are defensive about it. So they view anything that Republicans do, even on a bipartisan basis but doesn't fit their narrative as, ''this is political.''

Well, balancing the budget is in the best interest of the American people. Presenting realistic budgets—not a trillion dollars more in spending and bigger government—is exactly the kind of policies that Republicans do believe.

By the way, if they were really serious about trying to fix this global warming, they wold look in their own backyard with home heating fuel, which is diesel fuel, which they are putting all through the Northeast to heat their homes. That is a huge contributor to global warming, as opposed to clean, natural gas. They can make their own decisions. But I would say back to them: I think you ought to measure three times and have seen once, not just go accusing other people of things.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the Rules Committee, we had the gentleman from Coppell, Texas, KENNY MARCHANT, a great member of our Ways and Means Committee, come and testify about this bill, about how we look at raising the debt limit. He spoke very passionately, and there was a lot of common sense involved about how do we look at this issue and how do we solve it.

I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MARCHANT).

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding to me and his support on this issue. Also, I thank him for allowing the Rules Committee to spend over an hour on this issue yesterday to hear both sides of this issue as far as the debt ceiling goes.

Mr. Speaker, I can't go to a townhall meeting or even go to a gathering of just a few people without the subject of the debt ceiling coming up. My constituents on a regular basis, through emails, phone calls, and letters, ask me the questions: What is Congress doing about addressing the debt ceiling? Why do you lurch from year to year to year about the debt ceiling? Why don't you ever look at the debt ceiling in a comprehensive manner?

The debt is too high. When I introduced this bill in September, the debt had reached $18.1 trillion. Today, it is over $19 trillion. If the current law remains unchanged, the Congressional Budget Office predicts that the Federal debt held by the public will exceed 100 percent of our GDP in 25 years, and this is unsustainable.

The window to get a handle on the Nation's debt is closing very quickly. We need to enact solutions to retire the debt before it is too late. That is what the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act is all about.

This bill creates a new debt limit framework that places greater attention on finding debt reduction solutions. It does so by injecting transparency, accountability, and timeliness into the debt limit process. The bill would allow Congress and the administration to take comprehensive assessments of the debt and its drivers well before the statutory debt limit is reached.

Each year since I have been in Congress, I can pick up the newspaper one day and find that the Secretary of the Treasury announces that we have reached our statutory debt limit and usually proclaims a date. In this case, the statutory debt limit will be reached next March of 2017. At that point, everybody seems to go about their business. There is no particular action taken.

In fact, last month after that proclamation was made that we had reached our statutory debt ceiling, 7 months went by without us reaching the debt ceiling. How did that happen? Well, it happened because the Secretary of the Treasury has the ability to implement extraordinary measures. Now, if any committees in the Congress should know what those extraordinary measures that he is using are going to be or are, it is the Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee.

So this bill very simply lays out a framework where, before the debt ceiling is reached—and the Secretary of Treasury knows that—he has a framework of up to 60 days to come and appear before the Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee, which could be a joint meeting, and lay out for us when the debt ceiling will be reached—not after we have reached the debt ceiling, but before we have reached the debt ceiling—what extraordinary measures he will take once we have reached that debt ceiling and when, in fact, he thinks we will actually run out of money.

In that report, he will actually then lay out the administration's plan on addressing that debt in the short term, in the midterm, and in the future. So it is a very commonsense plan. It involves one very specific meeting with these two jurisdictional committees with the Secretary of the Treasury. The whole focal point of that meeting will be to talk about the debt ceiling. That does not happen now.

We have dozens of reports that are online. We have dozens of discussions besides this, but never statutorily is the Secretary of the Treasury and the two jurisdictional committees required to meet and discuss this. This is the great thing about this bill, the implementation of this bill.

Like so many Americans, my constituents have watched with great concern as the debt has skyrocketed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TIPTON). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 additional minute to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. MARCHANT. If we share these concerns at all—and I know that many of us do—we need to pass the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the rule.

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

Maybe I can clear all this up so we don't have to debate this bill.

The gentleman asked a question about extraordinary measures that the Secretary of the Treasury could potentially use to deal with the debt ceiling. I would just tell him that they are defined in statute, and we will happily provide him a copy of the statute so that he can understand that.

I would go back to what I said in my opening statement that, if we are serious about dealing with our deficit and our debt, then maybe we ought to be thinking in these terms, about actually not accumulating all these bills that get us to the point where we have to raise the debt ceiling.

I mean, we in Congress—not the administration, but we in Congress—accumulate all these bills and all these financial obligations. Once you do that, you have to pay for them. Our constituents, when they accumulate credit card debt, they have got to pay it. They just can't not pay it because they don't want to. So we have to start behaving like adults here and understand that we need to pay our bills.

I would suggest to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle that one way we might want to save some money and not add it to the deficit or to our debt is to stop giving Donald Trump tax cuts that you don't pay for.

□ 1345

If you want to have tax cuts for wealthy individuals, fine. Pay for them. Don't not pay for them. Stop subsidizing big oil companies in this country.

Maybe there was a time when we first started exploring for oil that you

could make the case that taxpayers ought to be subsidizing oil companies. Not anymore. Not with global warming and certainly not when they are making zillions of dollars a year in profits. Maybe we could take that money and put it toward deficit reduction.

Or maybe we could pay for these wars that everybody seems to want to commit our young men and women to. If you want to go to war, you ought to pay for it, not just put it on a credit card. If you are not prepared to do that, then end these wars.

But just putting in danger the lives of our brave men and women and just accumulating all these massive bills that there is no accountability of I think is unconscionable.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I now yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH).

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I respect the motivation that underlies this bill. We have got a debt in this country that is too large, and we have got to address it, but this is a nonresponse.

The job of addressing the debt belongs to Congress. It can't be outsourced. The Secretary of the Treasury has no more authority to address the debt than the Secretary of Agriculture or Education or the Democratic National Committee or the Republican Campaign Committee. This is a job that has to be done, but it is our job to do it.

Asking the Secretary of the Treasury to come in and talk about when that date certain will be on default when we set that date when we pass budgets means that we are asking somebody else to do our job and asking somebody who actually doesn't even have the authority to do the job. That belongs to Congress.

Every time we vote on either a tax cut or an appropriation bill, it has clear implications for how that will impact on the debt ceiling. It is debatable because there are fluctuations as to when we will hit that date.

But it is absolutely certain that, when we appropriate money or we pass tax cuts, in one case spending will go up, and in the other case revenues will go down.

What we have done is gone along in a kind of la-la land where we think we can cut taxes, we can raise spending, and then we are astonished when a year or so later there is actually a bill that comes due.

This is not the debt management bill. It is not the fiscal responsibility bill. It is the debt mismanagement and fiscal irresponsibility bill.

Think about the things that we have done. Mr. MCGOVERN has been talking about it. But we had a war in Iraq, a trillion dollars. Nobody paid for that. We voted to spend a trillion dollars on tax cuts. We can have an argument about tax policy. But you know what, revenues went down.

Congress voted to spend $800 billion on the prescription drug program, something that had bipartisan support. Not paid for. And then just a few weeks ago we passed tax extenders that are going to reduce revenues by $2 trillion.

Actions have consequences. The consequences are ones that are inevitable and foreseeable as a result of the actions of this Congress. This Congress, instead of assuming its responsibility, tries to outsource it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. WELCH. To someone else, it is a dodge. That is all it is. It is us trying to fool the American people with a game of three-card Monte where we are pretending that the problem that we are decrying had somehow mysteriously evolved out of nowhere.

I respect the concern of the authors of this bill about our debt. What I don't respect is the failure of Congress to address it.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, the reason why we are doing this is because one day 2 years ago the President, through the Treasury, wrote off $339 billion in one day. That is not responsible. It didn't happen in one day.

They play games at Treasury. The President of the United States plays games with this issue. Now it sounds like my colleagues are, also. This is an honest attempt to have a dialogue.

Regardless of who is going to be President or whoever is going to be Treasury Secretary next year, we want to know what kind of games or what kind of straightforward business they are going to operate.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Butler, Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY), one of the most exciting young Members of this Congress.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. I thank the gentleman for referring to me as young and exciting. I am going to phone my wife to let her know that is the case.

Mr. Speaker, I come before you today because I am in strong support of H.R. 3442. I think that sometimes we make this a Democratic versus Republican issue. Responsibility is not a political issue. It is a moral issue.

Irresponsibility is the problem that we have. I wish we could go away from making political talking points into making solid policy positions that say: okay, fine, if we are going to increase our debt ceiling, tell me why you are going to get there.

I come from the private sector. There are many times in my life I have had to go to lenders and tell them I need to borrow money. The first thing they would say is: give me your financials; let me look at the way you are running your company; let me see about what you are doing; then we will make a decision.

Then they would come back to me and say: you know what, I am looking at what you are asking for, and you definitely need an injection of capital; but my question is what is your turnaround plan so you are not back here in 6 months or 12 months asking for more money on a failed model.

The people's House, the Congress, is made up of both Republicans and Democrats. More importantly, it is made up of Americans. We are looking at a year when the tax revenues are the highest they have ever been—$3.25 trillion—yet, we continue to spend $3.7 trillion to $3.8 trillion.

Now people look at that and their eyes kind of roll back in their head. They say: I have absolutely no idea what you are talking about.

So you reduce it down to this, which I think is the most effective way of explaining it. Hardworking American couples sit down at the kitchen table. It is kitchen table economics. It is not all this other stuff. It is not all these hieroglyphics.

The husband and the wife talk and say: you know what, Honey, we had a great year; I was able to bring home $32,500; what I want you to do is to go out and spend $37,500 or $38,000.

They would look at each other and say: wait a minute, you told me you had a great year—and you did—but you want me to spend even more money than you brought in.

We constantly tell the American people: you are going to have to tighten your belts; you are going to have to live within your means. And then, because we don't have to, we go out and borrow and raise the debt ceiling.

Think about that couple that is increasing their debt load year after year after year—deficit spending—and we are crowing about the fact that you know what, we have cut our deficit spending by half a trillion dollars this year. Aren't we doing well?

My question is: so where does that deficit spending go? It goes onto your long-term debt. You are digging the hole so deep that you will never be able to climb out of it, but you are feeling good about it because you were able to satisfy whatever your needs were at that moment.

That is not only irresponsible, it is unconscionable. More than that, it is immoral for people to sit in this House as representatives of the American people who have been given the authority to tax, but they have also been given the responsibility to spend that hardworking American taxpayer's dollar.

More importantly, once you have authority and once you have responsibility, you have got to be accountable not just to that person in the mirror, but, in my case, the 705,687 people that I represent in western Pennsylvania.

Now, they are not all Republicans. They are not all Democrats. They are not all Libertarians. They are not all Independents. But they are all hardworking American taxpayers.

Why do we have to reduce this down to a political-talking-points issue instead of talking about what is fundamentally sound economically?

You cannot spend your way out of debt. You cannot continue to borrow

irresponsibly and say: well, we have the power to do it. So when we ask the Secretary of the Treasury who else would you go to, that is who is responsible for it.

I don't care who is sitting in there. I don't care who is in the White House. I care about sound, fundamental fiscal policy that protects this country going forward, not only those that are with us right now, but those that came before us and those that are going to come after us.

We are putting ourselves in a position that is totally going to be unrecoverable. Why would we knowingly sit here and think if I can pin the blame on somebody else from the political opposite of me, I will somehow win an election?

Is it really that important to win an election and lose the country? Is it really that important to have a political talking point that makes you feel good about what you said so you can go back home to somebody and say: you saw what I did on the floor; right?

I would hope that the constituents would say: yes, I did. You just put me deeper in debt. You made it impossible for me to plan for my future. You made it impossible for us to remain one of the strongest countries in the world because debt will eliminate you. I don't care if it is a person. I don't care if it is a business. I don't care if it is a State or a country.

We are quickly approaching the point of no return. To sit here and try to make it a political battle instead of survival for the United States of America is totally irresponsible. More importantly, it is immoral.

This is not a political battle. This is a fight for the future of our country. This is a fight for sustainability in the greatest country the world has ever known.

I do not think that any of us should ever turn our back on our responsibility because it just wasn't politically right.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, let me just say I have the greatest respect for my colleague from Pennsylvania, but the reason why we oppose this is because it does nothing.

Actually, it attempts to pin the blame on the Secretary of the Treasury, but the reality is—and I want to repeat this for my colleagues on the other side of the aisle—that Congress' decision on revenue and spending policies ultimately determine the level of debt and when the debt limit is reached. It is our responsibility.

What we object to is that, instead of debating concrete issues to reduce our deficit and reduce our debt, we are involved in this kind of debating a nonissue, a bill that does nothing, that will do nothing to reduce our deficit, reduce our debt, and is a complete waste of time.

At this point, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY).

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from Massachusetts for his leadership.

I want to say to my friend from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY), whom I respect and admire, this isn't like a simple, homespun, sit around the kitchen table and work this out and be responsible in paying our bills. I wish it were.

That homespun couple in Pennsylvania or my district in Virginia can't start a war that is unpaid for in Iraq, can't decide to give wealthy people a tax cut that is unpaid for, can't run the U.S. economy into the ground that costs trillions of dollars in additional debt because of policy choices made in this Congress, not by the Secretary of the Treasury.

It was Republican Vice President Cheney who actually said in the midst of all of that that debts no longer matter.

So we are glad to see the new-found religion here on the floor of the House with our friends on the other side of the aisle, who are now once again concerned about debt, debt they helped accumulate to an obscene degree.

I rise, Mr. Speaker, in opposition to not only that bill, but to the Scientific Research in the National Interest Act bill.

It comes as no surprise to my constituents in Virginia that the most anti-environmental Congress—the House majority is now attempting to tell the National Science Foundation how they ought to do and award Federal research grants based on what Congress deems worthy.

The House majority has been open about its climate denialism and candid about its outright political agenda against scientific fact. The very scientific community that we should trust to understand and forecast the effects of manmade global climate change is substituted in this bill by the United States Congress, a bunch of politicians.

This bill is a solution in search of a problem. It threatens the National Science Foundation's gold-standard merit-review process that has resulted in groundbreaking research over the years, including medical, technological, agricultural, and public health advancements.

Even worse, how are we to explain the majority's decision to exclude climate change, one of the most pressing global challenges we face, as one of the bill's seven national interest criteria? It is not even in there.

I offered an amendment that would have ensured climate change is deemed in the national interest. The Republican majority would not even allow that amendment to come to this floor for debate.

The NSF is helping to lead research in global climate change. For example, it was an NSF grant that launched a program in my district at George Mason University that will help television weather forecasters better inform and explain to viewers how climate change will affect us and those communities.

□ 1400

In 2013, Mr. Speaker, I visited a place called Ny-Alesund in Svalbard, Norway. This is the northernmost research installation in the planet in the Arctic Circle and a leading research and monitoring station that serves many of our international partners, including Norway, Italy, Japan, China, and the Netherlands.

I saw firsthand on that visit the rapid decline of Arctic sea ice and rapidly retreating glaciers. The research NSF funds there will have environmental and geopolitical benefits to the U.S., and we should be expanding not retracting on those commitments. I ask: How is it that research is not in the national interest?

This destructive bill will have a chilling effect on our research community, stifling ambitious research necessary to a 21st century future.

Sadly, once again, the Republican majority insists on misinformation and belief over empirical evidence and science.

I urge rejection of the bill.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH), chairman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Texas for yielding, and I appreciate the chairman of the Rules Committee bringing this rule to the floor to allow for consideration of H.R. 3293, the Scientific Research in the National Interest Act.

H.R. 3293 requires each National Science Foundation public announcement of a grant award to be accompanied by a nontechnical explanation of the project's scientific merits and how it serves the national interest. This written justification affirms the National Science Foundation's determination that a project is worthy of taxpayer support based on scientific merit and national interest.

The bill sets forth that NSF grants should meet at least one of seven criteria that demonstrate a grant is in fact in the national interest. These national interest areas are in the original enabling legislation that established the National Science Foundation and its mission or are part of the National Science Foundation mission today. These criteria are:

Increased economic competitiveness in the United States;

Advancement of the health and welfare of the American public;

Development of an American STEM workforce that is globally competitive;

Increased public scientific literacy and public engagement with science and technology in the United States;

Increased partnerships between academia and industry in the United States;

Support for the national defense of the United States; or,

Promotion of the progress of science in the United States.

These seven national mission areas encompass the overriding needs of

America to which the scientific enterprise can contribute and advance. Under this umbrella, many scientific disciplines and research areas can and do receive support and flourish.

The amendments that were not made in order by the Rules Committee would have opened up this NSF national mission statement to include every pet project, earmark, or political point that Members on the other side could think of. In fact, the explicit, line item-directed subjects that Members wanted to add to the list of ''what is in the national interest'' are already covered by one of the seven categories in the bill.

We welcome a fair and open debate on the merits of the bill, and several amendments were made in order that allow us to have that debate. These include amendments by the ranking member of the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, as well as five other Democratic amendments.

This rule allows us to have that fair debate, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Every criticism I have heard in the last few minutes about this bill could be addressed if those who oppose the bill just took the time to read the bill. It is only three pages long. You can probably read it in 3 minutes. They would see that their opposition has no foundation whatsoever.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts has 8 minutes remaining.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question. If we can defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up a bill that would help prevent mass shootings by promoting research on the causes of gun violence, making it easier to identify and treat those prone to committing these acts.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous materials, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, again, I oppose both H.R. 3442 and H.R. 3293.

Again, on H.R. 3442, if we are serious about deficit and debt reduction, then we ought to be talking about substance and something real, not some sound bite where Members of the House can point to the administration to say it is all their fault.

The reality is, it really is the fault of all of us, when you come down to it, because this is the place where spending decisions are made, where tax policy is made.

If my colleagues do not want to raise the debt ceiling, then don't accumulate all these bills. It is Congress that does this. When you accumulate all these bills and you have to raise the debt ceiling, it is irresponsible to all of a sudden say that we don't want to do it and then to default on our debt.

As I mentioned before, back in 2013, when Republican extremism actually shut the government down, it cost our economy $24 billion and 120,000 jobs.

Now, $24 billion may not seem like a lot to my Republican friends, but I assure you that it all starts to add up. Those 120,000 jobs that were lost is all lost revenue coming into the government which would go to paying down our deficit and debt.

If you really want to deal with this issue, then let's talk about things like paying for these wars that no one seems to want to pay for. Let's talk about not enacting tax breaks and tax cuts for wealthy individuals and not paying for it. Let's talk about reeling in some of these excessive subsidies to Big Oil and to other big corporate interests in this country. Let's talk about passing comprehensive immigration reform, which, again, the CBO has said would save us hundreds of billions of dollars that we could put toward getting our fiscal house in order.

Those are real things. This is just talk for the sake of talk. I guess maybe it is a good press release; but, quite frankly, I think our time would be better spent doing something else.

Again, on H.R. 3293, the so-called Scientific Research in the National Interest Act, I take great exception to those who question the integrity of the NSF. The National Science Foundation has integrity, in my opinion, beyond question. The work that they do is extraordinary. The work that they do leads to all kinds of benefits not only for the people in this country, but for the environment and people all over the world.

I think the scientists who work there are having their reputations questioned by the introduction of this legislation, never mind us even considering it here today. I think you are diminishing the incredible work that they do.

I get it. For some reason, my Republican colleagues can't admit that we have a thing called climate change going on around the world. So any time anybody talks about climate change, you go after whatever department or agency it is. You attack them. You try to cut their funding. You try to question their integrity.

Well, I hate to tell my Republican friends that climate change is real. The overwhelming science says it is real. If you don't appreciate that, maybe you ought to go back to school and take a science class.

When we talk about the lack of accountability and the lack of proper stewardship of what we are supposed to be doing here, that is one area where I think we have let the American people down; indeed, the world community.

We are sitting here debating whether it is even an issue—which the American people can't believe—while things continue to get worse.

I would say to my Republican friends: admit it; climate change is for real. You are on the wrong side of public opinion. When you try to claim it is a hoax, you are on the wrong side of the scientific community and you are on the wrong side of history.

One final thing, because I couldn't help but take note that my colleague from Texas kind of took a jab at Massachusetts over home heating oil. I would say to the gentleman a couple of things. One, Massachusetts is leading the Nation in terms of investments in renewable and green energy. I am really proud of what my State is doing.

I would say one other thing to the gentleman from Texas, and that is that his State—Texas—generates 10 times more emissions from heating oil, compared to Massachusetts. So I would urge him to get his State's emissions under control for the sake of our planet.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 3 minutes remaining.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

The first thing I would like to say to the gentleman is that Texas is bigger than France and Texas is bigger than Massachusetts. In fact, we have economic output. We have lots of people working. We have economic prowess in Texas.

We do have more output of what might be carbon. We do. We also had $290 billion worth of economic activity that we sent overseas. Texas helps the United States of America float its boat because we have jobs, we have lower taxes, we have great schools, we have people that enjoy living where they live, and we have people that take responsibility.

Across the board, Texas is a great place to live. Texas does, as you have heard many times, move our country in a direction to more freedom, Mr. Speaker. What we are talking about is freedom. With that freedom comes responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, why we are here today—exactly as I started to say in the very beginning—is that our Speaker, PAUL RYAN, has challenged I think all of Congress, but in particular this Republican majority, to bring forth good ideas that address the issues, thoughts, and answers about the problems that the United States Congress perhaps is responsible for and perhaps the United States sees that we need to start talking about what our future is going to be.

When he was the chairman of the Budget Committee and the Ways and Means Committee, Speaker RYAN talked about growing our economy. I know our friends want to raise taxes. I know the President of the United

States wants to also, now that the energy costs are down, stick them back up and stick the American people with a $10 a barrel tax. I know that what they want is more and more and more spending. They will get their chance with the budget when it comes in a trillion dollars higher in a year than what we are spending right now. That is their vision.

What we are talking about today is our vision, Speaker RYAN's vision, and the Republican majority's vision. And what is that? We would like to put in place an agreement. We would like for it to be a bipartisan vote. We already have bipartisan support. And that is so that we could say that, regardless of who is President and Secretary of the Treasury—right now, I don't know who it is going to be; I really couldn't even guess—we, as a body, make sure that we are focusing on what this is going to look like at the time. The gentleman from Massachusetts was very clear to say we already know all these things, but we don't.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleague to support this rule and the underlying bill.

The material previously referred to by Mr. MCGOVERN is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 609 OFFERED BY MR. MCGOVERN OF MASSACHUSETTS

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC. 3. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3926) to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for better understanding of the epidemic of gun violence, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 4. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 3926.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308–311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as ''a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge.'' To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that ''the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition'' in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R–Illinois) said: ''The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition.''

The Republican majority may say ''the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever.'' But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: ''Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment.''

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled ''Amending Special Rules'' states: ''a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate.'' (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: ''Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon.''

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on ordering the previous question will be followed by 5-minute votes on adopting House Resolution 609, if ordered; and suspending the rules and passing H.R. 4470.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 237, nays 180, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 65]

YEAS—237

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Granger
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Huelskamp
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—180

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici

Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—16

Castro (TX)
Duckworth
Fincher
Gowdy
Graves (GA)
Hanna
Herrera Beutler
Hudson
Huizenga (MI)
Kelly (IL)
Mullin
Quigley
Sanchez, Loretta
Smith (WA)
Speier
Westmoreland

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1434

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 236, noes 178, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 66]

AYES—236

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Granger
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Huelskamp
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOES—178

Adams
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—19

Aguilar
Castro (TX)
DeLauro
Duckworth
Fincher
Gowdy
Graves (GA)
Hanna
Herrera Beutler
Hudson
Huizenga (MI)
Kelly (IL)
LaMalfa
Mullin
Quigley
Rothfus
Sanchez, Loretta
Smith (WA)
Westmoreland

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1440

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 66, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

SAFE DRINKING WATER ACT IMPROVED COMPLIANCE AWARENESS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4470) to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act with respect to the requirements related to lead in drinking water, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 416, nays 2, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 67]

YEAS—416

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Benishek
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Graham
Granger
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grijalva
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins
Hill
Himes
Hinojosa
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Huelskamp
Huffman
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Pascrell
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Rangel
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Russell
Ryan (OH)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—2

Massie
Rokita

NOT VOTING—15

Castro (TX)
Duckworth
Fincher
Gowdy
Graves (GA)
Hanna
Herrera Beutler
Hudson
Huizenga (MI)
Kelly (IL)
Mullin
Quigley
Sanchez, Loretta
Smith (WA)
Westmoreland

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1447

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

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. HANNA. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 67 on H.R. 4470, I am not recorded because I was absent for personal reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GRAVES of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I was absent today to attend the funeral of a family member.

Had I been present, on rollcall No. 65, I would have voted "yes," on rollcall No. 66, I would have voted "yes," and on rollcall No. 67, I would have voted "yes."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, my vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 65 on the Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule providing for consideration of both H.R. 3293 and H.R. 3442. I am not recorded because I was absent due to the birth of my son in San Antonio, Texas. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

Mr. Speaker, my vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 66 on H. Res. 609—Rule Providing for consideration of both H.R. 3293—Scientific Research in the National Interest Act and H.R. 3442—Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act. I am not recorded because I was absent due to the birth of my son in San Antonio, Texas. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

Mr. Speaker, my vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 67 on H.R. 4470—Safe Drinking Water Act Improved Compliance Awareness Act. I am not recorded because I was absent due to the birth of my son in San Antonio, Texas. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the bill, H.R. 3293.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 609 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 3293.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1448

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 3293) to provide for greater accountability in Federal funding for scientific research, to promote the progress of science in the United States that serves that national interest, with Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

General debate shall not exceed 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 3293, the Scientific Research in the National Interest Act, is a bipartisan bill that ensures the grant process at the National Science Foundation is transparent and accountable to the American people.

America's future economic growth and national security depend on innovation. Public and private investments in research and development fuel the economy, create jobs, and lead to new technologies that benefit Americans' daily lives.

Unfortunately, in recent years, the Federal Government has awarded too many grants that few Americans would consider to be in the national interest.

For example, the National Science Foundation awarded $700,000 of taxpayer money to support a climate change-themed musical that quickly closed and almost $1 million for a social media project that targeted Americans' online political speech.

A few other examples of questionable grants include: $487,000 to study the Icelandic textile industry during the Viking era; $340,000 to study early human-set fires in New Zealand; $233,000 to study ancient Mayan architecture and their salt industry; and $220,000 to study animal photos in National Geographic magazine.

When the NSF funds such projects as these, there is less money to support worthwhile scientific research that keeps our country on the forefront of innovation. Such areas include: computer science, advanced materials, lasers, telecommunications, information technology, development of new medicines, nanotechnology, cybersecurity, and dozens of others that hold the greatest promise of revolutionary scientific breakthroughs. These sectors can create millions of new jobs and transform society in positive ways.

NSF invests about $6 billion a year of taxpayer funds on research projects and related activities.

The 1950 enabling legislation that created the NSF set forth the Foundation's mission and cited the ''national interest'' as the foundation for public support and dissemination of basic scientific research.

The Science in the National Interest Act reaffirms and restores this crucial mission. This will add transparency, accountability, and credibility to the NSF and its grant process.

H.R. 3293 requires NSF grants to meet at least one of seven criteria that demonstrates it is in the national interest. These seven criteria are: increased economic competitiveness in the United States; advancement of the health and welfare of the American public; development of an American STEM workforce that is globally competitive; increased public scientific literacy and public engagement with science and technology in the United States; increased partnerships between academia and industry in the United States; support for the national defense of the United States; and promotion of the progress of science in the United States.

Both the National Science Foundation director and the National Science Board have endorsed the principle that NSF should be more accountable in its grant funding decisions.

To NSF Director France Cordova's credit, the NSF began to implement new internal policies last year that acknowledge the need for NSF to communicate clearly and in nontechnical terms the research projects it funds and how they are in the national interest.

Opponents of this bill must think they know better than the NSF director. Director Cordova testified before the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee that the policy in H.R. 3293 is compatible with the NSF's internal guidelines. This legislation makes that commitment clear, explicit, and permanent.

Today, the NSF funds only one out of five proposals submitted by our scientists and research institutions.

How do we assure hardworking American families that their tax dollars are spent only on high priority research when we spend $700,000 of their money on a short-lived climate change-themed musical? It is not Congress' money, it is the taxpayers'.

How could elected representatives not agree that we owe it to American taxpayers and the scientific community to ensure that every grant funded is worthy and in the national interest?

With a national debt that now exceeds $19 trillion and continues to climbs by hundreds of billions of dollars each year, we cannot fund every worthy proposal, much less frivolous ones like a climate change musical.

The legislation before us reaffirms in law that every NSF grant must support research that is demonstrably in the national interest.

Scientists still make the decisions. They just do not get a blank check signed by the taxpayer. They need to be accountable to the American people by showing their proposals are, in fact, in the national interest.

H.R. 3293 passed the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee in October by a voice vote.

Congress has a responsibility to ensure that taxpayer dollars are spent wisely and are focused on national priorities. This bill is an essential step to restore and maintain taxpayer support for basic scientific research.

I encourage my colleagues to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 3293, the Scientific Research in the National Interest Act.

I oppose this bill because I believe that this bill will hurt the Nation's premier basic research agency, lead to less high reward research, and, ultimately, leave America less competitive.

My Republican colleagues have a simple argument for their legislation: Shouldn't NSF research be in the national interest? That is a very good question, but one that can be easily answered.

My answer is that NSF research is already in the national interest. It has been for more than 60 years.

The Federal investment in basic research over the past 60 years has been the primary driver of our Nation's economic growth and innovation. In innumerable ways, our investments in basic research have paid back a wealth of dividends.

This fact is widely recognized across academia and industry. The National Academies' ''Rising Above the Gathering Storm'' report made this point a decade ago. That panel, chaired by the former head of Lockheed-Martin, understood that investment in basic research was fundamentally in the national interest.

When we passed the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010 as part of the Democrats' innovation agenda, that bill was endorsed by hundreds of business and research organizations, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers. They all understood that investment in basic research is in the national interest.

What is this bill really about? Is it really about enhancing our Nation's ability to innovate? No. Sadly, this bill continues the Republican majority's preoccupation with second-guessing America's best and brightest research scientists.

For the past 3 years, the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology majority has been engaged in a relentless and pernicious campaign against research grants with silly or odd sounding titles.

Republicans have used that time to carry out an unprecedented rifling through the 70 NSF grants reviews. After all this effort, did they find any evidence of wrongdoing? No. The only thing they found was what they already knew: each of the research grants had passed NSF's merit review process with flying colors.

The majority may not like it and wish the results were different, but those are the facts. Let me be clear. Some of the greatest scientific achievements of the past 60 years were the result of funny sounding research, including research that was ridiculed in Congress as frivolous.

There are scores of examples. One of my favorites is ''The Sex Life of the Screwworm,'' surely one of the silliest sounding titles for research there could possibly be. So silly, in fact, that in the 1970s, the grant was ridiculed as an example of government waste on the Senate floor. Sounds a lot like what the majority is doing here today.

It turned out that the screwworm was costing the U.S. cattle industry a small fortune. As a direct result of this silly sounding research, the cattle industry saved approximately $20 billion in the U.S. and significantly reduced the cost of beef to U.S. consumers.

□ 1500

At its core, this bill is about second-guessing our Nation's best and brightest scientists and the grant-making decisions they make.

Perhaps this is not surprising when so many of my Republican colleagues openly question the validity of whole fields of established science, from the social sciences to climate science to evolutionary biology.

Far from adding anything useful to the NSF's review process, H.R. 3293 would add more bureaucracy and paperwork. Yet, my biggest concern about these requirements is that they will push NSF reviewers to fund less high-risk research, which, by its very nature, entails the pursuit of scientific understanding without it necessarily having any particular or known benefit. We know that high-risk research tends to have the highest reward, something that we have seen throughout the history of the NSF.

I am not alone in my concerns. The President's science adviser, Dr. John Holdren, noted:

> H.R. 3293 would create doubt at NSF and in the research community about Congress' real intent in calling into question the adequacy of NSF's gold standard merit-review process for applied as well as for basic research.
>
> This could easily have a chilling effect on the amount of basic research that scientists propose and that NSF chooses to fund, with detrimental consequences for this Nation's leadership in science, technology, and innovation alike.

Mr. Chair, I choose to stand with the scientists when it comes to science. For that reason, I strongly oppose this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 30 seconds.

I say to the gentlewoman from Texas that her objections are simply too late. They are too late because the Director of the National Science Foundation has already incorporated the national interest standard into the current guidelines that are being used at the National Science Foundation. We are already using that, and the bill makes them permanent.

I do like the gentlewoman's example of a screwworm because that is a reason to vote for the bill and not to oppose the bill. One of the requirements in the bill is that these grants be explained in plain English so that we know their connection to the national interest. Clearly, there would be no problem in explaining why the example she gave is connected to the national interest.

In a few minutes, I will give just a few more examples of how taxpayers' money is currently being used and should not be used.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS), who is the vice chairman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Mr. LUCAS. I thank Chairman SMITH for the time.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 3293, Scientific Research in the National Interest Act.

The NSF invests about $6 billion of public funds each year on research projects and related activities. It is the only Federal agency that is dedicated to the support of fundamental research and education in all scientific and engineering disciplines.

Since its creation in 1950, the NSF has served a mission that helps make the United States a world leader in science and innovation. In recent years, however, the NSF has seemed to stray away from its created purpose and has funded a number of grants that few Americans would consider in the national interest.

H.R. 3293 seeks to restore the NSF's critical mission by requiring the NSF to explain in writing and in non-technical language how each research grant awarded supports the national interest and is worthy of Federal funding.

Now, think about that for a moment: not just explaining it in scientific terms that the fellow scientific community can understand, but also in terms that taxpayers can understand.

In a time of distrust and suspicion of the Federal Government and of all institutions, that is a very important key point, being able to explain to the folks back home why it matters.

The bill also sets forth that NSF grants should meet one of seven criteria that demonstrates the grant is in the national interest.

Today, as was noted by the chairman, the NSF is able to fund only one out of every five proposals. This is a critical bill to restore faith in the process. We need to pass this.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. TED LIEU).

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Mr. Chair, I rise to oppose this bill.

America is an exceptional nation. One of the reasons we are the best country in the world is that we believe in science and we believe in innovation. Our country has always believed in physics and in chemistry, and we trust scientists.

The National Science Foundation has helped this country grow in terms of innovation and in terms of amazing scientific discoveries. It is not broken. So why are we trying to meddle with what the scientists have done?

The chairman mentioned some examples of grants that sounded sort of funny. I understand that most of the Republican legislators do not believe in climate change, but the overwhelming majority of scientists do, as does the U.S. military, as does ExxonMobil today.

One of the grants had to do with how people learn about climate change. That is vitally important because climate change is going to affect our children and our grandchildren.

It is true that some of these grants sound funny. That is because scientists do all sorts of things that, to a layperson, may not be very obvious.

Because I am not a scientist and because most people are not scientists, I think that is perfectly fine, that we don't have all sorts of redundant writings that explain what an experiment does. Let me give you one example that is on the NSF's Web site.

One of the grants is to study funny-looking colored clay in France, blue-green clay in another country. It sounds like a really silly grant, doesn't it?

It turns out that, when they looked at it, there were properties in this blue-green clay in France that kill bacteria, anti-bacterial properties that can help deal with MRSA, that can help deal with superbugs. This can be a groundbreaking grant, a groundbreaking discovery, but under this bill, it might have problems being funded.

Ultimately, what this is really about and what I have learned now in Congress is that often we are very arrogant. We do not trust scientists. We do not trust the people in America.

This is an arrogant bill that sort of says we know best, not the scientists who are doing peer reviews of what grants to fund, and that we know which experiment might do exactly what.

It turns out, in science, lots of times scientists study one area and get a completely different, amazing discovery in a totally unrelated area. We need to fund basic science. We need to take our hands off this. We need to trust scientists and trust the people in America.

Do not pass this bill. We are not that arrogant. We should not determine what scientists are to be doing and that we know better than they do, because we do not. I ask for opposition to this bill.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 30 seconds.

I really wish the people who say they oppose this bill would actually read the bill. It is only three pages long. They can probably read it in 3 minutes. Let me read the last sentence of the bill itself.

''Nothing in this section shall be construed as altering the Foundation's intellectual merit or broader impacts criteria for evaluating grant applications.''

Despite what just might have been told, we don't interfere with the merit-review process whatsoever.

The other thing is, when you come up with an example, as the gentleman just gave, it is clearly in the national interest. All we are asking is that the explanation show why it is in the national interest.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK), who is the chairman of the Oversight Subcommittee of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. I thank the gentleman from Texas, the chairman, for

yielding this time and for his leadership on this issue.

Mr. Chairman, last month the Congressional Budget Office released an updated deficit projection for fiscal year 2016. The CBO now expects that our deficit will be $544 billion this year, which is an increase from the original projection of $414 billion.

Now, more than ever, Congress needs to work diligently to reduce spending and balance the Federal budget. However, it is equally important for us to make sure that every taxpayer dollar that is spent is used responsibly.

That is why I am an original cosponsor of the Scientific Research in the National Interest Act. It will help ensure that the National Science Foundation, one of our Nation's most critical research agencies, is using its funding in the most beneficial way possible.

This bill requires the NSF to explain how each of its grants further America's best interests. This could be done through advancing STEM education, national defense, economic competitiveness, public health, or other key priorities.

By requiring the NSF to justify its research, this bill will help crack down on frivolous government programs. And, yes, Mr. Chairman, there are frivolous government programs.

For example, the NSF is currently spending $374,000 of taxpayer money on a study of the ups and downs of senior citizens' dating experiences. While we all want, I am sure, Americans to enjoy their romantic lives throughout the year, we cannot afford this type of wasteful taxpayer spending when we have a $19 trillion debt.

This commonsense legislation will ensure that NSF research is well directed and that it will help prevent valuable taxpayer dollars from being wasted.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chair, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO).

Mr. TONKO. I thank the gentlewoman from Texas for yielding.

Mr. Chair, I oppose this bill, which represents an effort by politicians to overrule expert scientists in deciding which scientific grants the NSF should fund.

In defense of their misguided effort, some of my colleagues like to pick a grant and poke fun at it or trivialize it or simply state that, in their opinion, it is not worth funding.

One of the grants that has been singled out is entitled Participant Support for the Zero Emissions Category of the Clean Snowmobile Challenge.

Snowmobiles are ideal modes of transportation in extreme polar locations. This grant funded the Clean Snowmobile Challenge in which students formed teams to engineer a lower emissions snowmobile.

Engineering competitions are both an important proving ground for new technologies and an incredible opportunity for students to engage in real-world engineering challenges.

My colleagues frequently talk up the importance of STEM competitions. The Science, Space, and Technology Committee has held entire full committee hearings on that very topic. Now some of my same colleagues would ridicule an engineering competition just because it might have a climate change benefit.

I hope all of my colleagues here today agree with me that encouraging and, certainly, promoting our next generation of engineers is definitely in the national interest, even when it results in less pollution.

This grant, singled out for ridicule by some in the majority, is just another example of why we should be concerned about the intent of this legislation.

I would also like to point out that I strongly believe that the current gold standard merit-review process works and that we should not be politicizing science.

The sheer number of amendments to this legislation demonstrates the flawed methodology of trying to define which research is in the national interest.

I think all of the Members who offered amendments to this section would agree that important priorities have been left out. Personally, I believe we have unacceptably overlooked clean drinking water and climate change.

I offered an amendment with Congressman KILDEE that would expand the priority of advancement of health and welfare to include clean drinking water explicitly. Unfortunately, this amendment was not made in order.

As we have seen in the news recently out of Flint, Michigan, we have taken our drinking water infrastructure for granted for decades. This neglect and lack of investment has caused serious public health issues.

We need to invest more, but we should not invest in a 20th or, in some cases, in a 19th century drinking water system.

A 21st century economy requires a 21st century infrastructure, but that cannot happen unless it is coupled with the critical research that will help us improve the construction, the operation, and the maintenance of our water systems. Our Nation's future public health and economic development are counting on it.

Clean drinking water is one of many important priorities not listed in this legislation. However, beyond missing important priorities, I am concerned that this legislation will limit critical research.

The exciting part of research is that, at the start, we do not know what we will find; so, we cannot accurately predict ahead of time all of the implications the research will have on specific national priorities. Instead, we should invest and encourage high-risk, high-reward research.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation.

□ 1515

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 30 seconds.

Here are some more reasons why we need this bill, and these are some more examples of how taxpayers' dollars have been spent: $200,000 to tour Europe for an overview of the Turkish fashion veil industry; $1.5 million to study pasture management in Mongolia; $735,000 for the American Bar Association to follow young lawyers' careers; $920,000 to study textile making in Iceland during the Viking era; $164,000 to study Chinese immigration to Italy in 1900.

There are dozens and dozens of more examples.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WEBER) who is the chairman of the Energy Subcommittee of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of Chairman SMITH's bill, H.R. 3293. At a time when budget constraints and the deficit loom large and ominous, why in the world would anyone object to more transparency and accountability? Can anyone explain that to me? I didn't think so.

Here is how some of our hardworking taxpayer money is being spent.

Mr. Chairman, I have a list of 41 studies and programs that, if taxpayers knew, they would rise up and revolt.

Some of the more notable are:

$227,000 to review animal photos in National Geographic magazine. (what baboon thought that up?)

$350,000 to study human-set fires in New Zealand in the 1800s. (the main "human set fire" here is our taxpayer dollars being burned)

$200,000 to tour Europe for an overview of the Turkish fashion-veil industry. (I am reminded that fashion is a form of ugliness so bad, it has to be changed about every 6 months!)

$735,000 for the American Bar Association to follow young lawyers' careers (3 awards).

$920,000 to study textile-making in Iceland during the Viking era (2 awards).

$50,000 to support STEM education in Sri Lanka.

$164,000 to study Chinese immigration to Italy (1900 to present).

$20,000 to study stress among people from lowland Bolivia (one of 12 awards).

$147,000 to analyze fishing practices at Lake Victoria, Africa. (Heck: all you gotta do is come down to my district in Galveston TX and we'll show you how to analyze fishing practices for a lot less and you can spend that money in our country!)

$147,000 to study international marriages between citizens of France and Madagascar.

$50,000 to study civil lawsuits in colonial Peru (1600–1700 AD).

$250,000 to survey public attitudes about the Senate filibuster rule.

$300,000 to study law firms in Silicon Valley.

$170,000 to study basket weaving among Alaskan native peoples (2 awards). Perhaps that's what folks think Congress is majoring in.

$276,000 to study the pre-history of Chiapas, Mexico.

$246,000 to study migration and adoption between Peru and Spain.

$134,000 to study Late Bronze Age metallurgy in the Southern Urals, Russia.

$195,000 to contrast the histories of Patagonian and Amazonian national parks.

$281,000 to analyze the history of Izapa, Mexico.

$136,000 to study life/history transitions among indigenous people of northern Argentina.

$27,000 to study Mayan wooden architecture and salt industry (600–900 AD).

$92,000 to study Mexico's public vehicle registration system.

$373,000 to study Chinese kinship, women's labor and economy (1600–2000 AD).

$152,000 to analyze accountability and transparency in China's dairy industry.

$300,000 to study Cyprus during the Bronze Age (2 awards).

$226,000 to study cultural dynamics in western Turkey.

$119,000 to coordinate an international archeological project in the S. American Andes.

$300,000 to produce an experimental dance program about nature and physics.

$516,000 to help amateurs create a video game—"Relive Prom Night."

$200,000 to devise social media algorithms for "Truthy.com," a website aimed at censoring political speech by Tea Party members, conservatives, etc.

$605,000 to travel and study why people around the world cheat on their taxes.

$193,000 to study human fish consumption in Tanzania (300–1500 AD).

$221,000 to study use of ochre pigment for painting in Stone Age Kenya.

$101,000 to pay for American psychologists to international conferences.

$250,000 to educate local TV meteorologists about climate change (2 awards).

$38,000 to consider whether livestock herding families in rural, undeveloped areas have more children in response to herd growth, or if increased family size drives herd growth.

$193,000 to study human fish consumption in Tanzania (1300–1500 AD).

$38,000 to study prehistoric rabbit hunting on the Iberian Peninsula.

$1.8 million to study the potential of commercial fish farming at Lake Victoria, Africa.

$330,000 to study the careers of 2,500 new lawyers in Russia.

$1.5 million to study pasture management in Mongolia.

Mr. Chairman, some of the more notable are:

$227,000 to review animal photos in National Geographic magazine. What baboon thought that up?

$350,000 to study human-set fires in New Zealand in the 1800s. The only thing being set on fire here is taxpayers' dollars.

$200,000 to tour Europe for an overview of the Turkish fashion veil industry. I am reminded what a friend of mine says. He says fashion is a form of ugliness so bad that we have to change it every 6 months, and yet we want to study it over in another country.

$147,000 to analyze fishing practices at Lake Victoria, Africa. Heck, folks, if y'all come on down to Galveston, Texas, we will show y'all how to fish and analyze that, and you can spend money in our country.

$170,000 to study basket weaving among Alaskan Native peoples. Is it any wonder that most of Americans think Congress must major in basket weaving?

These are just some of the more notable ones, Mr. Chairman. I could go on through the 41 on the list. For example, $330,000 to study the careers of 2,500 new lawyers in Russia. It is not that we don't have enough lawyers over here in America; now we are concerned about the ones in Russia.

I could go on and on, Mr. Chairman. I just want to simply say, I urge my colleagues to support transparency and accountability on behalf of our constituents and taxpayers. After all, they are paying the freight for this stuff. Shouldn't we be open and accountable to them?

I commend Chairman SMITH for his bill and for putting hardworking taxpaying Americans first.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER).

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chair, I rise to voice my strong opposition to H.R. 3293, the legislation of my friend, Chairman LAMAR SMITH, the so-called Scientific Research in the National Interest Act.

I understand the genesis of this bill: Mr. SMITH's dismay at some of the titles of the National Science Foundation's funded research.

This bill is the wrong approach to addressing the very occasional misuse of NSF grants, and it represents classic short-term thinking.

I am a businessman, and I know of no one in the business community who wants politicians or government to decide business winners or losers.

Of course, none of us, Democrat or Republican, believe that politicians should be making science decisions either. I believe Representative BILL FOSTER is the only Ph.D. scientist in the House, and the rest of us don't qualify.

By proclaiming the seven definitions of what science is in the national interest, we politicians are, in fact, deciding what is worthy of scientific research. By the way, no one on this side yet has raised any objections to the transparency or the accountability of the National Science Foundation. That completely mischaracterizes our objections.

These standards sound constructive and benign—increased economic activity, advancement of health and welfare, support for the national defense, et cetera—but only one of the seven definitions even mentions science. The last one says for the "promotion of the progress of science for the United States," whatever that means.

Where, oh, where is the commitment to basic research, the kind of fundamental research that I know all of us value?

Listen to all the funny names that would have sounded especially funny at the time: Would Einstein's 1905 papers on special relativity, on the photoelectric effect, and on Brownian motion even qualify under the seven definitions? How about Niels Bohr's research on quantum mechanics? How about Murray Gell-Mans' work on particle physics in quarks? How about Rosalind Franklin's work on the crystallography of DNA?

My college roommate spent 4 years at Berkeley, 1972 to 1976, studying something called Roman spectroscopy. He had no idea what it would do. Today we call them MRIs.

That is the whole point of basic research. We don't know where it will lead. We don't know that it is in the national interest. It just adds to our knowledge.

On the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, we reveled in the NASA presentation of the Pluto photographs. How does our New Horizons mission to Pluto possibly qualify under the seven definitions of the national interest?

I respect that the chair of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee wants the NSF funds expended into legitimate scientific research. I agree. Mr. SMITH used the phrase "demonstrably in the national interest." How could we definitely know, when all of basic research is, by definition, long term rather than short term?

Let's let the scientists decide and oppose this well-meaning but ill-conceived legislation.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 30 seconds.

To those who are on the other side, I really again encourage them to read the bill. It is three pages long. There is nothing in the bill that says we are going to tell the scientists what to do or think. It is very clear, in the examples that the gentleman just gave, that all of those are connected to the national interest. If a scientist can't explain that, then there are greater problems than we might expect.

The other point is, to repeat what I said a while ago, if you oppose the national interest standard, you are too late. The National Science Foundation Director has incorporated the national interest standard in the current guidelines. If you want to oppose the bill because you don't want to make the standard permanent, that is your prerogative, but don't oppose the national interest standard that is in the current guidelines.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI), who is an original cosponsor of this legislation.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Chairman, I want to start where we all have agreement. I think everyone would acknowledge that they want research funded by the NSF to be in the Nation's interest. We agree the Nation's interest is furthered by promoting scientific progress. That is certainly one of the principal reasons that I have served on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee for 12 years.

We also have some disagreements. I have respectfully disagreed with the chairman over his criticisms of some NSF grants. At a hearing in November of 2013, I spoke out strongly against a very different NSF bill, and I believe some people are confusing that bill with this bill that we have here today.

If you read this bill's text, I don't believe you can find anything that could undermine the merit review process at the NSF. In fact, I think this bill will help protect the NSF from future attacks and make the Foundation stronger.

H.R. 3293 says research funded by the NSF must be worthy of Federal funding and in the national interest. The national interest is defined by a series of broad criteria, one of which is that a grant have the potential to promote ''the progress of science for the United States.'' It is difficult to conceive of research that would be recommended by an NSF peer review panel that would not meet that standard. Thus, it is difficult for me to see how this standard could harm the work that the Foundation does.

The bill clearly states that it is the job of the Foundation to determine what is worthy of funding, not politicians, and that nothing in the bill would alter NSF's blunted peer review process, which we agree is the gold standard for funding scientific research. As a scientist myself, I believe this is as it should be.

Nevertheless, there have been suggestions that this bill is politicians creating a political filter on what research should be funded, but it is striking how similar this language is to the broader impacts criterion that we advanced in a bipartisan fashion in the 2010 COMPETES Reauthorization Act. There was no concern at the time about that language being a political filter, nor was there any concern that broader impacts be applied to a portfolio of grants, rather than individual awards.

Furthermore, at the time, the Foundation already had broader impact criterion as part of their review process, yet this committee still acted to put the criteria in statute. And the ease with which NSF has implemented the broader impacts criteria suggests to me that they could implement this language without changing the nature of the research they fund.

There is some concern that this bill would cause the Foundation to become more risk averse or applied, not funding breakthrough grants like the one that started Google. So let's take a look at that grant.

The NSF funded the Stanford Integrated Digital Library Project in 1994, and the research conducted through that grant, as well as other private and public support, including a graduate research fellowship for Sergey Brin, led to the algorithms that were the intellectual basis of Google.

The purpose of that grant, as stated in the abstract, was ''to develop the enabling technologies for a single, integrated and 'universal' library, proving uniform access to the large number of emerging networked information sources and collections.'' Even putting aside the emerging collections on the Web that could be impacted, that grant clearly seemed to have the potential to promote the progress of computer science and be worthy of Federal funding and, thus, would have been funded under the provisions of this bill.

Indeed, the debate around this bill has focused less on the language in the bill and more on the concern of intentions behind the bill. As I have said, I have disagreed with recent criticisms of the NSF. Time has shown us that some of William Proxmire's Golden Fleece Awardees have proven to be golden geese, as Ranking Member JOHNSON mentioned in her opening statement.

I think much of the criticism of grants comes from misunderstandings. This bill can help prevent misunderstandings or at least give NSF a better ability to defend its work. This will come from the requirement that abstracts be rewritten to more plainly explain the purpose of a grant.

I applaud the NSF for steps they have already taken to better explain why scientific research is valuable and to better explain why promoting the progress of science is in the Nation's interest and worthy of Federal funds. This policy and this bill will further help the NSF defend worthwhile grants.

All of us may never see eye to eye on what types of research should be supported by the Federal Government. For example, I see more value in social science and geoscience than many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, and I never miss an opportunity to point that out.

But far from acting as a political filter, I believe this bill will help the NSF continue to be the world's preeminent foundation in funding scientific research, and that is why I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to point out that this grant was mentioned earlier in remarks. In defense of their misguided efforts, some of our colleagues like to pick certain grants and make fun of them—just as has just been said—and then say they are not worth funding.

One of the grants that my colleagues like to pick on is a grant entitled, ''Ecosystems Resilience to Human Impacts: Ecological Consequences of Early Human-Set Fires in New Zealand.'' It may be easy for some of my colleagues to question why the Federal Government should spend money on studying fires that were set in a foreign country hundreds of years ago. Apparently, it is harder for them to spend 5 minutes reading the abstract.

It turns out that those early settlers in New Zealand caused the loss of more than 40 percent of the forests in just decades. By studying the long-term effect on the ecosystem impacts of those long-ago fires, we can gain knowledge to help natural resource managers make smarter decisions about how to mitigate, prepare for, and respond to massive wildfires in our own country. It is right in the public interest.

Just to put an economic figure to this, in 2012, the United States spent $2 billion to suppress over 65,000 wildland fires that burned over 9 million acres.

□ 1530

It sounds like this is of national interest to study the long term impact of fires that were set so many years ago. I choose to stand with the scientists when it comes to science. For that reason, I really uphold this misguided bill.

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I have one more Member on the way to the floor to speak, and then I am prepared to close.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chair, I have no further requests for time.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN), who is on his way to the podium right now.

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Chair, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3293, the Scientific Research in the National Interest Act.

The National Science Foundation spends $7 billion in taxpayer funds, most of which goes to important research that helps advance America's competitive edge. However, the NSF has funded far too many wasteful projects that are not in the national interest.

Here are several examples: $1.5 million to study pasture management in Mongolia; $147,000 to study international marriages between the citizens of France and Madagascar; $20,000 to study stress among the people of Bolivia.

While the NSF has begun to implement some new internal policies that are intended to increase transparency and accountability, this bill will help strengthen those reforms and make them permanent.

The Director of the NSF even testified before the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee that the policy of H.R. 3293 is ''compatible with the NSF's internal guidelines.''

I highly commend Chairman LAMAR SMITH for his leadership on this important bill, and I encourage my colleagues to very much support it.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, once again, I stand with the scientists. I also stand with the President's potential statement. If this bill is presented to the President, scientists have recommended that he veto it.

I stand with the scientists again and ask the people to vote against this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the remainder of my time.

I am glad that the gentlewoman brought up the administration's position on this bill because it is absolutely no surprise.

When President Obama was elected, he promised that this would be the most transparent administration in history. It has turned out to be the exact opposite.

Opposing a bill to bring more transparency to government, more accountability to the National Science Foundation is a perfect natural for this administration.

Let me give you some more examples. According to an analysis of Federal data by the Associated Press, the Obama administration set new records 2 years in a row for denying the media access to government files.

More than that, in an unprecedented letter to several congressional committees, 47 inspectors general, who are the official watchdogs of Federal agencies, complained that the Justice Department, EPA, and others consistently obstruct their work by blocking or delaying access to critical information.

This is the record, this is the history of an administration who opposes this bill. Again, a bill that is going to bring transparency and accountability to the Federal Government.

Mr. Chairman, it seems obvious to most of us and to most Americans that taxpayer-funded grants should be in the national interest, but let me address some of the false arguments that have been presented by Members on the other side.

Opponents claim that the bill interferes with the merit-review process for approving grants. This is false. The three-page bill clearly states ''nothing in this section shall be construed as altering the Foundation's intellectual merit or broader impacts criteria for evaluating grant applications.''

Scientists still make the decisions. They just do not get a blank check written by the taxpayer. They need to be accountable to the American people by showing that their proposals are in the national interest.

What the bill does do is ensure that the results of the peer-review process are transparent and that the broader societal impact of the research is better communicated to the public. This makes it clear how the grant is in the national interest.

Another common falsehood spread by opponents of the bill is that it means research projects will be judged by the title as to whether or not they are worthy of Federal funding. Again, this is false. The bill actually corrects a past problem with some NSF-funded grants.

Often, the title and an incomprehensible summary were all that was publicly available about a research grant. The bill ensures that a project's benefits are clearly communicated to earn the public support and trust. Researchers should embrace the opportunity to better explain to the American people the potential value of their work.

Finally, opponents have claimed that the bill discourages high-risk, high-reward research. Once again, this is false. Research with the potential to be groundbreaking is almost always worthy of Federal funding and in the national interest.

Basic research, by its very nature, is uncertain regarding outcomes and results, but payoffs to society, quality of life, and standards of living can be transformative.

Research that has the potential to address some of society's greatest challenges is what the NSF should be funding.

Improving computing and cybersecurity, advancing new energy sources, discovering new medicines and cures, and creating advanced materials are just some of the ways that NSF-funded research can help create millions of new jobs and transform society in a positive way.

On the other hand, how does spending $700,000 on a climate change musical encourage breakthrough research? There may well be good answers to those questions, but we weren't able to come up with them, and neither was the National Science Foundation.

When the NSF funds projects that don't meet such standards, there is less money to support worthwhile research that keeps our country at the forefront of innovation.

Both the National Science Foundation Director and the National Science Board have endorsed the principle that NSF should be more accountable in its grant-funding decisions.

Why would Congress oppose such a commonsense requirement? Why do opponents of this bill think they know better than the NSF Director, who has approved the national interest standard in the current guidelines?

It is just inconceivable to me that an elected U.S. Representative would oppose requiring government grants funded by the U.S. taxpayer to be spent in the national interest. Whose money do they think the NSF spends on these frivolous research grants? The taxpayers should know how their hard-earned dollars are, in fact, being spent.

I ask my colleagues to bolster transparency and accountability, protect American taxpayers, and promote good, fundamental science and basic research.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois who spoke just a minute ago. He made a really, really good point that I want to repeat, and that is that this bill is actually going to help strengthen the National Science Foundation because it is going to give it more credibility and taxpayers are going to have more assurance that their hard-earned money is being spent on worthwhile projects that are, in fact, in the national interest.

Mr. Chairman, taxpayers spend $6 billion; $6 billion is being spent by the National Science Foundation. They only approve one out of five grant requests.

Shouldn't those grant proposals be in the national interest? Shouldn't they be about breakthrough technology, technological inventions? Shouldn't they increase productivity in America? I think that is exactly how the taxpayers' dollars should be spent.

Mr. Chairman, how much time do I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia). The gentleman from Texas has 3½ minutes remaining.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, what I would like to do is to give more examples of how the taxpayers' dollars actually should not be spent. These are grants that have been approved by the National Science Foundation in the past.

Again, I want to give the current Director full credit. She has changed the standards. She has implemented the national interest as a part of their guidelines. But if we don't make these guidelines permanent, this is what could happen.

This is how the taxpayers' dollars have been spent:

$250,000 to survey public attitudes about the Senate filibuster rule;

$276,000 to study the prehistory of Chiapas, Mexico;

$246,000 to study migration and adoption between Peru and Spain;

$136,000 to study life/history transitions among indigenous people of northern Argentina;

$27,000 to study Mayan wooden architecture and the salt industry;

$152,000 to analyze accountability and transparency in China's dairy industry;

$300,000 to study Cyprus during the Bronze Age;

$226,000 to study cultural dynamics in western Turkey;

$119,000 to coordinate an international archaeological project in the South American Andes;

$60,000 to study the Gamo caste system in southwestern Ethiopia;

$300,000 to produce an experimental dance program about nature and physics.

Speaking of that, I think there was another $516,000 to help amateurs create a video game, $516,000 to help amateurs create a video game called ''Relive Prom Night.''

There is no national interest that I am aware of. If there is, they sure ought to point it out before we ask the taxpayers to spend half a million dollars on reliving prom night.

Let's see.

$605,000 to travel and study why people around the world cheat on their taxes;

$38,000 to consider whether livestock herding families expand in response to herd growth;

$193,000 to study human fish consumption in Tanzania from 1300 to 1500 AD;

$250,000 to educate local TV meteorologists;

$275,000 to study tourism in northern Norway;

$450,000 to create the Climate Change Narrative Game;

$131,000 for a 1-day program about climate change education using giant-screen TVs;

$430,000 to study Irish climate, environment, and political change in the past 2,000 years;

$2.5 million to create dioramas for the Oakland Museum of California;

$590,000 to support private groups advocating drastic climate change;

$289,000 to study how colonialism and climate change threaten the survival of Arctic peoples in Russia;

$549,000 to—I am sorry. My time is about expired, and I appreciate that.

I could go on and give dozens and dozens of examples, but I think it is clear that this is not how the American taxpayers' dollars should be spent.

Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chair, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 3293, the so-called Scientific Research in the National Interest Act, a bill that would actually hinder the National Science Foundation's (NSF) ability to meet the dynamic demands of science and provide resources across all scientific disciplines without political manipulations. This bill is simply another in a line of Republican efforts to politicize science and jeopardize discovery and innovation.

The NSF engages in remarkable, groundbreaking work. We must continue to support this organization and ensure that America remains a world-wide leader in scientific advances. To that end, I cosponsored a number of amendments with my colleague from Virginia, Mr. BEYER, that would allow NSF scientists to further our understanding of climate and environmental science. Unfortunately my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have displayed such open hostility towards climate science and research that they won't allow a vote on these amendments.

While I believe it's important that the NSF hold itself accountable regarding the research it funds, politicizing scientific research is shortsighted and can damage our ability to compete in the world economy. H.R. 3293 would interfere with ongoing efforts at NSF to better quantify and communicate the value of the research it funds.

Mr. Chair, I am also concerned that this legislation will have a chilling effect on many of the scientists at NSF and throughout our scientific community. This bill would force scientists to second-guess their research based on political whims and require them to justify all their actions according to short-term returns, stifling high-risk, high-reward research and innovation across all fields. We must not squelch creativity, critical thinking, and the open exchange of ideas.

Federal agencies like NIH and NOAA are headquartered in my district and I represent countless federally funded scientists who are advancing knowledge, discovering cures, and developing innovative technologies. I am committed to ensuring that the NSF and all of our research agencies have the resources they need without being subject to superfluous political tests. The valuable work done by our scientists and researchers at NSF and other institutions not only leads to the development of new innovations, but also enables our Nation to attract and retain the top research talent in the world. In order to continue to compete, we need sustained investments free from political interference.

I strongly oppose this bill and any other efforts to needlessly politicize scientific research.

The Acting CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule and shall be considered as read.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3293

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 ''Scientific Research in the National Interest Act''.

SEC. 2. GREATER ACCOUNTABILITY IN FEDERAL FUNDING FOR RESEARCH.

(a) STANDARD FOR AWARD OF GRANTS.—The National Science Foundation shall award Federal funding for basic research and education in the sciences through a new research grant or cooperative agreement only if an affirmative determination is made by the Foundation under subsection (b) and written justification relating thereto is published under subsection (c).

(b) DETERMINATION.—A determination referred to in subsection (a) is a justification by the responsible Foundation official as to how the research grant or cooperative agreement promotes the progress of science in the United States, consistent with the Foundation mission as established in the National Science Foundation Act of 1950 (42 U.S.C. 1861 et seq.), and further—

(1) is worthy of Federal funding; and

(2) is in the national interest, as indicated by having the potential to achieve—

(A) increased economic competitiveness in the United States;

(B) advancement of the health and welfare of the American public;

(C) development of an American STEM workforce that is globally competitive;

(D) increased public scientific literacy and public engagement with science and technology in the United States;

(E) increased partnerships between academia and industry in the United States;

(F) support for the national defense of the United States; or

(G) promotion of the progress of science for the United States.

(c) WRITTEN JUSTIFICATION.—Public announcement of each award of Federal funding described in subsection (a) shall include a written justification from the responsible Foundation official as to how a grant or cooperative agreement meets the requirements of subsection (b).

(d) IMPLEMENTATION.—A determination under subsection (b) shall be made after a research grant or cooperative agreement proposal has satisfied the Foundation's reviews for Merit and Broader Impacts. Nothing in this section shall be construed as altering the Foundation's intellectual merit or broader impacts criteria for evaluating grant applications.

The Acting CHAIR. No amendment to the bill shall be in order except those printed in part B of House Report 114–420. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

The Chair understands amendment No. 1 will not be offered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MS. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON OF TEXAS

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in part B of House Report 114–420.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 3, line 15, through page 4, line 15, amend subsection (b) to read as follows:

(b) DETERMINATION.—A determination referred to in subsection (a) is a justification by the responsible Foundation official as to how the research grant or cooperative agreement—

(1) by itself, or by contributing to a portfolio of research in that field or across fields, is in the national interest as reflected in the National Science Foundation Act of 1950 (42 U.S.C. 1861 et seq), namely to promote the progress of science, to advance the national health, prosperity and welfare, and to secure the national defense; and

(2) is worthy of Federal funding, as demonstrated by having met the merit review criteria of the Foundation.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 609, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, my colleague from Texas, the chairman of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, has stated many times that H.R. 3293 is consistent with the policy announced by NSF in January 2015.

He also frequently cites a year old comment by NSF Director Dr. Cordova about this bill. However, it is one thing to use such vague statements in defense of this bill; it is quite another thing to look directly at the NSF policy issued by Dr. Cordova to see what it actually says.

□ 1545

I will quote directly from NSF's January 2015 policy:

The nontechnical component of the NSF award abstract must serve as a public justification for NSF funding by articulating how the project serves the national interest, as stated by NSF's mission, to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; and to secure national defense.

As Dr. Holdren, the President's Science Adviser, said:

According to the clear wording and intent of the 1950 act that created the National Science Foundation, promoting the progress of science through basic research is in the national interest.

Likewise, Dr. Cordova, in describing what she means by ''national interest,''

points directly to the 1950 NSF mission statement. In her policy, there is no separate list defining national interest with criteria that, in fact, promotes more applied research, not basic research.

While the words ''promoting the progress of science'' appear in the bill before us, they do so only as an afterthought, in dead last place and added only after many versions of this bill.

Now that we all understand the National Science Foundation's actual policy, I can briefly explain my amendment.

By tying the term ''national interest'' to the 1950 national statement, my amendment brings the bill truly in line with the National Science Foundation's own policy for transparency and accountability.

My amendment also provides clarity to what we mean by the words ''worthy of Federal funding,'' by stating that anything that has passed the rigor of the National Science Foundation's peer-review process is ''worthy of Federal funding.''

In short, my amendment fixes the underlying bill by removing restrictions that may stifle high-risk basic research, and by taking decisions about grant funding out of the hands of politicians and putting it back in the hands of scientists, where it belongs.

The National Science Foundation's 1950 mission statement, implemented through its gold standard merit-review process, has served science and this Nation so well. Let's leave it intact by passing my amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I oppose the gentlewoman's amendment, which undermines the bill and weakens accountability and transparency.

First, the amendment seeks to dilute the bill's requirement that the grant must be worthy of Federal funding. It is difficult to understand why anyone would have objections to requiring that a research grant be worthy of taxpayer support. Worthy means: having adequate or great merit, character, or value; and commendable excellence or merit; deserving.

The opposite of worthy of Federal funding are awards of taxpayer money to frivolous, low-priority projects, like producing a climate change musical, creating a voicemail game, or studying tourism in Norway.

One would think that fundamental standards like ''worthy of Federal funding'' and ''in the national interest'' would already be embedded in the standards the National Science Foundation uses to evaluate thousands of grant applications and decide which ones should receive $6 billion in basic research grants each year. From the Science, Space, and Technology Committee's review of past NSF grants, we have learned that this is not always the case.

This amendment eliminates the requirement that each grant be worthy of Federal funding. It asserts that any grant approved by NSF through its merit selection system will be considered worthy of Federal funding. With this change, every NSF-funded project would be considered worthy of Federal funding, no matter how absurd.

With this amendment, Congress would effectively abnegate its responsibility to ensure that NSF spends taxpayer dollars only on projects worthy of Federal funding.

The underlying bill does not interfere with the National Science Foundation's merit selection process. I have already quoted from the bill twice tonight. It only requires that NSF be transparent and explain in writing and in nontechnical terms why each research project that receives public funds is in the national interest. Taxpayers deserve this information. It is their money.

Moreover, in order to maintain an increased public support for vital investment in basic research, NSF must be transparent and accountable and explain why every scientific investment deserves to receive hard-earned tax dollars.

NSF Director France Cordova and her team at NSF understand this. That is why the NSF is implementing new policies to make NSF grant-making more transparent and understandable for the American people.

These policies acknowledge the primary importance of national interest in awarding tax dollars. In fact, during her testimony before the Science, Space, and Technology Committee last year, Dr. Cordova described this national interest act and NSF's new transparency policies as consistent and fully compatible with each other.

I would like to remind everyone that it is not Congress' or the NSF's money. It is the American people's money.

The amendment offered by the ranking member seeks to change the section of the bill that requires NSF to accompany public announcement of every grant award with a nontechnical explanation of the award's scientific merit and national interest.

My concern is that the proposed amendment would create a loophole through which blocks of hundreds of grants in a particular area of science would be justified by just one general statement. This is the opposite of accountability and transparency.

I strongly oppose the amendment for these reasons.

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

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, this does not do any more than what was intended under the law. It leaves it in the hands of the peer review board and not the politicians.

It does nothing to make this bill worse. In fact, it improves it so that it can meet the charter of this Congress in doing its work.

Every grant that goes out of the National Science Foundation is peer-reviewed in a system that was set up 60 years ago. It has worked well. We have gained great research. I don't think that making sure that the politicians have something to say about it makes it any better. It makes it worse.

I ask for the adoption of my amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, the National Science Foundation Director and the National Science Board have both expressed and endorsed a principle that NSF should be more transparent and accountable in its grant funding decisions. In fact, the NSF has already incorporated the national interest standard in their guidelines.

This amendment creates loopholes and dilutes the intent of the bill—a bill that NSF Director France Cordova has testified: is very compatible with the new internal NSF guidelines and with the mission statement of the National Science Foundation.

I ask my colleagues to say ''yes'' to accountability and transparency and ''no'' to the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in part B of House Report 114–420.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 3, line 22, strike ''and''.

Page 3, line 23, redesignate paragraph (2) as paragraph (3).

Page 3, after line 22, insert the following:

(2) is consistent with established and widely accepted scientific methods applicable to the field of study of exploration; and

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 609, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the ranking member, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, for her leadership. I also want to thank Mr. SMITH for his chairmanship of the committee.

I have known the commitment to science that so many Members have. I hope that my amendment reinforces the emphasis that we have had with respect to science.

Scientists should control the direction and guidance of our research. The National Science Foundation does simply that. I hope that both of my amendments contribute to that premise, and I would like to acknowledge the Rules Committee for making these amendments in order.

The Jackson Lee amendment seeks to improve H.R. 3293 by ensuring that NSF-funded research, as it has been, remains consistent with established and widely accepted scientific methods applicable to the study of exploration.

In conducting experiments or research in new areas of inquiry, grant recipients would now follow protocols that ensure that the outcomes of research are able to be reproduced by other scientists or researchers.

I have always believed that science is the work that creates the ultimate work in decades and centuries to come. Having served on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee some years back, I used to always say: science is the work of the 21st century. If you create in science, innovation, products, and research, you create opportunities for jobs and products to be sold. This is what good science is all about and why basic research relies on the scientific method in the routine practice of scientists and researchers around the world.

I fully believe that the National Science Foundation gets it. That is what their underlying work is about.

The Jackson Lee amendment will support the promise that basic research is conducted with the expectation that good science should be the underlying goal. History has shown that basic research often leads to results with the utmost beneficial consequences for society.

I would ask my colleagues to support this amendment.

I thank Chairman SESSIONS and Ranking Member SLAUGHTER for making the Jackson Lee Amendment in order for consideration under H.R. 3293, the ''Scientific Research in the National Interest Act.''

My thanks and appreciation to Chairman SMITH and Ranking Member JOHNSON for their support of this amendment and their staffs for working with my staff to ensure the amendment reflects a goal we all share.

The Jackson Lee amendment improves H.R. 3293, by ensuring that NSF funded research, as it has been, remains consistent with established and widely accepted scientific methods applicable to the study of exploration.

In conducting experiments or research in new areas of inquiry, grant recipients would now follow protocols that ensure that the outcomes of research are able to be reproduced by other scientists or researchers.

This is what good science is all about and this is why basic research relies on the scientific method in the routine practice of scientists and researchers around the world.

In 1950, Congress passed the National Science Foundation Act to ''promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; and to secure the national defense; in addition to other purposes'' by creating the National Science Foundation.

The Act authorized and directed the Foundation to ''initiate and support basic scientific research and programs to strengthen the potential of scientific research and education programs at all levels in the mathematical, physical, medical, biological, social, and other sciences.''

The 1950 Act also authorized and directed NSF to fund applied scientific and engineering research.

One hundred years of basic scientific research has revealed its value, exemplified in the advances that helped our nation win World War II and allowed Congress to appreciate science as the gateway to the pre-eminent economic global success the nation could achieve.

This Jackson Lee Amendment would support the promise that basic research is conducted with the expectation that good science should be the underlying goal.

History has shown that basic research often leads to results with the utmost beneficial consequences for society; although, at the time that basic research is conducted, it may be impossible to predict how it will benefit the nation or the world.

One such example is the Genomic studies of nematode worms that led to the discovery of genes that ultimately control cell death; this study in turn opened the avenues of discovery for new treatment possibilities for cancer and Alzheimer's Disease.

Additionally, basic research on atomic physics led to the development of the atomic clocks that now enable the highly precise Global Positioning System (GPS) used to guide commercial aircraft to their destinations.

In 2014, due to a global embrace of scientific research the world saw:

The first landing of a space craft on the surface of a comet;

The discovery of a new fundamental particle, which provided information on the origin of the universe;

Development of the world's fastest supercomputer; and

A surge in research on plant biology that is uncovering new and better ways to meet global food needs.

Unfortunately none of these achievements were led by our nation's researchers or scientists.

I ask my colleagues to support this Jackson Lee Amendment so that we may make strides toward joining and surpassing our global competitors in the emerging scientific community.

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to this amendment, but I do not oppose the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I support this amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

The amendment requires that, in addition to the National Science Foundation making a determination that a grant is worthy of Federal funding and in the national interest, the NSF must also determine that the grant is: consistent with established and widely accepted scientific methods applicable to the field of study or exploration.

I agree that this is an important determination. Basic research funded by taxpayers must have a sound scientific foundation.

Reproducibility—the ability of an entire experiment or study to be duplicated—especially by someone else working independently, is the gold standard in the scientific method.

NSF should ensure that the research it funds meets this gold standard so taxpayer dollars do not go to waste.

I thank the gentlewoman for her amendment, and I do support it.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, let me thank the gentleman from Texas and the ranking member for their support.

With that, I ask my colleagues to support the Jackson Lee amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in part B of House Report 114–420.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 3, line 22, strike ''and''.

Page 3, line 23, redesignate paragraph (2) as paragraph (3).

Page 3, after line 22, insert the following:

(2) is consistent with the definition of basic research as it applies to the purpose and field of study; and

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 609, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I restate my earlier premise that science is the work of the 21st century. Maybe we will be saying the 22nd century. Because when you are innovative and do research, you create jobs and opportunities. This amendment establishes that basic research is in the national interest of the United States.

Let me suggest to you that we have a lot of universities in this country. When I travel, I always hear individuals seeking to come to be taught in American institutions of higher education. It is because of the creative thought and, in many instances, the research that is done, whether in medicine or all the forms of science and

technology, because we have a free-flowing basis upon which people can think and invent. I want that to continue. I want the National Science Foundation to be at the cornerstone of that.

I will include in the RECORD an article titled, ''The Future Postponed.'' Why Declining Investment in Basic Research Threatens a U.S. Innovation Deficit.

[From the Massachusetts Institute of Technology]

THE FUTURE POSTPONED

WHY DECLINING INVESTMENT IN BASIC RESEARCH THREATENS A U.S. INNOVATION DEFICIT

(A Report by the MIT Committee to Evaluate the Innovation Deficit)

2014 was a year of notable scientific highlights, including:

the first landing on a comet, which has already shed important light on the formation of the Earth;

the discovery of a new fundamental particle, which provides critical information on the origin of the universe;

development of the world's fastest supercomputer;

a surge in research on plant biology that is uncovering new and better ways to meet global food requirements.

None of these, however, were U.S.-led achievements. The first two reflected 10-year, European-led efforts; the second two are Chinese accomplishments, reflecting that nation's emergence as a science and technology power. Hence the wide-spread concern over a growing U.S. innovation deficit, attributable in part to declining public investment in research (see figure).

This report provides a number of tangible examples of under-exploited areas of science and likely consequences in the form of an innovation deficit, including:

opportunities with high potential for big payoffs in health, energy, and high-tech industries;

fields where we risk falling behind in critical strategic capabilities such as supercomputing, secure information systems, and national defense technologies;

areas where national prestige is at stake, such as space exploration, or where a lack of specialized U.S. research facilities is driving key scientific talent to work overseas.

This introduction also cites examples of the benefits from basic research that have helped to shape and maintain U.S. economic power, as well as highlighting industry trends that have made university basic research even more critical to future national economic competitiveness.

Basic research is often misunderstood, because it often seems to have no immediate payoff. Yet it was just such federally-funded research into the fundamental working of cells, intensified beginning with the ''War on Cancer'' in 1971, that led over time to a growing arsenal of sophisticated new anti-cancer therapies—19 new drugs approved by the U.S. FDA in the past 2 years. Do we want similar progress on Alzheimer's, which already affects 5 million Americans, more than any single form of cancer? Then we should expand research in neurobiology, brain chemistry, and the science of aging (see Alzheimer's Disease). The Ebola epidemic in West Africa is a reminder of how vulnerable we are to a wider pandemic of emergent viral diseases, because of a lack of research on their biology; an even greater public health threat looms from the rise of antibiotic resistant bacteria right here at home, which, because commercial incentives are lacking, only expanded university-based research into new types of antibiotics can address (see Infectious Disease).

America's emergence last year as the world's largest oil producer has been justly celebrated as a milestone for energy independence. But the roots of the fracking revolution stem from federally-funded research—begun in the wake of the first OPEC oil embargo 40 years ago—that led to directional drilling technology, diamond drill bits tough enough to cut shale, and the first major hydraulic fracturing experiments. Do we also want the U.S. to be a leader in clean energy technologies a few decades hence, when these will be needed for large scale replacement of fossil energy sources, a huge global market? Then now is when more investment in advanced thin film solar cells, new battery concepts, and novel approaches to fusion energy should begin (see Materials Discovery and Processing, Batteries, Fusion Energy).

Some areas of research create opportunities of obvious economic importance. Catalysis, for example, is already a $500 billion industry in the United States alone and plays a critical role in the manufacture of virtually every fuel, all types of plastics, and many pharmaceuticals. Yet today's catalysts are relatively inefficient and require high temperatures compared to those (such as enzymes) that operate in living things. So the potential payoff in both reduced environmental impact and a powerful economic edge for countries that invest in efforts to understand and replicate these biological catalysts—as Germany and China already are—could be huge (see Catalysis). The U.S. also lags in two other key areas: developing advances in plant sciences that can help meet growing world needs for food while supporting U.S. agricultural exports, and the growing field of robotics that is important not only for automated factories but for a whole new era of automated services such as driverless vehicles (see Plant Sciences and Robotics).

In an increasingly global and competitive world, where knowledge is created and first applied has huge economic consequences: some 50 years after the rise of Silicon Valley, the U.S. still leads in the commercial application of integrated circuits, advanced electronic devices, and internet businesses. But foreseeable advances in optical integrated circuits, where both Europe and Japan are investing heavily, is likely to completely reshape the $300 billion semiconductor industry that today is largely dominated by U.S. companies (see Photonics). In this area and other fields of science that will underlie the innovation centers of the future, U.S. leadership or even competitiveness is at risk. Synthetic biology—the ability to redesign life in the lab—is another area that has huge potential to transform bio-manufacturing and food production and to create breakthroughs in healthcare—markets that might easily exceed the size of the technology market. But it is EU scientists that benefit from superior facilities and dedicated funding and are leading the way (see Synthetic Biology). Research progress in many such fields increasingly depends on sophisticated modern laboratories and research instruments, the growing lack of which in the U.S. is contributing to a migration of top talent and research leadership overseas.

Some areas of research are so strategically important that for the U.S. to fall behind ought to be alarming. Yet Chinese leadership in supercomputing—its Tianhe-2 machine at the Chinese National University of Defense in Guangzhou has won top ranking for the third year in a row and can now do quadrillions of calculations per second—is just such a straw in the wind. Another is our apparent and growing vulnerability to cyberattacks of the type that have damaged Sony, major banks, large retailers, and other major companies. Ultimately, it will be basic research in areas such as photonics, cybersecurity, and quantum computing (where China is investing heavily) that determine leadership in secure information systems, in secure long distance communications, and in super-computing (see Cybersecurity and Quantum Information Systems). Recent budget cuts have impacted U.S. efforts in all these areas. Also, technologies are now in view that could markedly improve the way we protect our soldiers and other war fighters while improving their effectiveness in combat (see Defense Technology).

It is not just areas of science with obvious applications that are important. Some observers have asked, ''What good is it?'' of the discovery of the Higgs boson (the particle referred to above, which fills a major gap in our understanding of the fundamental nature of matter). But it is useful to remember that similar comments might have been made when the double helix structure of DNA was first understood (many decades before the first biotech drug), when the first transistor emerged from research in solid state physics (many decades before the IT revolution), when radio waves were first discovered (long before radios or broadcast networks were even conceived of). We are a remarkably inventive species, and seem always to find ways to put new knowledge to work.

Other potential discoveries could have global impacts of a different kind. Astronomers have now identified hundreds of planets around other stars, and some of them are clearly Earth-like. Imagine what it would mean to our human perspective if we were to discover evidence of life on these planets—a signal that we are not alone in the universe—from observations of their planetary atmospheres, something that is potentially within the technical capability of space-based research within the next decade? Or if the next generation of space telescopes can discover the true nature of the mysterious ''dark matter'' and ''dark energy'' that appear to be the dominant constituents of the universe (see Space Exploration).

Do we want more efficient government, more market-friendly regulatory structures? Social and economic research is increasingly able to provide policymakers with useful guidance. Witness the way government has helped to create mobile and broadband markets by auctioning the wireless spectrum—complex, carefully-designed auctions based on insights from game theory and related research that have netted the federal government more than $60 billion while catalyzing huge new industries and transformed the way we live and do business. Empowered by access to more government data and Big Data tools, such research could point the way to still more efficient government (see Enabling Better Policy Decisions).

In the past, U.S. industry took a long term view of R&D and did fundamental research, activities associated with such entities as the now-diminished Bell Labs and Xerox Park. That's still the case in some other countries such as South Korea. Samsung, for example, spent decades of effort to develop the underlying science and manufacturing behind organic light-emitting diodes (OLEDs) before commercializing these into the now familiar, dramatic displays in TVs and many other digital devices. But today, as competitive pressures have increased, basic research has essentially disappeared from U.S. companies, leaving them dependent on federally-funded, university-based basic research to fuel innovation. This shift means that federal support of basic research is even more tightly coupled to national economic competitiveness. Moreover, there will

always be circumstances when private investment lags—when the innovation creates a public good, such as clean air, for which an investor can't capture the value, or when the risk is too high, such as novel approaches to new antibiotic drugs, or when the technical complexity is so high that there is fundamental uncertainty as to the outcome, such as with quantum computing or fusion energy. For these cases, government funding is the only possible source to spur innovation.

This central role of federal research support means that sudden changes in funding levels such as the recent sequester can disrupt research efforts and cause long term damage, especially to the pipeline of scientific talent on which U.S. research leadership ultimately depends. In a survey of the effects of reduced research funding conducted by the Chronicle of Higher Education last year among 11,000 recipients of NIH and NSF research grants, nearly half have abandoned an area of investigation they considered critical to their lab's mission, and more than three quarters have fired or failed to hire graduate students and research fellows. Other evidence suggests that many of those affected switch careers, leaving basic research behind forever.

Despite these challenges, the potential benefits from expanding basic research summarized in these pages—an innovation dividend that could boost our economy, improve human lives, and strengthen the U.S. strategically—are truly inspiring. We hope you will find the information useful.

□ 1600

What this paper cites, in 2014, notable scientific advancements included landing of a manmade Earth object on a comet, discovery of a new fundamental particle which provided vital information on the origin of the universe, development of the world's fastest supercomputer, and a tremendous increase in plant biology that is discovering new and better ways to make global food requirements.

None of these, however, Mr. Chairman, were U.S.-led. So my amendment turns our attention, again, maybe to the obvious. Maybe if I say Alexander Bell, as we learned as children in school, everybody knew that he created the telephone.

George Washington Carver was associated with the many scientific discoveries out of a single peanut, someone that those of us, in this month of African American History, when they would teach us African American History, we would all know George Washington Carver, that we had a real role model that was a scientist and that generated probably thousands of scientists, people of African American heritage and beyond.

So I want my amendment to emphasize that we want the long list of innovation to be on our side and to continue the tradition and trajectory that we have had of basic research that then applies to all levels to create opportunities of work and genius that is here in this country.

I ask my colleagues to support my amendment.

I thank Chairman SESSIONS and Ranking Member SLAUGHTER for making three Jackson Lee Amendments in order for consideration under H.R. 3293, the "Scientific Research in the National Interest Act."

My thanks and appreciation to Chairman SMITH and Ranking Member JOHNSON's staff for working with my staff on drafting this amendment.

Jackson Lee Amendment No. 4—adds to the list of goals in the national interest—the conduct of basic research that follow well established protocols and scientific methods.

The scientific method—it is what happens every day and can lead to basic research experiments conducted by scientists.

Basic research is the foundation of tomorrow's innovations.

The Jackson Lee Amendment will help ensure that the nature of basic research is preserved because without basic research the United States will be dependent on others to make and reap the tremendous economic rewards from new discoveries.

Applied science depends on a well-grounded understanding of the basic research that leads to discovery.

I call my colleagues attention to a groundbreaking report by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology entitled "The Future Postponed: Why Declining Investment in Basic Research Threatens a U.S. Innovation Deficit."

For much of our history, the United States' industries took a long term view of research and development and did fundamental research, activities associated with basic research at Bell Labs and Xerox Park.

Today, as competitive pressures have increased, basic research has essentially disappeared from U.S. companies, leaving them dependent upon federally-funded, university-based basic research to fuel innovation.

In 2014, notable scientific advancements included:

1. landing of a man made earth object on a comet;

2. discovery of a new fundamental particle, which provided vital information on the origin of the universe; development of the world's fastest supercomputer; and

3. a tremendous increase in plant biology that is discovering new and better ways to meet global food requirements.

These are wonderful accomplishments, but none of them were U.S. led.

The first two were European in origin and the second two were accomplished by China.

China landed the Jade Rabbit, its first lunar probe on the moon, and on Sunday North Korea launched a long range rocket that put a satellite into space that flew over the location of the Super Bowl.

The Jackson Lee Amendment is intended to strengthen the nation's commitment to basic research so that the United States remains preeminent in the field of discovery.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment, though I do not oppose the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I support this amendment by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), her second amendment that we are accepting on this side of the aisle.

I believe this amendment, in combination with the previous amendment, aims to ensure that the National Science Foundation grants fund research that meets the highest standards so taxpayer dollars are not wasted on frivolous grants or poorly designed research proposals.

This amendment recognizes the National Science Foundation's basic research mission and endorses applying the bill's national interest standards and criteria to National Science Foundation's basic research grants.

I thank the gentlewoman for her amendment, and I support it.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the gentleman for supporting this amendment, and I thank the ranking member for supporting it.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, let me say that, in addition to following protocol, we must invest funds, money, in basic research.

But I also want to take note of something that I have watched over the years, and I have added amendments, and I have seen the growth.

One of my first acts on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee was to utilize laboratory tools or equipment that were no longer needed by the Federal Government in its national science lab to give them to middle schools and high schools so that they would have access to this kind of equipment. Many of us know that there are schools all throughout America who are deficient in science labs. I see them in my district. I hear about them.

I think the other important point is that, over the years, we have expanded the research collaboration to Historically Black Colleges, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, Native American-Serving, rural, and colleges that serve the economically disadvantaged.

Those are good things because we don't know where the genius is America and how many people may come up with outstanding research. So I hope that we do focus on how important basic research is.

I ask my colleagues to support the Jackson Lee amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MS. DELBENE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 5 printed in part B of House Report 114–420.

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 4, line 6, insert ", including computer science and information technology sectors," after "workforce".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 609, the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington.

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Chair, I rise to offer this amendment to ensure the National Science Foundation can continue investing in the development of an American workforce that is globally competitive in computer science and information technology. This has been a bipartisan goal in the past, and I am hopeful everyone in this Chamber will be able to support it.

Computing technology has become an integral part of our lives, transforming our society and our Nation's economy. Nowhere is this clearer than in the Puget Sound region. I have the honor of representing Washington's First District, which has some of the world's leading software companies and technology innovators.

But the same can be seen across the country. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, there will be roughly 10 million STEM jobs by 2020 and, of those jobs, half are expected to be in computing and information technology. That is nearly 5 million good-paying jobs. But unless we step up our game, our country won't have enough computer science graduates to fill those positions.

Today, there continues to be a substantial shortage of Americans with the skills needed to fill computing jobs, and too few of our students are being given the opportunity to learn computer science, both at the K–12 level and in college. What is worse, dramatic disparities remain for girls and students of color.

Last year, less than 25 percent of students taking the AP Computer Science exam were girls, while less than 15 percent were African American or Latino.

To remain economically competitive, we need to make smart investments now to address these disparities and ensure we have a strong 21st century workforce in the decades to come. Thankfully, NSF supports vital research and development projects to help prepare the next generation to compete in STEM jobs, something we all agree is an important goal.

My amendment simply clarifies that, under the legislation, NSF can also invest in projects aimed at developing an American workforce that is globally competitive in computing and information technology, sectors that are seeing enormous growth here at home and around the globe.

If we want our students to be prepared for the digital economy, NSF must be able to fund projects that support the teaching and learning of essential computer science skills like coding, programming, designing, and debugging. My amendment will do just that. It will ensure we are looking forward and preparing students for the college degrees and careers of the future.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support it.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I claim time in opposition to the amendment, but I do not oppose it.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I accept the gentlewoman's amendment. It clarifies that it is in the national interest to fund grants that support the development of an American STEM workforce that is globally competitive and that includes computer science and the information technology sectors.

In October, the President signed into law the STEM Education Act, a bill that I introduced with my colleague Ms. ESTY, which expands the definition of STEM to include computer science. This amendment reinforces that new Federal definition of STEM. It is a perfecting amendment to the bill, and I welcome it.

I agree with my colleague that it is in the national interest to support creating training a STEM workforce which includes computer science, and I support her amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. DELBENE. I want to thank the chairman for his support.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MS. DELBENE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 6 printed in part B of House Report 114–420.

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 5, after line 3, add the following:

(e) CLARIFICATION.—Nothing in this Act shall be construed to impact Federal funding for research grants or cooperative agreements awarded by the National Science Foundation prior to the date of enactment of this Act.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 609, the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington.

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Chair, I rise to offer an important amendment for scientists across the country who are engaged in ongoing research funded by the National Science Foundation.

As everyone in this Chamber knows, research and innovation are central to American competitiveness and driving our national economy. Each year, investments in research through NSF help us push the boundaries of scientific knowledge, support new industries, and address the challenges facing our society.

I don't think anyone would deny that funding for NSF has overwhelmingly benefited our country. It is also key to our country's economic growth. Funding new explorations in science and technology is how we stay on the cutting edge of research; it is how we continue to compete globally in the 21st century economy.

That is why I have serious concerns about the implications of the underlying legislation, which needlessly inserts a layer of political review into the scientific research process. To remain a world leader, we need to ensure scientists are exploring transformative new ideas and frontiers based on the merits of their research, not the subjective opinions of politicians in Congress.

Unfortunately, those subjective opinions are exactly what is being injected into the process under this legislation; and what is worse, it has the potential to put ongoing research at risk. By changing the rules about how NSF funding is awarded, scientists across the country may rightfully be concerned about how this legislation affects the important work that they are doing today.

As someone who started her career in research, I can tell you firsthand it is incredibly important that you have the certainty to see a project through to the end. Starting and stopping research is highly detrimental.

We should provide scientists the long-term visibility to know their ongoing research can be completed without interference from politicians, and that is precisely what my amendment does. My amendment simply clarifies that the underlying legislation does not impact any grant funding that has already been awarded by the NSF. It is critical that we pass it to ensure ongoing research is not disrupted by this unfortunate bill.

Mr. Chairman, research isn't a spigot you can turn on and off. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this commonsense amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment, though I do not oppose the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I accept the gentlewoman's amendment. It clarifies that the new requirements in the bill do not apply to grants that have already been awarded by the National Science Foundation. I agree that the bill is not intended to be retroactive.

In January 2015, NSF began to implement new internal guidelines that promote accountability and transparency. These guidelines are compatible with this bill, but the implementation of them is a work in progress. I will continue to communicate with NSF about how they implement their internal guidelines, but agree that this bill will only apply to future grants, once enacted.

So, Mr. Chairman, I support the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. DELBENE. I thank the chairman for his support of the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE).

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CARTER of Texas) having assumed the chair, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3293) to provide for greater accountability in Federal funding for scientific research, to promote the progress of science in the United States that serves that national interest, had come to no resolution thereon.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 13 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1645

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia) at 4 o'clock and 45 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2017, COMMON SENSE NUTRITION DISCLOSURE ACT OF 2015, AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM FEBRUARY 15, 2016, THROUGH FEBRUARY 22, 2016

Mr. BURGESS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114–421) on the resolution (H. Res. 611) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2017) to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to improve and clarify certain disclosure requirements for restaurants and similar retail food establishments, and to amend the authority to bring proceedings under section 403A, and providing for proceedings during the period from February 15, 2016, through February 22, 2016, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 609 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 3293.

Will the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. BLUM) kindly take the chair.

□ 1647

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3293) to provide for greater accountability in Federal funding for scientific research, to promote the progress of science in the United States that serves that national interest, with Mr. BLUM (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, amendment No. 6 printed in part B of House Report 114–420, offered by the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE), had been disposed of.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MS. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON OF TEXAS

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, the unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 181, noes 235, not voting 17, as follows:

[Roll No. 68]

AYES—181

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Doyle, Michael F.
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanna
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—235

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costa
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Granger
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Huelskamp
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden

Walker	Whitfield	Yoho
Walorski	Williams	Young (AK)
Walters, Mimi	Wilson (SC)	Young (IA)
Weber (TX)	Wittman	Young (IN)
Webster (FL)	Womack	Zeldin
Wenstrup	Woodall	Zinke
Westerman	Yoder	

NOT VOTING—17

Castro (TX)	Hudson	Richmond
Duckworth	Huizenga (MI)	Sanchez, Loretta
Fincher	Kelly (IL)	Shimkus
Gowdy	Lipinski	Smith (WA)
Graves (GA)	Mullin	Westmoreland
Herrera Beutler	Quigley	

□ 1708

Messrs. SENSENBRENNER and NUGENT changed their vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

Messrs. ASHFORD and PETERS changed their vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. BOST). There being no further amendment, under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia) having assumed the chair, Mr. BOST, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3293) to provide for greater accountability in Federal funding for scientific research, to promote the progress of science in the United States that serves that national interest, and, pursuant to House Resolution 609, he reported the bill back to the House with sundry amendments adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole? If not, the Chair will put them en gros.

The amendments were agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

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

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentlewoman opposed to the bill?

Ms. EDWARDS. I am opposed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. Edwards moves to recommit the bill H.R. 3293 to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith, with the following amendments:

Page 4, line 13, strike ''or''.

Page 4, line 15, strike the period and insert ''; or''.

Page 4, after line 15, insert the folowing:

(H) increased understanding of the causes and prevention of gun violence.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Maryland is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill. It will not kill the bill or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

H.R. 3293, the deceptively entitled Scientific Research in the National Interest Act, represents an effort by the majority to overrule expert scientists in deciding which scientific grants the Federal scientific agency should fund. What this really translates to, Mr. Speaker, is that these are areas that some politicians do not want to fund because they don't believe in scientists.

Just a week ago, 26-year-old NeShante Davis, a second grade teacher in Fort Washington, and her 2-year-old daughter, Chloe, were gunned down because of child support. We have a gun violence problem in the United States.

According to The American Journal of Medicine, compared to other rich nations, Americans are 25 times more likely to be violently killed with a firearm, 6 times more likely to be accidentally killed with a gun, 8 times more likely to commit suicide using a firearm, and 10 times more likely to die from a gun death overall.

To address this, Americans deserve the facts and Congress needs the breadth and the data for the epidemic. Using the public health approach, we have reduced smoking among Americans from 43 percent, at the time of the first Surgeon General's report in 1964, to 18 percent.

□ 1715

Since the 1970s, using the public health approach, we have reduced deaths from motor vehicle crashes by more than 70 percent. In 1970, there were over 55,000 deaths from motor vehicle crashes per year. Today there are around 30,000.

So what does the public health approach yield? Well, the essence is this: define the problem, including its magnitude, nature, and distribution in the population; define the cause or risk and protective factors for the problem. What are the characteristics to prevent the problem?

For example, educating people about the risk of guns that come with gun ownership and how to reduce that risk and develop widely implemented programs using proven strategies to prevent the problem, public health can help solve this problem.

At this time, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. SWALWELL), my colleague and cosponsor of the motion.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. I thank the gentlewoman from Maryland for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, on every block in every community across America, people are asking what is the Federal Government doing to keep our community safe from gun violence. They are asking for good reason.

Nearly 11,000 Americans were victims of homicide by firearm in 2014. There was nearly one mass shooting for each day of the year in 2015, according to The New York Times. With these stats, are we doing enough? Can we do more?

Our motion to recommit answers this question by endeavoring to understand the causes of gun violence and learning how we can curb it. As Members of Congress, we have no higher obligation than to protect those we represent.

I urge all Members to live up to that responsibility. Help do all we can to reduce gun violence. Pass this motion to recommit.

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, using the public health approach, we have now eradicated smallpox, eliminated polio in most countries, reduced motor vehicle deaths by 70 percent, and reduced smoking rates by over half.

We can do something about gun violence, and we have an obligation to do it today. Just think if we were able to do the same thing to address the gun violence epidemic.

This is a small and yet powerful step with research—just research—that could lead to significantly reducing the number of Americans killed by firearms.

All we want to do is look at the problem. All we want to do is measure the magnitude. All we want to do is find solutions for NeShante Davis, 26 years old, and her 2-year-old daughter, Chloe, gunned down—gunned down.

In every single community across this country, we can do this by enabling the National Science Foundation to just look into the issue and give us some answers so that we can find solutions. We owe it to NeShante. We owe it to Chloe. We owe it to the American people.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to treat this like the epidemic that it is. End gun violence in this country.

I urge my colleagues to support my commonsense motion.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I oppose the motion to recommit.

H.R. 3293, the Scientific Research in the National Interest Act, is a bipartisan bill that ensures the grant process at the National Science Foundation is transparent and accountable to the American people.

America's future economic growth and national security depend on innovation. Public and private investments in research and development fuel the economy, create jobs, and lead to new technologies that benefit Americans' daily lives.

NSF invests about $6 billion of taxpayers' funds every year on research projects and related activities. Unfortunately, in recent years, the Federal Government has awarded too many grants that few Americans would consider to be in the national interest.

Only one out of five grant proposals are approved. We cannot fund every worthy proposal, much less frivolous ones like $516,000 to create a video game called ''Relive Prom Night.''

The legislation before us reaffirms in law that every NSF grant must support research that is in the national interest.

The 1950 enabling legislation that created the NSF set forth the Foundation's mission and cited the national interest as the foundation for public support and dissemination of basic scientific research.

The Science in the National Interest Act reaffirms and restores this crucial mission and requires the NSF grants meet at least one of seven criteria that demonstrate it is in the national interest. This will add transparency, accountability, and credibility to the NSF and its grant process.

Opponents of this bill must think they know better than the NSF Director. Director Cordova testified before the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee that the policy in H.R. 3293 is ''compatible with the NSF's internal guidelines.'' This legislation makes that standard clear, explicit, and permanent.

Scientists still make the decisions. They just do not get a blank check signed by the taxpayer. They need to be accountable to the American people by showing their proposals are in the national interest.

The National Science Foundation has supported and continues to support basic research into the causes and prevention of crime and mass violence. NSF-funded research has included studies of violent impulse behavior, cultural and social factors affecting predisposition to violence, the links between mental disorders and violent behavior, parenting and parental influences over their children's disposition toward violent behavior, and patterns of crime and violence in American cities.

There is no need for this motion to recommit. In fact, it is an inappropriate earmark. For those reasons, I urge my colleagues to reject the motion to recommit and to support the underlying bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of passage.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 177, noes 241, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 69]

AYES—177

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Massie
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—241

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costa
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Granger
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Huelskamp
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—15

Castro (TX)
Duckworth
Fincher
Gowdy
Graves (GA)
Herrera Beutler
Hudson
Huizenga (MI)
Kelly (IL)
Miller (FL)
Mullin
Quigley
Sanchez, Loretta
Smith (WA)
Westmoreland

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1727

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 69, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 236, noes 178, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 70]

AYES—236

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costa
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Culberson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Granger
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Huelskamp
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOES—178

Adams
Aguilar
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Courtney
Crowley
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Doyle, Michael F.
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanna
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Ros-Lehtinen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—19

Blum
Brooks (AL)
Castro (TX)
Duckworth
Fincher
Gowdy
Graves (GA)
Herrera Beutler
Hudson
Huizenga (MI)
Kelly (IL)
Kind
Massie
Mullin
Quigley
Sanchez, Loretta
Smith (WA)
Westmoreland
Wittman

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas) (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1733

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote No. 70 on H.R. 3293, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GRAVES of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I was absent today to attend the funeral of a family member. Had I been present, on rollcall No. 68, I would have voted "no," on rollcall No. 69, I would have voted "no," and on rollcall No. 70, I would have voted "yea."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, my vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 68 on the Eddie Bernice Johnson Amendment for consideration of H.R. 3293—Scientific Research in the National Interest Act. I am not recorded because I was absent due to the birth of my son in San Antonio, Texas. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

Mr. Speaker, my vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 69 on the Motion to recommit H.R. 3293—Scientific Research in the National Interest Act. I am not recorded because I was absent due to the birth of my son in San Antonio, Texas. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

Mr. Speaker, my vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 70 on the final passage of H.R. 3293—Scientific Research in the National Interest Act. I am not recorded because I was absent due to the birth of my son in San Antonio, Texas. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

AUTHORIZING THE USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL IN THE CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER FOR A CEREMONY AS PART OF THE COMMEMORATION OF THE DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE OF VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST

Mr. HARPER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on House Administration be discharged from further consideration of House Concurrent Resolution 111, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MACARTHUR). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Mississippi?

There was no objection.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 111

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),

SECTION 1. USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL FOR HOLOCAUST DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY.

Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center is authorized to be used on May 5, 2016, for a ceremony as part of the commemoration of the days of remembrance of victims of the Holocaust. Physical preparations for the conduct of the ceremony shall be carried out in accordance with such conditions as may be prescribed by the Architect of the Capitol.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

UNITED STATES-JORDAN DEFENSE COOPERATION ACT OF 2015

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 907) to improve defense cooperation between the United States and Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, with the Senate amendment thereto, and concur in the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendment:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) As of January 22, 2015, the United States Government has provided $3,046,343,000 in assistance to respond to the Syria humanitarian crisis, of which nearly $467,000,000 has been provided to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

(2) As of January 2015, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, there were 621,937 registered Syrian refugees in Jordan and 83.8 percent of whom lived outside refugee camps.

(3) In 2000, the United States and Jordan signed a free-trade agreement that went into force in 2001.

(4) In 1996, the United States granted Jordan major non-NATO ally status.

(5) Jordan is suffering from the Syrian refugee crisis and the threat of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

(6) The Government of Jordan was elected as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council for a 2-year term ending in December 2015.

(7) Enhanced support for defense cooperation with Jordan is important to the national security of the United States, including through creation of a status in law for Jordan similar to the countries in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Japan, Australia, the Republic of Korea, Israel, and New Zealand, with respect to consideration by Congress of foreign military sales to Jordan.

(8) The Colorado National Guard's relationship with the Jordanian military provides a significant benefit to both the United States and Jordan.

(9) Jordanian pilot Moaz al-Kasasbeh was brutally murdered by ISIL.

(10) On February 3, 2015, Secretary of State John Kerry and Jordanian Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh signed a new Memorandum of Understanding that reflects the intention to increase United States assistance to the Government of Jordan from $660,000,000 to $1,000,000,000 for each of the years 2015 through 2017.

(11) On December 5, 2014, in an interview on CBS This Morning, Jordanian King Abdullah II stated—

(A) in reference to ISIL, ''This is a Muslim problem. We need to take ownership of this. We need to stand up and say what is wrong''; and

(B) ''This is our war. This is a war inside Islam. So we have to own up to it. We have to take the lead. We have to start fighting back.''.

SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

It should be the policy of the United States—

(1) to support the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in its response to the Syrian refugee crisis;

(2) to provide necessary assistance to alleviate the domestic burden to provide basic needs for the assimilated Syrian refugees;

(3) to cooperate with Jordan to combat the terrorist threat from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) or other terrorist organizations; and

(4) to help secure the border between Jordan and its neighbors Syria and Iraq.

SEC. 4. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) expeditious consideration of certifications of letters of offer to sell defense articles, defense services, design and construction services, and major defense equipment to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan under section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2776(b)) is fully consistent with United States security and foreign policy interests and the objectives of world peace and security;

(2) Congress welcomes the statement of King Abdullah II quoted in section (2)(11); and

(3) it is in the interest of peace and stability for regional members of the Global Coalition to Combat ISIL to continue their commitment to, and increase their involvement in, addressing the threat posed by ISIL.

SEC. 5. ENHANCED DEFENSE COOPERATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—During the 3-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan shall be treated as if it were a country listed in the provisions of law described in subsection (b) for purposes of applying and administering such provisions of law.

(b) ARMS EXPORT CONTROL ACT.—The provisions of law described in this subsection are—

(1) subsections (b)(2), (d)(2)(B), (d)(3)(A)(i), and (d)(5) of section 3 of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2753);

(2) subsections (e)(2)(A), (h)(1)(A), and (h)(2) of section 21 of such Act (22 U.S.C. 2761);

(3) subsections (b)(1), (b)(2), (b)(6), (c), and (d)(2)(A) of section 36 of such Act (22 U.S.C. 2776);

(4) section 62(c)(1) of such Act (22 U.S.C. 2796a(c)(1)); and

(5) section 63(a)(2) of such Act (22 U.S.C. 2796b(a)(2)).

SEC. 6. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.

Subject to the availability of appropriations, the Secretary of State is authorized to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to increase economic support funds, military cooperation, including joint military exercises, personnel exchanges, support for international peacekeeping missions, and enhanced strategic dialogue.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered as read.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the original request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

JUDICIAL REDRESS ACT OF 2015

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 1428) to extend Privacy Act remedies to citizens of certified states, and for other purposes, with the Senate amendment thereto, and concur in the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendment:

On page 3, strike line 6 and all that follows through page 4 line 21, and insert:

(d) DESIGNATION OF COVERED COUNTRY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General may, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Secretary of Homeland Security, designate a foreign country or regional economic integration organization, or member country of such organization, as a ''covered country'' for purposes of this section if—

(A)(i) the country or regional economic integration organization, or member country of such organization, has entered into an agreement with the United States that provides for appropriate privacy protections for information shared for the purpose of preventing, investigating, detecting, or prosecuting criminal offenses; or

(ii) the Attorney General has determined that the country or regional economic integration organization, or member country of such organization, has effectively shared information with the United States for the purpose of preventing, investigating, detecting, or prosecuting criminal offenses and has appropriate privacy protections for such shared information;

(B) the country or regional economic integration organization, or member country of such organization, permits the transfer of personal data for commercial purposes between the territory of that country or regional economic organization and the territory of the United States, through an agreement with the United States or otherwise; and

(C) the Attorney General has certified that the policies regarding the transfer of personal data for commercial purposes and related actions of the country or regional economic integration organization, or member country of such organization, do not materially impede the national security interests of the United States.

(2) REMOVAL OF DESIGNATION.—The Attorney General may, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Secretary of Homeland Security, revoke the designation of a foreign country or regional economic integration organization, or member country of such organization, as a ''covered country'' if the Attorney General determines that such designated ''covered country''—

(A) is not complying with the agreement described under paragraph (1)(A)(i);

(B) no longer meets the requirements for designation under paragraph (1)(A)(ii);

(C) fails to meet the requirements under paragraph (1)(B);

(D) no longer meets the requirements for certification under paragraph (1)(C); or

(E) impedes the transfer of information (for purposes of reporting or preventing unlawful activity) to the United States by a private entity or person.

Mr. GOODLATTE (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the reading be dispensed with.

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

There was no objection.

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

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NO VETERAN DIES ALONE

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

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, it has been said that no veteran dies alone. Yesterday, southern Arizona proved that true in an amazing way.

Recently, Sierra Vista resident Sergeant First Class Sidney D. Cochran passed away at the age of 93. He served 20 years in the U.S. Army, serving in both World War II and Korea, but died without any family to attend his funeral. A call went out at the end of last week on social media to encourage anyone to attend his service. Over 300 people came out to show their respects.

The Sierra Vista Herald reported that American Legion Riders escorted Sergeant Cochran to the cemetery, where members of the Tucson-based Patriot Guard Riders were waiting to

greet him. Fort Huachuca's Honor Guard carried him to his final resting place, and an Arizona National Guard helicopter conducted a flyover. The manager of the cemetery remarked that she had never seen a service like that before.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud everyone in my district who took the time to give Sergeant Cochran the honor he deserved. Southern Arizona is unique for so many reasons, and not least of all is the amazing way our community shows appreciation for our veterans and their service.

CYBERSECURITY NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the President announced his Cybersecurity National Action Plan in conjunction with his 2017 budget proposal. This proposal starts with a much-needed investment in Federal cybersecurity: a 35 percent increase in spending anchored by a $3.1 billion revolving fund designed to kick-start the modernization of outdated government IT systems—something that is sorely needed.

The Action Plan is notable for its emphasis on centralizing Federal cybersecurity, something I have long called for. While the CISO created under the plan does not have all authorities I think the position requires, it is certainly a step in the right direction.

The plan also makes needed investments in workforce development, including the very successful CyberCorps program, and charters a Presidential commission to do more long-range planning in the domain.

I commend the President's effort, which reflects an appropriately strategic adjustment to the breach of Office of Personnel Management systems last year; however, I hope we will leverage this increased attention to address the challenges of tomorrow, not just those of yesterday.

IRAN VIOLATES INTERNATIONAL LAW

(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. Mr. Speaker, it was a routine exercise, sailing from Kuwait to Bahrain through the Persian Gulf, until, allegedly, the navigation system failed on one of the two U.S. gunboats. Mysteriously, the boats lost communication.

Next, 10 American sailors surrendered and were captured by Iran. They were led off the boat at gunpoint and held hostage. Iran, unsurprisingly, violated Article 13 of the Geneva Convention by failing to protect our sailors from ''insults and public curiosity.''

Here is a poster of our sailors surrendering to the small boat of Iranians. The bottom photograph apparently shows arms taken off the two American boats. I assume the Iranians kept those.

Iran's Supreme Leader has awarded victory medals to its navy commanders for capturing the Americans.

International law states that anyone can have innocent passage through a state's territorial waters, as long as it is nonthreatening, continuous, and expeditious.

Iran claimed the Americans were sent to spy. These claims turned out to be delusional. Iran acted without consequences, and the U.S. did not act at all.

Many questions remain. Where was the effective air cover for the Navy? Why did the sailors ''give up the ship''? Who gave the order to surrender?

The Navy needs to let the American public know how two American boats were confiscated by the Iranians and why it happened.

And that is just the way it is.

FLINT WATER CRISIS

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, in Michigan, thousands of young children were poisoned because Governor Snyder used a contaminated water source to cut costs. Last year, in my State of New Jersey, over 3,000 children under 6 years old were afflicted with dangerous levels of lead, according to a new report.

Four of the communities I represent in Congress—Irvington, East Orange, Newark, and Jersey City—have dangerous lead levels. At the same time, our runaway Governor continues to roll back protections for clean water.

It is a national disgrace that children in New Jersey, Michigan, and other U.S. States are being poisoned by lead in the year 2016. Many of these children will suffer irreparable harm, never reaching their full potential, because of the neglect and indifference of their leaders.

We have a moral obligation to protect the health and well-being of our communities, especially our children. Let's meet it.

□ 1745

SUPPORTING THE DOLPHINS CANCER CHALLENGE AND SYLVESTER COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CENTER

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge south Floridians to join me at the Dolphins Cancer Challenge on Saturday, February 20.

The Dolphins Cancer Challenge raises money for the University of Miami's Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center to help ''tackle cancer''—to the tune of $11.5 million since its inception in 2010.

This event was inspired by Jim ''Mad Dog'' Mandich, whom we see pictured here, whom we tragically lost to cancer nearly 5 years ago.

A champion both on and off the field, the ''Mad Dog'' was a key contributor for the still-perfect and still-peerless, undefeated 1972 Miami Dolphins.

But Jim was perhaps best known and loved for his broadcasting work, where he cheered our own Dolphins with his patented ''Alright Miami.''

So please ride, run, or walk with me at the Dolphins Cancer Challenge to help support Sylvester's innovative cancer care.

MANMADE DISASTER IN FLINT, MICHIGAN

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

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to join my colleagues in decrying this manmade disaster that is affecting the residents in the city of Flint, Michigan.

Every day we learn more about how the Governor and Michigan public officials made decisions that sacrificed the health and futures of the Flint residents in order to save a few dollars. That is just plain wrong. The people of Flint deserve better. We cannot stand silent while Americans, while children, are poisoned.

Flint is a majority African American city, and the average household income is just $24,834—that is a year—which is barely half of Michigan's average household income. Would the same decisions have been made had this been in an affluent community? I doubt it.

Earlier today, this House passed the bipartisan Safe Drinking Water Act Improved Compliance Awareness Act, but we can and must do more to prevent this from ever happening again.

Our response must be comprehensive and urgent. It is a state of emergency that requires Members of Congress to find all of the Federal resources possible to demonstrate that we are really and truly our brothers' and sisters' keeper.

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S FY 2017 BUDGET AND CRUSHING DEBT

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

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, this is the cover of President Obama's last budget proposal. Whether or not the administration intended it, it is a fitting and appropriate cover because it symbolizes the mountain of debt President Obama will leave behind.

His latest budget proposal increases spending by a record-breaking 4.9 percent, or $2.5 trillion over the next decade. The President's budget leaves our

children and grandchildren burdened with an unfathomable mountain of debt, regulations, and taxes; and like every other budget he has presented, it never balances. This budget is reckless and unconscionable.

When President Obama took office on January 20, 2009, the national debt was $10.6 trillion; yet Mr. Obama has increased the national debt to $19 trillion, and this budget would increase our national debt to $27.4 trillion over the next decade—more than twice the debt when he first took office.

This cover will be part of the Archives of the United States. It will be a fitting historical record for the mountains of debt it represents.

DATA COLLECTION

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, data collection affects countless Americans and touches many parts of our lives. Data collection is very personal and may include your location, photos, messages, and many of the things that make up who we are; yet we lack basic rights for data collected on mobile devices.

This week, I introduced a pair of bills to safeguard consumer privacy:

H.R. 4517, the APPS Act, will bolster consumer privacy by requiring app developers to maintain privacy policies, obtain consent from consumers before collecting data, and securely maintain the data they collect.

H.R. 4516, the Data Act, would re-create transparency and control for consumers over their personal data and provide consumers with the tools to correct the record and minimize collection.

Privacy is an issue that should unite us, not drive us apart. It is past time for our laws to reflect this reality through commonsense rules for data collection, transparency, and use.

CONGRATULATING PENNSYLVANIA STATE REPRESENTATIVE GENE DIGIROLAMO FOR RECEIVING THE 2016 DR. NATHAN DAVIS AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING GOVERNMENT SERVICE

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate State Representative Gene DiGirolamo, of Bucks County, Pennsylvania, who will be honored this month with the American Medical Association's 2016 Dr. Nathan Davis Award for Outstanding Government Service, which is named for its founder.

Representative DiGirolamo's dedication to the betterment of public health through advocacy and legislative work in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives earned him this prestigious award. He is presently serving in his 11th term in office and third term as chairman of the House Human Services Committee.

Representative DiGirolamo steadfastly continues his advocacy of issues related to drug and alcohol treatment and prevention, physical and intellectual disabilities, and individuals with mental illness. Additionally, he wrote legislation that increased funding for vital rehabilitation centers, while establishing a separate cabinet agency for the important effort that streamlined drug and alcohol treatment services in Pennsylvania.

Representative DiGirolamo has provided leadership to his associates and constituents and set an example for others to follow, and I am honored to call him my friend.

Congratulations, Gene.

PRESQUE ISLE STATE PARK BEACH REPLENISHMENT

(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, earlier this week I joined my colleagues—Representative MIKE KELLY from Pennsylvania's Third Congressional District, along with Pennsylvania Senators PAT TOOMEY and BOB CASEY, JR.—in sending a letter to the Assistant Secretary of the Army. In that letter, we requested that Presque Isle State Park remain a high-priority project for the Army Corps of Engineers' budget for the fiscal year 2016.

Presque Isle State Park is located along 7 miles of Lake Erie's shoreline. The park's beaches require proper care and nourishment every single year to fight their constant erosion.

More than 4 million people visit Presque Isle State Park each year, making it Pennsylvania's most visited State park. The park is woven into the social fabric of the region and is a highly important part of northwestern Pennsylvania's economy.

It is my hope that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will continue to support replenishment of this vital resource for the Erie region, preserving these beaches for future generations.

FUTURE FORUM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from California (Mr. SWALWELL) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, we are here for another Future Forum discussion, and tonight our topic is restoring our democracy, campaign finance, and voting rights.

Americans agree, our voting system and our political system is broken, and the integrity of our democracy is at stake.

Future Forum is a House Democratic Caucus group consisting of 17 of our youngest members who have gone across the country to 11 cities, now, talking to young people about their democracy and what they care about.

We were just in Dallas this past Friday, hosted in the Dallas/Fort Worth area by Congressman MARC VEASEY, as well as being joined by Congressman RUBEN GALLEGO of Phoenix.

Today we are following up on what we heard in Dallas and what we have heard in many of the cities before it, which is, for all the issues facing millennials, many of them understand that, at the root of the problem is the influence of outside money in politics and access to the ballot box.

Joining us tonight is one of the leaders in the House on the issue of money and politics, Congressman JOHN SARBANES of Maryland. He is the lead sponsor of the Government By the People Act.

Also we will be joined by Congressman KILMER, from the Seattle area, and Delegate PLASKETT, from the Virgin Islands.

So I am going to first ask Congressman SARBANES this question, which we have heard from so many millennials across the country: What can we do to restore their faith in their government?

I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES).

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me thank the gentleman, Congressman SWALWELL, of the Future Forum, for convening us around issues here in the Chamber and out in the country that are particularly important and critical for the next generation out there, and what we can do to bring their interests in, bring them into the political town square, if you will, and get the benefit of their voices.

The gentleman is absolutely right to point to the challenge, the problem we have. Many young people, many Americans of all ages these days feel that their voice really isn't accounted for here in Washington. Their sense is that there is kind of an insider game being played, that big money and special interests hold particular sway in this place, and the voice of everyday Americans, average citizens, just doesn't have a place.

That has led to cynicism, it has led to anger, it has led to frustration, and it has led to a lot of people deciding to exit the political arena.

It doesn't mean they are not passionate about things. That is clearly the case. You see a lot of young people who are focused on climate change, on the economy, on jobs, on issues that are important to them. They have just kind of given up that maybe Washington and Congress are the places where important decisions and progress can be made on those issues.

So the challenge for us is: How do we bring people back? How do we get them back into the conversation so we can benefit from what a pluralistic democratic society is all about, which is, you get people in there, you tussle

around, you put your views out, you reach a compromise, and then you move forward? That is what progress is all about.

I think one of the critical ways to address this is we have got to look at revamping the way we fund campaigns in this country. So the gentleman is right to call attention to that, and we have a lot of leadership here in the House that is focused on what we can do to kind of restore the voices of everyday Americans.

I appreciate your citing the Government By the People Act, which is reform legislation that we have introduced in this Congress. We have almost 160 cosponsors, including, I think, everybody who is going to speak this evening as part of the Future Forum.

The idea there is just to basically go build a different way of funding campaigns that puts everyday citizens back at the center, so they are the linchpin, they are the driver, where small donations can earn matching funds and help to power the campaign of Members of Congress and candidates out there who want to run and become part of this place. There will be a place for candidates to turn to support their campaigns other than to the special interests and the big money crowd.

We can build a system like that that is viable, that puts everyday citizens at the center of it. And I think if we do that, young people and people, frankly, of all ages and stripes are going to decide they want to step back into the political space because they will feel appreciated again, like their voice matters.

□ 1800

So I look forward to the discussion tonight, and I want to thank you for your work on the Future Forum and particularly calling attention tonight to this issue of money and politics, how we address it, and how we bring the voices of everyday citizens back into the mix into the people's House.

Mr. SWALWELL. I want to again thank my colleague from the Baltimore area in Maryland.

I want to ask Congressman KILMER. The Future Forum went to Seattle. We visited college campuses in the Tacoma and Seattle area. We went to a couple of the big businesses in your area with a millennial workforce.

We heard in Tacoma the same thing that we heard when we went to the Manchester, New Hampshire, area and the same thing that we heard in the Dallas area, which is that millennials just think that the system is rigged and there is no reason to participate. The numbers show that. Roughly 22 percent of the eligible millennials showed up to vote in 2014.

What are you hearing in the Seattle area about this issue?

Mr. KILMER. I think that is pretty consistent with what we hear in our neck of the woods. You saw in the last election season two-thirds of Americans cast a no-confidence vote by not voting at all, and those numbers are even worse when it comes to millennial voters.

I think as Mr. SARBANES said, it is not that they don't care, there are a lot of things that they care about. But it is, I think, out of a fair belief that there is too much money, too many deep pockets, and too many special interests that are driving our democracy.

This week Politico came out with a report that the 100 biggest donors of the 2016 cycle have spent $195 million. That is more than the combined total of 2 million small donors. So I think it is fair to say that millennial voters see that dynamic and believe that their voice is getting drowned out in the process.

Mr. SWALWELL. If you look at this chart here, 158 families gave nearly 50 percent of the early 2016 donations. How does that make you feel?

If you are a part of the largest generation America has ever known, 80 million people, the most diverse generation America has ever known, how does it make you feel when 158 families are contributing over 50 percent?

Mr. KILMER. I think it drives the importance of some of the change that we are talking about here tonight. Certainly, the Government By the People Act is a key part of that, trying to get the deep pockets and special interest influence away and actually empower the everyday American and millennial voters.

There are other things we have to do as well. You see this problem exacerbated by the Citizens United decision. Many of us are cosponsors of a constitutional amendment to undo that Supreme Court decision.

You have seen efforts focused on trying to at least shine a bright light on where some of this dark money is coming from. There is a bill called the DISCLOSE Act that at least tries to focus on that issue.

Then the other thing that I have worked on is trying to put the teeth back into the watchdog of our campaign finance system. So, after Watergate, you saw the Federal Election Commission established. That was really meant to be the watchdog to make sure people weren't violating campaign finance law and that they were playing by the rules.

Unfortunately, as time has passed, the Federal Election Commission has almost become as dysfunctional as the United States Congress. The consequence of that is people are playing fast and loose with the rules.

You see the rise of super-PACs and this whole question of coordination, particularly in the Presidential campaigns, and it is a real problem. So we put forward a bill that is called the Restoring Integrity to America's Elections Act. Very simply, it tries to put teeth back into the Federal Election Commission.

So there are all sorts of things that we have got to do on this front to try to reduce the role of money in our politics and to try to restore the people's power back.

Because, if you look at some the extraordinary things that have happened in this country, whether it be the civil rights movement or advances made in environmental protection or any number of things, they have happened when everyday Americans, citizens, are able to take hold of their government and to actually make a difference in their government.

I think each of us is trying to do that, certainly from a policy standpoint. Next week I am doing seven townhall meetings in my district to try to make sure that everyday Americans have a voice in their democracy.

But you look at charts like that and I think it makes it very hard for people to feel any sense of impact and efficacy and feel like their voice is being heard. I think it is an important conversation for us to be having because we need to change that.

Mr. SWALWELL. Your proposals to have reforms with more teeth are quite popular across the country. I don't know if you knew this, but it has strong support across a cross-section of the electorate.

For example, majorities of Democratic voters, 72 percent women and 84 percent men, support small donor reforms. Independent voters, 60 percent of the women polled and 66 percent of the men polled supported it. Among Republican voters, 57 percent of the women supported it, and 53 percent of the men have supported small donor reforms.

So I want to ask Congressman SARBANES—and then I see we are now joined by Congressman VEASEY as well—how has money and politics also worked to disenfranchise voters? Because Congressman VEASEY and I heard in the Dallas/Fort Worth area about how voting laws that have been put in place have made it actually quite hard to show up and vote. We heard about the purging of people from the voter rolls.

What is the connection there when you have outside interests drowning out voices, putting in who they want as policymakers, and then the effect on the rules that go into place as far as how we govern our election?

Mr. SARBANES. You can talk about the effect on the rules. You can just also talk about the effect on the enthusiasm for voting, period.

If people are convinced that money calls the shots, then they are going to look at voting as just being asked to come out on election day and decide which of two people to send to Washington to work for somebody else.

Look at the issue of access to the ballot box and protecting access to the ballot box. Last year I had the opportunity with many Members of Congress to go down to Selma with JOHN LEWIS and remember the foot soldiers from 50 years ago who fought for the right to vote.

We talked about protecting access to the ballot box. But just as important is

protecting the ballot box' opportunity to get to Washington without being hijacked along the way.

Because that undermines the franchise, too. People bleed and sweat to get to the ballot box. You have to make sure that ballot box is preserved on its way to Washington.

So on one side of the coin, you have the right to vote, which is sacrosanct in our country. On the other side of the coin, you have the right to have your vote mean something. That is where we have to address the undue influence that money has.

Two other real quick points before I yield back.

One is—and this is important, I think, to millennials, young people, and the next generation—this question about what we do with money in politics. It is not just about putting rules in place. Rules are important.

You have got to have disclosure and transparency. You have to have non-coordination rules so the super-PACs can't talk to the candidates. You want to try and get a constitutional amendment to put limits on what the big money players can do. But rules are putting a referee on the field of the democracy to blow the whistle when the big money crowd gets out of hand.

We need the rules, but we also need power. We need to figure out a way to get Americans out of the bleachers and onto the field of their own democracy. That is what small donor matching systems of public financing are all about.

So it is about rules, but it is also about power. I think young people are leaving a lot of power on the table that they can take back to give themselves a voice in their democracy again, and they will be at the center of that kind of reform. So that is why it is so critical to push forward with all of these different measures.

Then the last thing I just wanted to point out is one of the things that happens is young people want to run for office. They want to get into the game. They want to enter politics. They want to come into the political arena.

But, unfortunately, there is something called the money primary or the green primary where, if you can't find a lot of people that can raise a lot of money for you, then you have no way to be viable as a candidate. So then you don't even put your hat into the ring.

One of the things that will happen if we can create systems of small donor public financing across the country—and we are starting to see that in places like Seattle, Maine, Arizona, Connecticut, New York City, and so forth—is that people who before could never imagine running because they couldn't raise the money because there is a system that can lift them up, they will put their hat in the ring, they will run, they will compete, they will win, and they will serve.

It will change the composition not just of Congress, but of State legislatures all across the country. That is the promise of small donor reform. Then we can bring young people in here. Then we can get the benefit of their wisdom not just as donors and not just as small donors, but as candidates and public servants.

Mr. SWALWELL. Thank you again, Congressman SARBANES, for your work.

I want to empower young people across America right now, #FutureForum. There is a poll right now: Do you believe Congress should vote to update campaign finance rules? We have had over 100 responses since just posting it. Ninety percent of the people say yes.

Congressman VEASEY, we were in Dallas on Friday. We talked to hundreds of young people about what issues they care about, especially access to the ballot box.

What did you hear in Dallas?

Mr. VEASEY. Absolutely, Representative SWALWELL. I appreciate you taking your time to come out to Dallas/Fort Worth.

All the kids that were there, the college campus, the young professionals that we spoke to, the business leaders that we spoke to, really appreciated the fact that you and others in Congress are leading the effort to engage young people and to engage millennials.

They make up such a large portion of our population. They are going to continue to make up a very large portion of our population. We need to engage them to find out what it is they are thinking.

One of the things that we heard when we were in the metroplex, as we like to call Dallas/Fort Worth, is that young people feel like voting is not necessarily easy, that some of the barriers that have been put up recently in place have made it a lot harder for young people to exercise their right to vote.

One of the young people that we met talked about the fact that they had missed one election cycle, they went to go and vote, and they found out that they had been suspended from the voter file, that they had been actually purged.

Mr. SWALWELL. I remember that woman. How does she feel about that?

Mr. VEASEY. It was very discouraging for her. It makes it seem as if the system is rigged against her, and she didn't understand why that happened. That was really unfortunate.

One of the other things that I am aware of—because I am actually a plaintiff in a lawsuit to roll back the Texas voter ID law—is a lot of our young people, when they go to college, get IDs from their university. At a lot of our State universities, they will get IDs.

These IDs are good if they need to identify themselves to a campus police officer. If they need to be able to use the ID to get on a plane or anything like that, these kids can use these college IDs.

But under the Texas voter ID law, a lot of our young people, if they go back home to vote in their home counties and they show their student ID card—a student ID card, again, that is issued by the State of Texas—they cannot vote. They will be given a provisional ballot. It won't count.

When young people hear things like that, it really discourages them from voting. So we need to do everything we can to engage young people.

One of the things that I hear, Representative SWALWELL, from a lot of young people is that—for instance, the young lady that we met that was purged from the voter roll—if there were same-day registration—actually, same-day registration actually encourages young people to participate in voting.

But a lot of States, like the one that I live in, won't do things like that. They won't take that initiative. They won't take that extra effort to engage young people.

It is no wonder that so many of our young people feel like the system is really rigged against them, that, if they vote, their vote really won't count. It is really, really unfortunate.

I would really think that, in the wake of the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act, there is really no better time to assure young voters that they can play a pivotal role in our democracy and to continue to urge them, despite what a lot of States like mine are doing, to really discourage them from voting and discriminate against them, that they will continue to take part in help shaping America. The best way how you can do that is by voting.

Mr. SWALWELL. We talked to a lot of innovative young people in Dallas. If I have learned anything about young people—and I remember being up in Manhattan with Congressman ISRAEL and Congresswoman GRACE MENG.

We were at a district co-workspace. The complaint we often heard there was just about how darn hard it is to get to the polls and why is it on a Tuesday. Why is it so inconvenient.

I want to have Delegate PLASKETT speak to us on voting rights as well, but in a moment I'm going to have STEVE ISRAEL talk to us about weekend elections because people on Twitter right now are asking: Why can't we have votes on the weekend?

Delegate PLASKETT, can you talk to us a little bit just about voting rights with respect to the Virgin Islands, but also what you are hearing among young people.

Ms. PLASKETT. Thank you so much for putting this together for us to be able to speak to the American people and speak to this body about voting rights, its importance, and the difficulties, that many groups are feeling disenfranchised from the voting system.

The Voting Rights Act is probably one of the most important pieces of legislation that this Congress has put forward. It was passed in 1965 to prohibit discrimination in voting.

According to the Department of Justice, the Voting Rights Act itself has

been called the single most effective piece of civil rights legislation. That was back in 2009 when they said that.

The Department of Justice has had a history of blocking racial gerrymandering, which was covered in section 4 of the act. In 2006, the Voting Rights Act was reaffirmed by an act of this Congress.

The Senate voted for it 98–0, and the House voted 390–33 in favor of the Voting Rights Act, which lets us know that this is a fundamental right that most Americans believe.

□ 1815

But there are still these barriers that many groups feel. I know, Congressman SWALWELL, you have gone around the country. You have heard from young people, you have heard from poor people, you have heard from those who live in rural areas, the difficulty they have in exercising this fundamental right.

In the Virgin Islands, we are facing an even greater constitutional issue that we are bringing court cases to the United States about. Many years ago, Congress decided that the right to vote was not a fundamental right for people that were living in the territories.

Under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizen Absentee Voting Act, if you live in the United States in any of the 50 States, if you decide to move to Paris, if you decide to move to Timbuktu, you can still vote. But if you decide that you are going to live in one of the United States territories, you have given up that right to vote for your President in your Federal election. In places like Guam, American Samoa, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, we have the highest veteran rate per capita in the United States. In the Virgin Islands, we have the highest casualty rate per capita of people who have volunteered to serve this country, but cannot vote for their Commander in Chief.

We are bringing case law—and I am part of an effort—to ensure that people who decide to live in the Virgin Islands, who are from the Virgin Islands, can retain that right to exercise their voice in our Federal elections and not something that we are fighting for right now.

This goes along with many of the other what we believe to be historic discrimination that has gone on. There is an enormous amount of racial gerrymandering that is happening in this country. The great Mr. JOHN LEWIS, our colleague, has issued H.R. 12, I believe it is, which is a bill to expand voting rights and the ability for people to vote.

I know that as you go around this country and you speak with people, Representative SWALWELL, you will hear about the difficulties, particularly those people who are discriminated against in many ways, from their ability to vote.

One of the things that I recall writing about when I was in law school was individuals who have been incarcerated and the ability that they no longer have to vote. We know that in the Black community there is a disproportionate amount of our young men and women who are incarcerated and then have lost their right to vote. The difficulties they have reinstating that right and that ability to vote absolutely excludes not only their dignity and their ability to voice their opinions, but they are feeling part of the American Dream, feeling included in this American mission. What message are we saying to them when they need to be reintegrated back into this country and to be productive citizens that they can work, we want them to work, we want them to do everything that they are supposed to do, but they cannot have that fundamental right to vote.

These are the things that I am glad you are speaking about tonight and that you are making the American public available to. I don't know what the Twitter feed is working on right now, but I am hoping that people will tweet about this and will get this word out and will really create an echo chamber of young people, and even those who are not young, who are concerned about millennials and concerned about the next generation being able to be a part of the American process.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. I thank Delegate PLASKETT. That was so eloquently said.

On Twitter right now under the #futureforum, people are speaking about their democracy and their right to access the polls. Anna Little-Sana tweeted: Election day should be a Federal holiday! Kel tweeted: Elections on Saturdays sounds like the easiest and least controversial solution.

Congressman ISRAEL, what if someone introduced the Weekend Voting Act? Wait, someone has, and he is here.

Mr. ISRAEL. What a coincidence.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Tell us about that.

Mr. ISRAEL. What a coincidence this is.

I want to thank my friend from California for his leadership in the Future Forum, traveling the country, engaging young people and millennials on the critical issue of participating in government. I don't qualify as a millennial.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. It is a mind-set.

Mr. ISRAEL. I am slightly older than most of the audiences that you engage. But I used to be a millennial. I used to be a young person. I grew up in Levittown, New York, on Long Island. I remember going to public school at Gardiners Avenue Elementary School and being taught civics, being taught what it takes to be a good citizen, and what our responsibilities and obligations were.

The principal responsibility and the principal obligation of a good citizen was voting. You could vote to the left, you could vote to the right, but vote. Now we are falling further and further behind on voting because it has become harder and harder.

There is a particular Republican candidate who talks about how we have to make America great again. Do you know what we are not so great at? We are not so great at voting. In fact, we are falling further and further behind the rest of the industrialized world. We are falling further and further behind most democracies in our voting participation.

Why is that well? One reason is because we reserve one day of the year to vote in Federal elections, and that is Tuesday. I don't know if my friend knows—here is a little history quiz, a little pop quiz, to put him on the spot: Why do we vote on that Tuesday? Do you have any idea why we vote on that Tuesday?

Mr. SWALWELL of California. I don't have the slightest clue, no. Why do we?

Mr. ISRAEL. Here is the answer. In 1845, Congress decided that voting day would be on Tuesday in November. Why? Because at the time we were living in a mostly agrarian society, we were a farm economy, and Sunday was the Lord's day. The polling places were usually in the county seat, so Monday was the day that you traveled to the county seat. You got to your county seat on Tuesday, you cast your vote, you returned on Wednesday, and you farmed on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. That may have made sense in 1845, but it doesn't make the same sense in 2016.

As a result of reserving this one Tuesday as voting day, most Americans report that they didn't vote because they just couldn't vote on Tuesday. Some people have two jobs, three jobs, and they are raising families. As important as it is to be a good citizen and to cast their vote, they are finding it harder and harder.

The solution is very simple. I am going to make another quick comment. The solution is very simple. Allow people to vote on weekends. Designate Saturday and Sunday for voting. You can do it on a Saturday; you can do it on a Sunday. But we ought to designate weekend voting.

There are other democracies in the world, other nations in the world, that have weekend voting, and their voting participation is much higher than ours.

If there is one thing the government should do to make it more convenient for middle class citizens and working families, it is make it more convenient to vote, and we can do that on weekends.

Let me make one other point if I could. I made a decision that I would not run for reelection. My decision was based on a broad range of personal issues and personal considerations, personal desires, to do other things. I have been here for 16 years. It is time to pass the torch.

But I will tell you what. One of the factors was that I could not stand to

spend one more day asking one more donor for one more dollar.

We have a system that used to be dysfunctional. Now it is not dysfunctional. It is just beyond broken. It is a system that tells people around the country that their voices are drowned out. There is a sense—particularly among the young people that you have engaged across this country—that the only way you get heard in this place is if you have a super-PAC or a registered lobbyist with you. Most middle class families and most young people can't afford a super-PAC or a registered lobbyist.

I am concerned that we have a majority right now that has made Congress a gated community. We need to bring down those gates. The way to bring down those gates is to pass campaign finance reform; it is to pass the DISCLOSE Act, which Democrats passed when we had the majority, requiring that people know who are funding elections; that we pass weekend voting so it is easier for people to cast their votes and choose their democracy, so that their democracy is not chosen by literally a few hundred families, by passing something that our colleague, JOHN SARBANES, talked about earlier: citizen-funded elections.

If you want a stake in democracy and if you want to own democracy, you should have a share in that democracy. We ought to be encouraging citizen-funded elections, which are being done in States across the country—Republican states, Democratic States. They are embracing citizen-funded elections. We should be doing the same thing.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. You wrote a New York Times op-ed on this that was very frank, very passionate, and I think, for a lot of people, very disturbing to hear how much time Members of Congress have to spend fundraising.

I just want to ask you as you start your parting tour, which I am very sad to see, but have you met a single colleague in this Chamber on either side—left or right—who told you that they came here because they enjoyed raising money, or that that is the most enjoyable part, or anywhere close to the most enjoyable part of their job?

Mr. ISRAEL. No. In fact, I did write a piece in the New York Times that went viral. I received responses on both sides of this aisle—on both sides—people saying: You are right, we spend too much time in call time. Instead of thinking about issues, instead of thinking about a robust foreign policy that is going to defeat our enemies, we spend too much time trying to figure out a robust fundraising policy to get reelected. Both sides of the aisle said that.

Not one of our colleagues enjoy fundraising. But, in my view, there is only one party who is willing to do something about it. Pass the DISCLOSE Act, support campaign finance reform, demand transparency.

The only way we are going to take this government back and make America great again is to engage voters across the spectrum by lowering the barriers that exist in this place. That is going to require the DISCLOSE Act, citizen-funded elections, greater transparency, and weekend voting.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. That is right. Both sides from my experience acknowledge this problem, but only the majority has the ability to bring this up for a vote on these reforms.

I always have the sense that we can all smell the burning and the smoke in this House, but the fire alarm is on this side of the Chamber. Until our colleagues are willing to pull it and bring these issues to this floor, we are going to see millennials continue to think that the system is rigged. It is not going to be any surprise when they show up again at 20 to 25 percent at the polls.

In your district in Long Island, young people, what do they think when they see all this money in politics, that they are the largest generation in America, yet 158 families contributed over 50 percent so far in the 2016 Presidential cycle? What do you hear from them as far as whether that makes them want to engage or participate?

Mr. ISRAEL. I am very fortunate because I represent a district in New York that is blessed with universities and colleges. We have a wonderful infrastructure of university and college campuses, and I toured those campuses and heard what you have heard: Congressman, my voice doesn't count. Congressman, why should I vote when it makes no difference? Congressman, why should I get involved in a campaign when my $20 contribution, or my $3 contribution, gets drowned out by one billionaire who is writing checks for millions of dollars for the candidate that he supports?

I have said to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, it is bad for all of us when an entire generation gives up on us. That is just bad for democracy. That is bad for trying to accomplish anything.

I have also said—and people understand this, I believe, intuitively—no matter what issue is important to you, no matter what it is—more investments in education or infrastructure or national security or your paycheck or the environment—no matter what it is, it is all rooted in a system that doesn't allow progress on those issues because it is rigged against progress on those issues.

People say: Well, what can we do? What is the one thing we can do to get our voice back? Get this Congress to pass fundamental and meaningful campaign reform and we will make progress on every other issue.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. I will never forget at one of our townhalls when we were in the Boston area. The students were listing their concerns from climate change and the inaction they have seen there, to student loan debt and how it has them in financial quicksand. To my surprise—and then I ended up seeing this on every campus we visited—this particular student said: But, yeah, you are not going to solve any of that because the system is rigged. As long as that is the perception, which we experience as our own reality, we won't see progress on those issues.

We owe it to that generation. It is sad for you to acknowledge that a whole generation is about to give up on us until we change the way that we not only have rules for money and politics, but the way that we govern and represent our constituents, not outside corporate interests.

We have a Future Forum event coming up in Denver. It is going to be in April, hosted by Congresswoman DEGETTE and Congressman POLIS.

I will give you, Congressman ISRAEL, the last word on this evening's Future Forum focusing on voting rights and campaign financial reform.

□ 1830

Mr. ISRAEL. Again, I thank the gentleman so much for his leadership.

If you would allow an aging 57-year-old to attend the Future Forum meetings, I would be happy to do so. I will bring my crutch, my cane, and all of the other things that I need.

On a serious note, I really do want to commend you for the work that you are doing, for the engagement. Through this engagement, you are giving people hope. You are letting people know that there are people who are listening to them. You go to those events without a super-PAC. You go to those events without billionaire donors. You are representing the best that the grassroots has to offer. I want to thank you for that.

Leave people with a sense of hope. For as long as we are talking on this floor about these issues, there is hope that something will be done on this floor on these issues, and the middle class and young people and millennials will make progress again.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

AMERICA'S MANDATORY AND DISCRETIONARY SPENDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, we are actually doing something a little different tonight. We have brought about 15 to 20—what we will call—boards. If we were in a more electronic age, they would be PowerPoints.

We will have a couple of our brothers and sisters here, hopefully, from the Republican side to help us walk through some of these numbers and what they actually mean. We want to talk about what is really going on fiscally, mathwise. I am sure it was riveting reading for Members of this body;

but 3 weeks ago, on a Wednesday—so 3 weeks ago today—the CBO issued a new report. When you go through the numbers of the reality of what is going on, it is devastating.

The reality is that, unless this body engages in activities and policy and we have a President who is willing to work with us who dramatically improves economic growth and not just for a year but for the next couple of decades, there is not enough revenue to cover the entitlement promises we have made. I know that is sort of inflammatory to say, but we are going to actually walk through a series of the boards and sort of explain what is really going on.

For someone who is actually out there who may have an interest in understanding what is happening, this is the CBO report from 3 weeks ago. What makes this one so different from any other report that has happened is that we have two major entitlement programs that run out of money—that go bankrupt—within the 10-year window.

For years, you would see people walk up to these microphones and say: A decade or two from now, such and such is going to happen—30 years, 25 years from now. It is no longer decades. It is now. We are going to show you a couple of portions of the data where, in 20 months, Social Security itself goes negative, meaning the interest income that we pay ourselves—and we pay ourselves 3.1 percent in interest income from the money that the general fund has reached over and taken out of the Social Security trust fund, and the tax revenues from Social Security do not cover the money going out the door. This was not supposed to happen.

When I first got here 5 years ago, it was a decade away. Then, in some of the reports, it was 5 years. Now it is 20 months away.

We need to understand, when we talk about the desperate need for economic growth, it is jobs; it is people's futures; it is their retirements; it is also the ability to support and pay for and finance the promises this government has made—the earned benefits and—let's face it—some of the unearned benefits that are out there and our ability to pay for them. So let's actually walk through some of the boards and sort of explain where we are. This is really, really important, and you are going to hear me say that over and over as we do this.

This is the 2016 budget as we have it today. Do you see what is in blue—that bluish purple? That is what we call mandatory spending. That is Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, interest on the debt, veterans' benefits, ObamaCare—the new healthcare law—and a handful of other poverty support programs, but it is mandatory. It is all formula driven. You will notice it is 70 percent of our spending in the fiscal year we are in—this year. The red—that 30 percent—is what we call discretionary. That is what we get to vote on around here. Half of that discretionary is defense. When you hear politicians or public policy analysts or budget analysts talk, if they are not talking about the mandatory spending, they are missing, basically, three-quarters of our spending. Understand its rate of growth is squeezing out everything else.

If you are someone out there who cares about healthcare research or education or the parks, the resources for those activities in this government are shrinking and shrinking and getting squeezed and getting squeezed, and it is because of the movement of mandatory spending.

We have this thing called baby boomers. The fact of the matter is that baby boomers began to retire about 3 years ago, and there are about—what?—76 million of them who will retire in an 18-year period, and they do consume tremendous amounts of resources that we have failed to set aside for their futures.

Mr. Speaker, I just changed the boards. As we continue, the board that is up right now, for those folks who would be interested, is actually where the money is going today. My friend from Pennsylvania and I are going to talk through some of the mechanics here; but Social Security today is 22 percent of the spending; Medicare is 17; Medicaid is nine; other spending—that would be Section 8, SNAP, and other things that are mandatory spending that are in the formula—is another 17 percent.

Mr. PERRY. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my good friend from Arizona.

When I start my townhall meetings, I always start with our fiscal situation because people ask me—and I imagine it is the same in your district—what is wrong with you people in Washington? Why can't you get along? What is all the bickering about? That slide is instructive because I explain to them that nearly 70 percent of the budget we don't discuss at all, and it keeps getting smaller—the things that they kind of associate with the Federal Government—because, in their minds, these other things, the things you talked about—Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, care for our veterans, the ACA—all just happens automatically, and they think about—oh, I don't know—the IRS, the Park Service, the military. I keep telling them that it gets smaller, and so we squabble more over this diminishing pie.

I just need you to clarify something. So you say it is formula driven. That makes sense to you, and it makes sense to me.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Yes.

Mr. PERRY. But can you make that easy for a layman?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. You and I have both had this experience because we talked about it earlier. You get asked at our townhalls and at other gatherings: Why do you fight with each other? It is like other families—it is about the money.

When I stand here and say it is formula driven, what happens is, when you turn 65, you are eligible for certain earned benefits. When you turn 67, there are certain earned benefits. If you fall below a certain income, there are certain things you can receive. They are based on a formula whether it be your age, whether it be your income, whether it be your military service. That formula becomes sort of sacrosanct around here, and there is an inability to say, if we do these tweaks, we can preserve this benefit for future generations or even, as you are going to see in some of these numbers—and I don't know if you have had this experience in your townhalls where the political class before us used to say, ''This is for your grandkids.'' Then, after a few years, it was for your kids—and now?

Mr. PERRY. It is for my mother, who is already on Social Security, and it is definitely for me and for anybody who thinks he may collect Social Security, understanding that, when we say ''entitlements,'' that is not meant to be you are entitled to it. Do you know why you are entitled to it?—because the government forced you to pay into it. They forced you to invest when it comes to Social Security, right? They forced you to invest. It might not be a good investment, but you must invest. It is important, and I think you are going to talk about this a little bit in the future of how that investment is going.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. As we do this, we probably should make the distinction between an earned benefit and an entitlement and those, but, for right now, we are going to somewhat refer to them as ''mandatory spending.''

Mr. PERRY. Sure.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. We could actually break down all of the programs, but this is already a little geeky as it is because we are going to be talking about numbers that are in the billions and trillions, and people's eyes glaze over when you talk about that. It means zeros. Yet what is really, really important here is understanding the pattern of what is going on and how quickly these numbers are eroding.

One of the reasons for this board here is, as we talk about this Congressional Budget Office report, some of the erosion in our fiscal situation is because of our lack of economic growth and of our failure to reform, repair, preserve a lot of these very programs we are talking about.

There is this slide here. This is 2026. Understand, in 9 years, mandatory spending, earned benefits, and other types of entitlements are going to have increased over those 9 years 83 percent in spending. What you and I get to vote on of military and other discretionary—the Park Service, the EPA, education, health, medical research—that will have grown 22 percent. That

is over 10 years. So think of this. What we would consider discretionary will grow about what we expect inflation to be, and that is how it has been budgeted. It is meant to basically be flat on purchasing power but where the entitlements grow dramatically.

Mr. PERRY. Because of the formula.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Formula and—we have to be brutally honest—demographics.

Mr. PERRY. Right, and the population growth for those people who will be receiving benefits.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Yes.

Look, this isn't a sinister plot. I can remember, back in 1981 or in 1982, sitting in a statistics class, and the professor at that time was actually showing how much money had to be set aside because the baby boomers eventually were going to turn 65. Though, as you have found here in Congress, it is almost as if we have just recently discovered that.

Mr. PERRY. We have a tendency in Congress—quite honestly, we have a tendency as Americans—with our domestic and foreign policy, to just pretend that these things aren't happening.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Yes.

There are a number of times you and I have folks who come to our offices or to our townhalls who have great ideas, and they desperately want some more resources for this research project or for this activity or for this infrastructure or for this and that. You try to explain—okay—this board here talks about the next 9 years; so from this budget year—where we are right now working on the 2017 budget—for the next 9 years. I know that seems like a long time, but the average over that time—76 percent of all of the spending, three-quarters of all of the spending—is going to be in those mandatory: the formula, the entitlements, the earned benefits. Only 24 percent of the spending is going to be in the military or in other activities of government.

As we go back to make that circle again, why do we fuss with each other around here? It is about the money when you have someone standing in front of you and he is not talking about the need to do two things. Now, they are big things. One is to dramatically adopt policy that grows the economy. We are not going to make it under this current growth rate. This Obama economy is just killing us. Number two, we are going to have to be honest about the benefits that we provide and the formulas underlying them. There may be some creative things we can do, but as the political class, we have got to stop being terrified to talk about it.

Mr. PERRY. What are the consequences of not doing that?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Oh, we are going to get to that slide.

Do you plan to live more than 9 years?

Mr. PERRY. I sure hope so. My kids hope so.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. You are incredibly fit. Understand, I am going to show you some slides under the new projections by the CBO, the Congressional Budget Office, that came out 3 weeks ago.

□ 1845

Mr. Speaker, Social Security, the trust fund has about 14 years, but Medicare part A is gone in about 9 years. You are going to see Social Security disability may have only about 58 months, and that trust fund is gone again. So understand how fast these things are eroding.

Look, we are going through a lot of data and a lot of slides. I know you and I and a couple of other Members, we are going to be putting this deck of slides on our Web sites. For anyone that is actually interested in the fiscal sanity and health of this country, this is the ability to take a look at them, analyze them, give us suggestions, and give us creativity.

This one right here, so, in 2026, think of this: only 22 percent of the spending will be in what you and I get to vote on. Half of that is going to be defense; half of that is going to be nondefense.

Oh, and by the way, the one good thing I can tell you about we are getting from the slow-growth economy right now is we have reprojected our interest rate. Because if I had shown this slide a few months ago, we were expecting trillion-dollars-plus interest. Now, we only expect a much lower mean interest rate 9 years from now. So only 12 percent of our spending will be interest coverage.

Think of that. Interest will be greater than defense in 9 years. Interest will be greater than all discretionary spending in 9 years—and substantially so. So the growth you are going to see here is functionally in Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, interest on the debt, and some of the other programs. This is where we are at.

You try having a conversation with our constituents and say these are big numbers, they are huge programs. You have got to move away from some of the political folklore.

We should actually, as we go through these—because I have a couple of spots. How many times have you been at your townhall meeting and someone raises their hand? Some of the suggestions they have to save money are wonderful, but they are tiny.

I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. PERRY. They want to cut something.

Why do you spend money on—I don't know. They call them Obama funds. Or why do you spend money on foreign aid? If we just cut that, we don't have to pay for people to hate us. They will hate us for free. It all sounds all well and good, except you can cut all that completely and—I think you will show at some point—it won't make a dent. It won't even begin to make a dent.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, those of us on the right who are more conservative—we have our folks who are guilty of this, and, heaven knows, I see it from our friends on the left—where we hold up a shiny object and pretend like this would take care of this fiscal cliff that is no longer very far in the future. It is here. We say, oh, if we would just adjust this on foreign aid, we would be fine. Anyone who says something like that, they don't own a calculator.

So the slide next to us right now—and the gentleman and I were working on this earlier today. I thank the gentleman and his staff for their willingness to sit there and, shall we say, geek out with calculators, budgets, and actuarial tables.

One of the things that has happened—about every 3 months, I do one of these presentations. If someone were ever to go back a few years when we did the very first one, parts of these numbers have actually gotten much worse. Even though we are supposedly out of the recession and we are supposed to be in a healthier economy, as we keep being told from the other side, the fiscal, the financial shape of the country is worse.

How is that possible?

Mr. Speaker, I am going to make the argument that when we do examine what we were telling folks our financial situation was in the future, it is actually much worse. In 2011 we said, hey, when we finally get to that year 2016, we are going to have 3.3 percent GDP. Then we had a couple of crazy ones that said, in 2012 and '13, you are going to be at 4½ or 4.4 percent GDP growth. You are going to be blowing the wheels off.

Then in 2014, it started to come down. Well, you are going to be at 3.4 percent GDP growth. The problem is that the latest update on our numbers, we are down to 2.3 percent GDP growth. So we are half of what we were telling the public we were going to have just a couple of years ago.

I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. PERRY. More importantly, for this illustration, it is as important that we were telling the public—because the CBO projection told us that it was going to be 4.5, 4.4, but we were basing all our estimates on those numbers. We are basing our estimates on those numbers, and those numbers turned out to be true to the point that it is not even 2.3. It is more like 2.1, currently. It is even less than that.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. As you know, the first quarter of this budget year—because budget years aren't the same as calendar years—came in at 0.7. So we didn't even make a full percentage point of gross domestic product growth.

Once again, this is geeky and people's eyes are glazing over. Why this is important is because that economic growth is what helps create the jobs and the trade and the velocity in the economy, and that velocity ends up creating the tax revenues and the revenues that get paid into Medicare, get

paid into Social Security, help us pay and cover our promises.

What happens if you keep saying the check is out the door but you don't have the revenues? That is why it is important to pay attention to what we do in tax policy over this coming year, what we do in regulatory policy over this coming year, when we start to take on those factors that grow the economy.

I would think this would be both our friends from the left, who thought somehow we could regulate ourselves into prosperity, would see the folly of their policies and see it in the numbers and be willing to come our direction. Because do they care about saving Social Security? Do they care about saving Medicare? Do they care about saving Social Security disability? If they truly care, we have got to do something about economic growth.

I want to switch up a couple of the boards and just sort of walk through some of the different numbers here and have this make more sense. Do you have the table that actually shows the change from 2022 to 2018?

Remember, the last board I was showing you that was talking about, hey, here is what happens when we miss all these GDP numbers? This is why, on occasion, I desperately wish more of our brothers and sisters around this body would grab a CBO like this and actually read it and highlight it and pull out their calculators and look at it again. Yes, you are going to fall asleep two or three times when you do it, but you will understand how incredibly important some of the policy sets are we are making here.

This was just from when the trust funds' actuaries did their report this last summer. We will just go down to the bottom line because that is the punch line.

I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, would the gentleman from Arizona confirm for the audience or explain what OASI and DI mean?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. When you see something that says OASI, that means ''Old Age, Survivors Insurance.'' That is Social Security. That is Social Security.

DI, think of it is as Social Security disability.

I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. PERRY. You lose your job from unemployment, but you get hurt and you can't work?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. A permanent injury that changes your ability to support yourself.

As you know, this last fall, fall of 2015, it was to be out of money right now.

We bailed it out, but we bailed it out in a fairly dodgy fashion. Let's be brutally honest. We reached over into big Social Security, took $114 billion and handed it over here. All we bought was 5 years of fiscal survivability.

I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. PERRY. So you took $114 billion out of OASI, which is the big Social Security?

We took it out of that and put it into disability insurance because disability was going to be bankrupt while we stand here today?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Right. Right now.

My calculations are we shortened the life of Social Security's trust fund by about 13 months when we did that. I don't think you voted for it. I don't think I did. I know I didn't. Now we have to deal with the realities of what that meant.

As we were looking before, what happens when you are not achieving the economic growth that is required? All of a sudden, you see numbers like this. And this is stunning. When you are talking about a huge trust fund, this should not be happening.

This is to give you a sense of how dramatic the problem is out there in this economy. I know we are happy talking. It is an election year and President Obama needs to sort of tell a story of how wonderful it is, but it isn't showing up on the map.

So this last August, the trustees of Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security—they all do their individual reports. The Social Security trustee said interest income and tax revenues would cover the payments going out the door on Social Security until 2022, except for the small problem of, somehow between August and 3 weeks ago when we got this new updated report, it is down to 2018. Now, all of a sudden, Social Security goes negative, meaning it doesn't have enough revenues to cover its obligations.

So the way we were doing the math is, in 20 to 22 months, Social Security is going to have to start reaching over and cash in some of its bonds. We pay ourselves 3.1 percent interest in the washing machine where the general fund has reached over to the Social Security trust fund, taken the money, and loaned it to our debt.

This is devastating. If any of you have ever been in business or finance, when you start to use up principal, you are in real trouble.

I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. PERRY. So we lost 4 years. What caused losing 4 years?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. It is a combination of economy, growth rate, reaching over and taking $114 billion out to shore up Social Security disability, and our recalculation of what future GDP is.

Just for the fun of it, can I talk my friend from South Carolina into joining us, A, because it is always entertaining when you get behind a microphone, and, B, you have no hesitation to correct me when I get math wrong.

I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina.

Mr. MULVANEY. Well, anything for fun, Mr. SCHWEIKERT.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from South Carolina and I have talked about these charts before, and the reality of this should terrify people how fast these numbers are eroding. Where is the conversation? Why isn't it a headline? Why isn't it on business news every night?

If I came to you and said you just lost 4 years of actuarial soundness on a trust fund that today is $2.8 trillion, you have got to understand the scale we are talking about.

I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina.

Mr. MULVANEY. The real frustrating thing about it, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, is that the demographic group that you would hope would be engaged in this topic isn't. When you go home and you and I and Mr. PERRY talk to our folks back home, who is most interested in Social Security? The folks who are already at or near retirement.

You have got another graph, by the way, that shows who really should be interested in this because you have got the first year outgoing exceeds income, including interest. On another graph, you show when the trust fund goes to zero for Social Security.

The last time I had the CBO run the numbers, it was roughly 2032. In fact, it was July of 2032. Why do I remember this? It is the month that I turn 65 years old. It should be our generation. It should be the people in their thirties, forties, and fifties who are demanding that we make this a topic of conversation, and they don't.

They are not demanding it right now in the Presidential election. They are not demanding it in their congressional elections. They are more concerned about other things that I get the importance, as Mr. PERRY does, of national defense and immigration. I get all that.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. How do you and I and Mr. PERRY help the public understand these numbers in the background are driving much of our policy here, much of the fussing here, but yet it is not part of the Presidential campaign, and this is no longer about your grandkids? This no longer about your kids. It is about you retire—you turn 65 in what year?

I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina.

Mr. MULVANEY. 2032.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. You will be happy to know that my math is Social Security will have been emptied out 2 years before you retire. I mean, it is 14 years from now. So these are just critical.

I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina.

Mr. MULVANEY. Yet it is not our generation. It is Mr. BUCK's generation, the gentleman from Colorado, the older generation, the next generation who is paying closer attention to it.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, I am not going there.

Let's walk through a couple of the other trust funds because I know this is

really exciting, but this is important. This is the 10,000-pound gorilla in the room. So often those of us, as Members of Congress, we get behind these microphones and we do the shiny object type of discussion.

This is it. This is going to decide what our military capability is because it is what we can afford. This is going to decide what money we have for medical research and education. This is it. These numbers are incredibly important. If this doesn't drive us this year to start moving forward on tax reform, on regulatory reform, things that will start to kick-start economic growth, these numbers are devastating.

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Let's do a little quick discussion about Medicare part A. If I came to you right now and said: ''Hey, what was so devastating in this Congressional Budget Office report? What should have scared you out of your mind?'', in here it basically for the very first time said one of the major trust funds is out of money in the 10-year window.

Mr. PERRY. Ten years.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Look at this. If you plan to be around 9 years from now, Medicare part A, what covers your hospital, those types of section in Medicare, it is gone. The trust fund is gone.

So all of a sudden now are we willing to do what Speaker RYAN has talked about for years, premium support, some way to reform the way we price and cost and the benefits we receive and how we allocate them and price theory, you know, sort of thinking like an economist, but things that make sure you get your earned benefit, but we also make it sustainable?

It is no longer a theoretical conversation for decades from now. It is in 9 years. So if you plan to live for 9 more years, understand, Medicare part A, the trust fund, is gone.

In our calculations in our office, it could be 30 percent cut in what is able to be paid out. How many medical professionals are willing to see you when you come in and say that you need your cataract done, you need a heart valve, you need this and, oh, by the way, the hospital is only going to be paid 30 percent less what it gets today? Are they still going to see you? Do you understand the wall we are going to be putting our seniors in? This happens in 9 years.

How many Presidential candidates have you seen or heard talk about this?

Mr. PERRY. I haven't seen any talk about that.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. So now let's talk about the other trust fund that was in the Congressional Budget Office report, something we shored up this last fall. You remember how we did it? We reached over and grabbed $114 billion out of Social Security, old-age survivors, and moved it over to Social Security disability.

In the discussions around here, people were happy. They were applauding. I thought we had fixed it for years. Remember there were going to be some reforms and some of these things? Well, these numbers are with the reforms and with the money, and it is gone in 58 months.

MICK, I am going to make you stand up again because you were one of the most articulate in talking about the scale of reforms we had. Both were just, in the modern economy, were there ways we could help our brothers and sisters who are on Social Security disability move back into at least some economic participation and not have them hit a cliff where all of a sudden their benefits are cut off.

It might cost us a little bit for a couple years, but in the future it would become more sustainable. We didn't do it. Now we are back on the treadmill again.

Mr. MULVANEY. I have got a question for you. While we are preparing that question, if the young man could put up the previous graph below, that one that shows the status of the Medicare trust fund.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. It is stunning to think, in 9 years, Social Security disability——

Mr. MULVANEY. Put them so we can see both of them at the same time, please.

That is stunning. So between 2021 and 2025, we are going to have the Social Security disability fund go broke——

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Yes.

Mr. MULVANEY. And Medicare part A go broke.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Correct.

Mr. MULVANEY. Last time we fixed the Social Security disability—I am making the air quotations when I say fixed disability—by robbing from old-age retirement.

Where are we going to rob from the next time when we have both Medicare and Social Security disability going bust within a couple of months of each other?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Look, the ultimate driver for all of these trust funds, for everything around us, would be incredibly robust economic growth. Math problem.

Mr. MULVANEY. What are the assumptions on this, by the way?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Oh, no. We are working on those tables because it turns out to be much more complicated. A couple years ago, when we were pretending we would hit 2016 and be at 4½ percent GDP growth, if you hit that number and could hold it, we were going to be okay.

Mr. MULVANEY. How many times, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, have we held 4½ percent growth for, say, a decade?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. I don't think it has ever been done, ever.

Mr. MULVANEY. I think that is a fair assumption.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. In this environment, in the fourth quarter of last year, which is the first quarter of our fiscal year, we were at, what, 0.7?

Mr. MULVANEY. As this year stands, it looks like now, when they revise the last quarter's numbers, which they will do here shortly, 2015 will be the tenth year in a row without 3 percent growth in the American economy.

If that turns out to be the case and we go 10 years without 3 percent growth during any of that decade, it will be the first time in the history of the Nation that that has happened.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. And then you try to have the conversation with our friends from the left saying: You don't think the regulatory state affects us? You don't think raising taxes has slowed down the economy?

There is some actual great literature—and we are working on it for a future presentation—that says, for the tax hikes that the President demanded a couple years ago that this body did, for every dollar of new revenues that came in, a dollar was lost in economic growth.

It got us nothing. It basically slowed down our economic growth into the future, ultimately costing us billions. In a couple of these programs, if you really lay it out over 30 years, it could be in the trillions.

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. SCHWEIKERT, I see you brought up the graph for the Social Security trust fund. Have you explained what the nature of the trust fund is?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. No, I haven't. I may let you do that. Let me just pitch what this one means.

In 2011, when I first got here and I started this project in our office, we actually set up a little team in our office we call the ideas shop. We actually grind out these numbers all the time, and we watch them like a hawk.

We actually do something fun. When the trustee reports come out, we sit there with our yellow highlighters and read them as a group. The amazing thing is I have almost no staff turnover, which I can't figure out why they stay.

I hear some of my staff laughing in the background.

Mr. MULVANEY. No. That is us, actually.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. In 2011, this was the chart. I just want you to look. What is the direction? The trust fund was supposed to grow and grow and grow up until 2021.

There was going to be more money there every year. This is what we were telling ourselves, telling the public, telling the financial markets just 5 years ago.

Now take a look when we look at the new budget projection. And understand we went from saying these trust funds are going to grow.

So when you and I first got here, I think the Social Security trust fund was supposed to survive to 2038, and now we have taken 8 or 9 years off that. This is the new number that just came out in the report, that, in 22 months, it starts to go negative and we start to dip into the principal balance.

In 14 years—and you will see that in the next chart because in the next one

I take it beyond the 10-year projection because we had to do our own calculations for the final 4 because they only give you 10 years when they do the projections—in 14 years, the trust fund is gone.

Look, I know you have talked about how the trust fund works.

Mr. MULVANEY. Yeah. The trust fund is actually fairly simple. A lot of people think that it doesn't exist. They think it is a myth. It is real.

What it represents is the accumulated excess collections that Social Security has made over the years. I tell people that the last time we really had a major overhaul of Social Security was back in the 1980s.

Ever since then, we have taken more money in every month in Social Security taxes, FICA, than we have paid out in benefits.

So if you take $100 in in a particular month and only spend $80, you have $20 left over. That is the money that goes into the trust fund. It is essentially a savings account.

Now, when people say, oh, it doesn't really exist, you have stolen money from it, and it is not there, that is not true. You can't keep $20, real paper money, in an account someplace, in a desk. That would be foolish.

What we do is we invest in the only thing the Social Security Administration is allowed to invest in, which is U.S. treasuries. There is actually in excess of $2 trillion in the trust fund.

The trust fund exists. It is in a drawer in West Virginia in a building named after Senator Byrd, as most of the buildings are in West Virginia. It is full of treasuries.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Actually, General Perry and I were talking about that. You don't mind me calling you that, do you?

Mr. PERRY. Carry on.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Our official military expert. It was helicopters, wasn't it?

Mr. PERRY. Indeed.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. We were talking about earlier that my calculations are that, as of right now today, it is a little under $2.8 trillion of special Treasury notes that have been given from the Treasury to the Social Security trust fund because that cash has been moved over here.

And the revenues that go into Social Security are a combination of the FICA taxes. And would you believe we pay ourselves 3.1 percent interest?

Mr. MULVANEY. Wow.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. It took us a while to find that number.

Mr. MULVANEY. Do we actually pay that or we assume that?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. No. No. Technically, we are paying ourselves. So that is part of the revenue into Social Security right now and the Medicare trust fund and all the three big trust funds. We are paying ourselves 3.1 percent, which is actually greater than a 10-year T-bill substantially.

Mr. MULVANEY. That is a great investment right now. Yeah.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. So we are actually paying ourselves a SPIF, and we are still burning through our cash. That is why this board is up, to show you how devastatingly different the number is from just this last August, how fast the numbers have moved.

But even if we go back to 2011, when we were doing these floor presentations, we thought we were talking 2038. You would have been 65-plus for a few years.

Mr. MULVANEY. Could have been at Mr. BUCK's age.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Yeah. I am not going there.

Sorry to the Speaker. We don't mean to be teasing you. Well, actually, we do. We are just afraid of it.

But this is really important. So if there is someone out there, whether you are on the right or the left, and you actually care about getting your earned benefits, you need to start demanding your elected officials to take it seriously.

Number one is: What are you going to do to get this economy to grow? Because that becomes the most powerful thing to fix these numbers.

These numbers are rotten and horrible because now we are projecting long-term GDP around 2.2, 2.5. When you start looking at numbers in there, it doesn't work. The math just doesn't work for us.

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. SCHWEIKERT, there is an ad campaign on television right now that speaks to this. I think it was on during the Super Bowl.

It shows a very dramatic bridge scene and the bridge slowly fades into decay, and it says: This is what will happen to our economy. This is what will happen to our infrastructure because of entitlement spending.

Some folks don't like that term, but we use it here for Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and so forth.

It says: Demand of the Presidential candidates what their plan is to solve this problem. Call or write your Member of Congress and demand what their plan is.

I have gotten one call. Have you gotten any?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Oh, it is amazing.

Mr. MULVANEY. How many people have called your office to say: Mr. SCHWEIKERT, what is your plan for fixing this?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. I think it is zero. And I have actually had this experience and I think Mr. PERRY, my friend from Pennsylvania, had this experience where we have held budget townhalls and we have held well over a hundred in our district over the last couple years.

We walk through the numbers and then have a discussion about it. I have had an individual go to the microphone and basically use a curse word and then say: I don't care about my grandkids. I want every dime.

Part of the audience laughed. Part of the audience was terrified.

Maybe that was a more interesting discussion when it really was about your great-grandkids or your grandkids or your kids.

You have to understand that the erosion of these numbers, substantially because of the growth of participation, utilization of the benefits, and the horrible economic growth, is no longer future generations. This is us, particularly you. I didn't realize you were so old.

Mr. MULVANEY. It happens.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Can you see that date on this particular slide? I know you have eagle eyes from flying those helicopters. Our number is 2030, 2031. Right in there the Social Security trust fund is gone.

Mr. MULVANEY. And so what happens on that date?

Mr. PERRY. The only thing you have left to pay is from incoming revenues from taxes. So your benefits are decreased by that whatever that amount is at that time. So it probably fluctuates probably somewhere between 25 and 30 percent.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. In some ways, it is actually more complicated, which I wasn't going to go there, but let's do it for the fun of it.

The Social Security revenues will be subject to the whims of the economy. So you might have 1 month where you are able to pay out more and the next month you are paying out less because of the whims.

You also no longer have the interest revenue. If I handed you $2.8 trillion today and paid you 3.1 percent, that is what is going into the trust fund today. That is all gone. The interest revenues are gone.

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This is a double whammy we are talking about. That is why you never, ever, ever want to get anywhere near these numbers. You fix it long before. Because every day we wait, it gets harder to deal with. Remember, my calculations are that in about 22 months we start to move into principal balance. We start eating our seed corn. And then, every day, the calculations get more difficult.

Mr. MULVANEY. You talked about how every day we wait, it gets harder to do. I remember giving a presentation similar to this at a retirement community in my neighborhood. It was back during one of the first Ryan budgets when we had actually talked about raising the benefit age slowly by a couple of months.

There was a gentleman there who was in his late fifties. He said: Look, I don't want to work another 2 or 3 years. I said: Sir, we are not asking you to do that. He said: What are you asking me? I said: I am asking you to work an extra month. I am asking me to work an extra year. I am asking my triplets to work an extra 2, but I am only asking you to work an extra month. Can't you do that? He said: Of course, I can do that. Will that fix things? I said: That will go a long way towards fixing things.

He got angry that it was that easy and nobody had explained it to him. I said: You are going to get even angrier. If we had done it 20 years ago, it would be a week. If we wait another 20 years, you can never fix it.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. You no longer can say 20 years or a couple of decades. It is 14 years now.

I am the proud father of an infant. If you do the calculations, when she reaches her peak earning years, her tax rates will be double what I pay. And that is already done. We have already done that to our children.

You have got to understand the scale of what we have done. Doesn't she have the right to participate in some of the same earned benefits that we should have earned and hopefully will be there because we are going to find a way to fix them?

It is not like the left gets behind television cameras and screams at us or puts up television commercials of a PAUL RYAN look-alike pushing grandma off the cliff. That is political rhetoric. They are basically pulling a scam on you. This is math.

I know we get folks in—I don't you know if you have ever had them at your townhalls—saying: It doesn't feel right. But I don't have a feelings button on my calculator. I have said that over and over to try to make the point that if you want us to protect your retirement future, you have got to demand that we step up and do it. It can be done by a series of little things.

The reality is that Social Security is easy to fix. You can create a little smorgasbord of policy. Some might be aged, some might be folks with certain assets and opting out. There are a whole series of creative things to do. You give some optionality to young people. Because those who now are going to live in sort of the ''gig'' economy have the ability to put in 50 cents every time they have a transaction or by using the technology of these supercomputers we all carry in our pocket.

Mr. PERRY. Many of your constituents hear, from time to time, whether it is the President, people on the other side—and, frankly, people on our side—say that we are reducing the deficits. They hear this.

If they don't come to your townhall meeting, they say: Well, the deficit is smaller, right? So that is good. What is all this hara-kiri about Social Security and debt. What is all the histrionics?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. We are going to get to that in a second, because you have to understand how much the deficit has gone up this year. We have a slide somewhere here that is going to tell us that.

May I ask the Speaker how much time I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BUCK). The gentleman from Arizona has 12 minutes remaining.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Let's actually run through these. Let's use our last 12 minutes and get exactly to your point of where we are at and what has been going on.

I put this one up specially for my friends who had fussed and wailed and complained about this thing called sequestration and how it was the end of the world. Basically, western civilization was going to be collapsed to its knees.

What you see is that the red is sequestration and the green is discretionary spending without sequestration. If you see the blue bars there, that is mandatory spending. That is Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, the new healthcare law, interest on the debt, and other transfer programs. It explodes off the charts.

If our friends who complained about sequestration so much cared, they would have talked about mandatory spending: the entitlements. But if you look at the differential between that red and green, it is tiny. The fact of the matter is, this year and next year it is actually gone.

Mr. PERRY. I don't think you can completely explain the green part of sequestration. As you can see, it moves above the red line on occasion about 2017.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Basically, let's look at 2016 and 2017. There is no sequestration. We increased our spending. We blew up the sequestration caps this last fall and last year.

Mr. PERRY. We wanted to spend more money.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. So the one thing that was holding us back on discretionary spending is gone, but under the law, it actually comes back in 2018. So that little tiny differential you see on that chart between the red and the green is sequestration.

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. SCHWEIKERT, would you like to wager a guess as to the likelihood of that reduction staying in law is?

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. It has got to enrage us that if you really cared about the country, you would have the two conversations we are demanding: one, your willingness to change the Tax Code and the regulatory code—the things that help grow the economy—and; two, how are you going to deal with the mandatory spending—the entitlements—that are blowing off the charts?

Mr. PERRY. But the bigger point of this slide, if you will, is that even with sequestration, you can see that, first of all, it is not different from the normal program spending. It has absolutely nothing to do with the huge portion of spending which is mandatory that eclipses everything we do, regardless.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. MULVANEY and I have been having a running conversation about how we put together a budget for this coming year. One of the discussions that we have been trying to calculate is, okay, they blew up some of the spending caps last year. It is what it is. But if they had paid for that increased spending with reforms in entitlements, that is something that goes on and on and on and multiplies out into the future.

Actually, it does a little bit to help our future and save the entitlements. It has sort of a multiplier effect because it lives in perpetuity. It is fascinating, because some of us are trying to pitch that idea of give us a few things that we know actually have a multiplier effect in the future as a way to start to deal with these numbers.

I put this chart up. This is last year. We are going to do this real quickly. I will have it on the Web site, and I will ask both of you if you are willing to do it, too.

You are at your town hall. You have a group walking into your office demanding more money. You have got to understand that happens all day long. Every 15 minutes, there is another meeting of another group that wants more money.

I will get groups that will come in and say: We want more money. If you would just get rid of foreign aid, we will be just fine. Then you pull this board out and say, Okay, you see the little red line there? That is every dime of the State Department's budget. That is military foreign aid, foreign aid to Israel, humanitarian foreign aid, food aid, and all the embassies and their staff, and this and that.

It doesn't do anything. It is great rhetoric. It is a shiny object. It does not do anything, unless you are talking about Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, other welfare programs, ObamaCare, interest on the debt.

Understand that we are incredibly lucky. Interest on the debt this year was supposed to be somewhere in the $600 billion range. Our projection for the 2016 budget is maybe about $260 billion. We have been really lucky.

Mr. PERRY. It is the only benefit of a weak economy.

Mr. MULVANEY. It is also the benefit of a totally accommodating Federal Reserve, who sets the price of interest through things like quantitative easing, which is nothing more than printing money. They have unnaturally depressed rates.

Depressed interest rates is nothing more than the cost of money. One of the direct beneficiaries of that has been this body. It has been much easier for us to run of these huge deficits—which is the annual debt—and the overall debt, simply because it is essentially been free money for the last 6 or 7 years.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. MULVANEY, would you agree that the cheap money, the artificial liquidity, has kept Congress from doing what it knew it had to do in reforming the entitlement programs?

Mr. MULVANEY. There is no question. At $16 trillion of debt, roughly, which is the public debt now, you are talking about interest rates below 2 percent.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. If you really want to get geeky, it is getting shorter because they are going shorter on what they call the weighted daily average.

Mr. MULVANEY. The 40-year rolling average is about 6 percent. That is

what money ordinarily costs the United States of America. It is about 6 percent if you look at it over a generational length of time.

If we simply regress to the mean and end up with money costing us about 6 percent, you are talking about more than $1 trillion a year in just interest payments.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. It is coming.

This goes back to what my friend from Pennsylvania was commenting on. What do we look like in the year we are in right now? Functionally, we are going to be borrowing about $545 billion this year. This was supposed to be one of the good years. Understand that the inflection doesn't happen until 2018, when the debt starts to explode. This was one of the good years.

Do you understand what $545 billion is? No one does. That is a lot of zeroes. It is $1.493 billion a day. It is $62 million a hour. But, think of this. My favorite one is that it is $1 million a minute. It is $17,000 a second. And understand this goes up in 9 years. It basically triples. This triples in 9 years. So, we are borrowing $17,000 a second, and that number triples in 9 years. I threw these together because I figured we would have a little bit of fun here.

So, we are holding a townhall. We get some of the groups that come in and fuss at us and say: Well, I saw somewhere on some news article that said you should get rid of subsidies for fossil fuels.

First off, it is depreciation, just like every business has, but let's say you took away that depreciation from the production of natural gas and oil. You took it all away.

If we are borrowing, functionally, $1.5 billion every single day, and you took it all away, it would buy you 12 minutes and 41 seconds of borrowing coverage a day. There are 1,440 minutes in a day, and you just came up with a way to cover 13 minutes. It shows you how fake many of these rhetorical things are that we hear from the political class, particularly the left.

Let's actually take the next step. What about green energy? Did you know green energy has three times the subsidies of fossil fuels?

Let's say you took every dime of the $36.7 million day that green energy gets. That buys you almost 35 minutes a day. There are 1,440 minutes in a day. We took care of 12 minutes by getting rid of the tax deductions and depreciation for fossil fuels. You got rid of 35 minutes and 24 seconds if you got rid of it all for renewables.

My point is, much of the rhetorical things we hear from the President, from our friends on the left, are completely frauds, mathematically. We have to understand something very, very simple. We are borrowing more than half a trillion dollars this year. In 20 months, the debt starts to explode.

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Mr. MULVANEY, when you have actually been in front of some of your audiences in South Carolina, have you ever shown them the chart that this year and next year were supposed to be the good years? It was supposed to be fairly flat, and then it explodes.

Mr. MULVANEY. Actually, I have been showing them that chart since you and I arrived in 2011 because the number has not changed significantly. When you and I arrived and served on the Budget Committee together in 2011, we could have told people roughly what the deficit would have been this year. The projections have not changed.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. And what happened between last August and now that all of a sudden—remember, last year, the deficit was about $150 billion lower than this, than we are going to run this year. Multiple things happened:

We didn't come close to the economic growth we had built and modeled.

The movement of our citizens into certain programs has been greater than expected, and fewer velocity.

We say unemployment is this, but when we actually look at the actual tax revenues coming from it, there is a disconnect. There is something horribly wrong there. So there is something wrong in economic growth.

And then we blew up many of the sequestration caps last year.

Well, ultimately, we went from, I think we had a $420 billion, $430 billion deficit last year, which was still stunning, and now we are going to be $545 billion.

Look, these are big numbers. It makes your brain hurt. They are uncomfortable. But what you have to appreciate, it is stunning, and it gets dramatically worse in 20 months. We hit what was called the inflection.

I remember reading about this a decade or two decades ago. It is when the baby boom population has been moved in to retirement. And the spiking years are moving in, and they are starting to receive their earned benefits. Then we start adding a couple of hundred billion dollars every year in new borrowing, and it blows off the chart.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 757. An Act to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. HUDSON (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today on account of illness.

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. 2109. An Act 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; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 31 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, February 11, 2016, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

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

4289. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1429; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-246-AD; Amendment 39-18382; AD 2016-02-03] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, 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 Transportation and Infrastructure.

4290. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2014-1045; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-031-AD; Amendment 39-18372; AD 2016-01-13] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, 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 Transportation and Infrastructure.

4291. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2014-0447; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-019-AD; Amendment 39-18368; AD 2016-01-09] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, 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 Transportation and Infrastructure.

4292. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Dassault Aviation Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-2967; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-072-AD; Amendment 39-18376; AD 2016-01-16] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, 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 Transportation and Infrastructure.

4293. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1990; Directorate Identifier

2015-NM-027-AD; Amendment 39-18364; AD 2016-01-05] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, 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 Transportation and Infrastructure.

4294. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1427; Directorate Identifier 2013-NM-203-AD; Amendment 39-18380; AD 2016-02-01] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, 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 Transportation and Infrastructure.

4295. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Agusta S.p.A. Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2015-8695; Directorate Identifier 2015-SW-042-AD; Amendment 39-18365; AD 2016-01-06] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, 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 Transportation and Infrastructure.

4296. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-0081; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-170-AD; Amendment 39-18371; AD 2016-01-12] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, 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 Transportation and Infrastructure.

4297. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1991; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-251-AD; Amendment 39-18381; AD 2016-02-02] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, 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 Transportation and Infrastructure.

4298. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-0678; Directorate Identifier 2013-NM-207-AD; Amendment 39-18367; AD 2016-01-08] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, 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 Transportation and Infrastructure.

4299. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1984; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-022-AD; Amendment 39-18363; AD 2016-01-04] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, 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 Transportation and Infrastructure.

4300. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-8433; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-194-AD; Amendment 39-18366; AD 2016-01-07] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, 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 Transportation and Infrastructure.

4301. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1275; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-070-AD; Amendment 39-18354; AD 2015-26-06] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, 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 Transportation and Infrastructure.

4302. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1981; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-204-AD; Amendment 39-18362; AD 2016-01-03] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, 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 Transportation and Infrastructure.

4303. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Piper Aircraft, Inc. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-4213; Directorate Identifier 2015-CE-022-AD; Amendment 39-18359; AD 2016-01-01] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, 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 Transportation and Infrastructure.

4304. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2014-1049; Directorate Identifier 2013-NM-110-AD; Amendment 39-18361; AD 2016-01-02] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, 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 Transportation and Infrastructure.

4305. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1422; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-125-AD; Amendment 39-18370; AD 2016-01-11] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, 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 Transportation and Infrastructure.

4306. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1990; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-027-AD; Amendment 39-18364; AD 2016-01-05] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, 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 Transportation and Infrastructure.

4307. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Fokker Services B.V. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1982; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-108-AD; Amendment 39-18353; AD 2015-26-05] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, 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 Transportation and Infrastructure.

4308. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2015-0937; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-024-AD; Amendment 39-18348; AD 2015-25-10] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 8, 2016, 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 Transportation and Infrastructure.

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. BURGESS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 611. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2017) to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to improve and clarify certain disclosure requirements for restaurants and similar retail food establishments, and to amend the authority to bring proceedings under section 403A, and providing for proceedings during the period from February 15, 2016, through February 22, 2016 (Rept. 114–421). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. DOLD (for himself and Mr. VARGAS):

H.R. 4514. A bill to authorize State and local governments to divest from entities that engage in commerce or investment-related boycott, divestment, or sanctions activities targeting Israel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. CALVERT (for himself and Mr. COOK):

H.R. 4515. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to increase the maximum penalty for mail theft; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia (for himself, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. CICILLINE, and Mr. COHEN):

H.R. 4516. A bill to require data brokers to establish procedures to ensure the accuracy of collected personal information, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia (for himself, Mr. BARTON, Mr. CHABOT, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. CICILLINE, and Mr. COHEN):

H.R. 4517. A bill to provide for greater transparency in and user control over the treatment of data collected by mobile applications and to enhance the security of such data; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. EMMER of Minnesota (for himself, Mrs. LOVE, Mr. MULVANEY, and Mr. WILLIAMS):

H.R. 4518. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to lower the corporate rate of income tax to the OECD average, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 4519. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide a five-year extension of the special survivor indemnity allowance provided to widows and widowers of deceased members of the uniformed services affected by required Survivor Benefit Plan annuity

offset for dependency and indemnity compensation received under section 1311(a) of title 38, United States Code; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. NEWHOUSE (for himself, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. WELCH, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. ROUZER, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. NOLAN, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. BENISHEK, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. YOHO, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. CLAY, Mr. LAMALFA, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. VELA, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. WALZ, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. COSTA, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. BOST, Mr. ASHFORD, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. POCAN, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. KIND, Mr. DENHAM, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Ms. GRAHAM, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. HURD of Texas, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. PEARCE, and Mr. COLLINS of Georgia):

H.R. 4520. A bill to posthumously award a Congressional gold medal to Justin Smith Morrill, United States Senator of the State of Vermont, in recognition of his lasting contributions to higher education opportunity for all Americans; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. THOMPSON of California (for himself, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. BERA, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLAY, Mr. COHEN, Mr. COLE, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. COOK, Mr. COOPER, Mr. COSTA, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. CROWLEY, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. DENT, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. ESTY, Mr. FARR, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. SESSIONS, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. SHIMKUS, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. SIRES, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. TIBERI, Ms. TITUS, Mr. TONKO, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. WALZ, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. HECK of Washington, Mr. HIMES, Mr. KEATING, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KILMER, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. LEWIS, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. NEAL, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. HONDA, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. LATTA, Ms. LEE, Mr. LOBIONDO, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. MEEHAN, Ms. MENG, Ms. MOORE, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. NUNES, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. POCAN, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. POLIS, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. RUIZ, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. VELA, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. YARMUTH, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. DELBENE, Ms. BASS, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. HAHN, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. KIND, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. VISCLOSKY, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. WELCH, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. KILDEE, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DEUTCH, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. HOYER, Ms. JACKSON LEE, and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi):

H.R. 4521. A bill to transfer recreational management authority for Lake Berryessa in the State of California from the Bureau of Reclamation to the Bureau of Land Management, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. SALMON, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. MICA, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. KLINE, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, and Mr. YOHO):

H.R. 4522. A bill to amend the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1987 with respect to certain prohibitions regarding the Palestine Liberation Organization under that Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. COFFMAN (for himself, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. POLIS, and Mr. ROHRABACHER):

H.R. 4523. A bill to repeal the Military Selective Service Act, and thereby terminate the registration requirements of such Act and eliminate civilian local boards, civilian appeal boards, and similar local agencies of the Selective Service System; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. CROWLEY (for himself and Ms. FRANKEL of Florida):

H.R. 4524. A bill to amend the Social Security Act to provide for mandatory funding, to ensure that the families that have infants and toddlers, have a family income of not more than 200 percent of the applicable Federal poverty guideline, and need child care have access to high-quality infant and toddler child care by the end of fiscal year 2026, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. DELAURO:

H.R. 4525. A bill to make a supplemental appropriation for the Public Health Emergency Fund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Appropriations, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. FRANKEL of Florida (for herself, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. DEUTCH, Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. POLIQUIN, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. TAKANO, and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia):

H.R. 4526. A bill to amend the Restore Online Shoppers' Confidence Act to protect consumers from deceptive practices with respect to online booking of hotel reservations and to direct the Federal Trade Commission to conduct a study with respect to online shopping for hotel reservations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. KILMER (for himself and Mr. RUSSELL):

H.R. 4527. A bill to temporarily authorize recently retired members of the armed forces to be appointed to certain civil service positions, require the Secretary of Defense to issue certain notifications, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. TED LIEU of California (for himself, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Ms. DELBENE, and Mr. BISHOP of Michigan):

H.R. 4528. A bill to preempt State data security vulnerability mandates and decryption requirements; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on 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 Mr. MURPHY of Florida:

H.R. 4529. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to provide for an annual increase in the contribution and benefit base, to exclude a certain number of childcare years from the benefit computation formula, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. POLIS (for himself and Mr. AMODEI):

H.R. 4530. A bill to implement integrity measures to strengthen the EB-5 Regional Center Program in order to promote and reform foreign capital investment and job creation in American communities; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SABLAN:

H.R. 4531. A bill to approve an agreement between the United States and the Republic of Palau, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. STEWART (for himself, Mrs. LOVE, Mr. CHAFFETZ, and Mr. BISHOP of Utah):

H. Con. Res. 114. Concurrent resolution expressing concern over the disappearance of David Sneddon, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select), 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 Mr. DOLD:
H.R. 4514.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. CALVERT:
H.R. 4515.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress).

By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia:
H.R. 4516.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia:
H.R. 4517.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. EMMER of Minnesota:
H.R. 4518.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 1, Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution which reads: ''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.''

By Mr. GRAYSON:
H.R. 4519.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 3 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution

By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 4520.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. THOMPSON of California:
H.R. 4521.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I Sec I

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN:
H.R. 4522.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution

By Mr. COFFMAN:
H.R. 4523.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution (Clauses 12, 13, 14, 16, and 18), which grants Congress the power to raise and support an Army; to provide and maintain a Navy; to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces; to provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the militia; and to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the foregoing powers.

By Mr. CROWLEY:
H.R. 4524.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Ms. DELAURO:
H.R. 4525.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 9, Clause 7 and Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Ms. FRANKEL of Florida:
H.R. 4526.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clauses 3 and 18 of the U.S. Constitution, respectively giving Congress the authority to regulate interstate commerce and to make all laws neccessary and proper for carrying into execution the powers of Congress.

By Mr. KILMER:
H.R. 4527.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. TED LIEU of California:
H.R. 4528.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. MURPHY of Florida:
H.R. 4529.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The General Welfare Clause of Article 1, Section 8, of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. POLIS:
H.R. 4530.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. SABLAN:
H.R. 4531.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Under Article I, section 8 of the Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

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

H.R. 27: Mr. THORNBERRY.
H.R. 188: Mrs. BUSTOS and Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.
H.R. 191: Mr. FLORES and Mr. ROSS.
H.R. 267: Mr. POE of Texas.
H.R. 347: Mr. PEARCE.
H.R. 467: Ms. KUSTER.
H.R. 662: Mr. FITZPATRICK and Mr. HULTGREN.
H.R. 699: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H.R. 700: Ms. DEGETTE and Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 745: Mr. DEUTCH.
H.R. 814: Mr. MCCAUL and Mr. LAMALFA.
H.R. 845: Mr. ROE of Tennessee.
H.R. 863: Mr. REED.
H.R. 921: Mr. BUCHANAN.
H.R. 939: Mr. MCNERNEY.
H.R. 1062: Mr. KIND.
H.R. 1142: Mrs. TORRES.
H.R. 1193: Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 1284: Ms. KAPTUR.
H.R. 1391: Mr. DEFAZIO.
H.R. 1397: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
H.R. 1475: Mr. NOLAN.
H.R. 1552: Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 1608: Mr. DONOVAN and Mr. PITTENGER.
H.R. 1736: Mrs. WAGNER.
H.R. 1769: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.
H.R. 1887: Mr. KIND.
H.R. 2144: Mr. PEARCE.
H.R. 2148: Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. ALLEN, and Mr. CHABOT.
H.R. 2228: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 2236: Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 2300: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.
H.R. 2330: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 2400: Mr. TROTT.
H.R. 2411. Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 2418: Mr. REED.
H.R. 2449: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, and Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H.R. 2515: Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. MULLIN, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Mr. WEBSTER of Florida.
H.R. 2631: Mr. BRAT.
H.R. 2680: Ms. DUCKWORTH and Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 2698: Mr. PEARCE.
H.R. 2715: Mr. HASTINGS and Mr. GARAMENDI.
H.R. 2737: Mr. MILLER of Florida and Mr. PALLONE.
H.R. 2802: Mr. CHABOT.
H.R. 2823: Ms. MENG.
H.R. 2992: Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. UPTON, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. YODER, and Mr. MARCHANT.
H.R. 3099: Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Ms. STEFANIK, and Mr. COURTNEY.
H.R. 3142: Mr. SCHIFF and Mr. GARAMENDI.
H.R. 3180: Mr. REED, Miss RICE of New York, and Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 3229: Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 3283: Mr. WALBERG.
H.R. 3323: Mr. FITZPATRICK.
H.R. 3326: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 3355: Mr. HOLDING.
H.R. 3365: Mr. NORCROSS and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 3381: Mr. SARBANES, Mr. WALBERG, and Mr. FORTENBERRY.
H.R. 3406: Ms. DELBENE, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, and Mr. MEEKS.
H.R. 3516: Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 3635: Mrs. LAWRENCE.
H.R. 3706: Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. GIBSON, and Mr. NADLER.
H.R. 3782: Mr. MCNERNEY.
H.R. 3805: Ms. PINGREE.
H.R. 3880: Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 3892: Mr. POSEY, Mr. JOYCE, and Mr. SMITH of Texas.
H.R. 3913: Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. DEFAZIO.
H.R. 3917: Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. WENSTRUP, and Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 3920: Mr. COLE.
H.R. 3947: Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 3948: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 3949: Ms. PLASKETT.
H.R. 3952: Mr. GROTHMAN and Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 3956: Mr. RANGEL and Mrs. ROBY.
H.R. 3970: Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 3986: Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 4007: Mr. CHABOT.
H.R. 4013: Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 4076: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 4087: Mr. JOLLY.
H.R. 4126: Mr. FORBES and Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 4137: Ms. JACKSON LEE.
H.R. 4144: Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 4176: Mr. PASCRELL.
H.R. 4184: Mr. LANGEVIN.
H.R. 4212: Mr. WELCH and Mr. HUFFMAN.
H.R. 4219: Mr. LONG.
H.R. 4229: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas and Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 4235: Mr. TAKANO and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.
H.R. 4247: Mr. GROTHMAN.
H.R. 4262: Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia.
H.R. 4263: Mr. QUIGLEY.
H.R. 4266: Ms. BORDALLO and Mr. NORCROSS.
H.R. 4281: Mr. COSTA.

H.R. 4320: Mrs. LOWEY.
H.R. 4336: Mr. GOODLATTE and Mr. ROUZER.
H.R. 4342: Mr. ALLEN.
H.R. 4344: Mr. MCCLINTOCK.
H.R. 4352: Mr. ASHFORD, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. CARNEY, and Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 4355: Ms. JACKSON LEE.
H.R. 4364: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 4365: Mr. PETERSON and Mr. FITZPATRICK.
H.R. 4380: Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 4400: Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. FATTAH, and Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 4420: Mr. RENACCI, Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia, Mr. GOWDY, and Mr. ASHFORD.
H.R. 4428: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.
H.R. 4430: Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. MCNERNEY, and Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 4435: Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Ms. CASTOR of Florida.
H.R. 4436: Mr. JOLLY.
H.R. 4438: Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 4442: Mr. HINOJOSA and Mr. POLIS.
H.R. 4446: Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. PIERLUISI, Mr. BUCHANAN, and Mr. WILLIAMS.
H.R. 4447: Ms. BORDALLO and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 4461: Mrs. ROBY.
H.R. 4470: Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. ELLISON, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, and Mr. PASCRELL.
H.R. 4475: Mr. MCNERNEY.
H.R. 4502: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, and Mr. FLEISCHMANN.
H.J. Res. 9: Mr. NEWHOUSE.
H. Con. Res. 50: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.
H. Con. Res. 75: Mr. BABIN, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, and Mr. HECK of Nevada.
H. Con. Res. 89: Mr. LATTA and Mr. BUCSHON.
H. Con. Res. 101: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa.
H. Con. Res. 105: Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.
H. Con. Res. 110: Mr. VEASEY.
H. Res. 148: Mr. ENGEL and Mr. ROSKAM.
H. Res. 318: Mr. VEASEY.
H. Res. 454: Mr. GOHMERT.
H. Res. 548: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.
H. Res. 569: Mr. NOLAN.
H. Res. 571: Mr. GIBSON, Mr. LAMBORN, Ms. GRANGER, and Mr. KELLY of Mississippi.
H. Res. 582: Mrs. BLACK, Mr. MESSER, and Mr. ROE of Tennessee.
H. Res. 588: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mr. BABIN.
H. Res. 593: Mr. MCNERNEY and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.
H. Res. 597: Mr. VEASEY.
H. Res. 610: Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, and Mr. DESAULNIER.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY MRS. MCMORRIS RODGERS

The Manager's amendment to be offered to H.R. 2017, Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act of 2015, by Representative McMorris Rodgers of Washington, or a designee, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 162 WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2016 No. 24

Senate

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

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, glorious in strength and marvelous in majesty, we ascribe to You the glory due Your Name. You have elevated this Nation and sustained it through its history. Keep us from forgetting that righteousness exalts, but sin destroys.

Lord, infuse our Senators with the spirit of humility, enabling them to refuse to become legends in their own minds. May they cultivate esteem for others, seeking for opportunities to practice the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. As they work to find common ground, give them Your wisdom and peace.

We pray in Your strong 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.

CLEAN POWER PLAN

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I was disappointed last night to learn that the Supreme Court temporarily halted the implementation of President Obama's Clean Power Plan program. This was an especially stunning move by the Supreme Court, given that just weeks ago the DC Circuit Court of Appeals categorically rejected a halt in the Clean Power Plan and States do not need to start implementing the plan until 2022.

This shortsighted decision by the Court's five conservative Justices is an unfortunate setback. It unnecessarily puts into question a major part of our country's effort to address climate change and protect our environment. Notwithstanding my amazement, I remain confident that the Obama administration's carbon rules are legally sound and will prevail in the courts.

In the landmark case Massachusetts v. Environmental Protection Agency, the Supreme Court itself directed the Environmental Protection Agency to address climate change if carbon pollution was found to be a danger to human health. Based on enormous scientific evidence, the EPA did make that finding and the Agency is required by law to regulate carbon pollution. I can't imagine that the Supreme Court would take such an unprecedented and drastic step at this time. But the unparalleled nature of the Supreme Court's decisions show why Congress must play a role in addressing climate change.

Climate-denying Republicans in the House and Senate might applaud this decision, but their refusal to protect Americans from the impact of climate change is the real loss for our country.

NORTH KOREA SANCTIONS LEGISLATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there is no nation on this planet more dedicated to fear and intimidation than North Korea. Its leader Kim Jong Un is a brutal dictator. He will stop at nothing to keep his power intact and his people isolated. That has been proven.

To accomplish these objectives, the North Korean Government relies on threats to Japan and other neighbors and, of course, the United States. Recently, the number of alarming developments out of North Korea has accelerated. These acts of aggression are extremely concerning to the American community, as they should be.

Last Saturday, North Korea defied international warnings and launched a rocket using ballistic missile technology. This was a flagrant violation of multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions. This came less than a month after North Korea detonated a nuclear device, also in clear violation of international law.

That brings us to yesterday, when the U.S. Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, confirmed that North Korea has restarted a plutonium reactor. The Director estimated that North Korea would be able to recover fuel from its reactor within a matter of weeks or months.

The international community quickly condemned these incidents, as it should have. President Obama has been a leader in pushing back against the saber-rattling from North Korea. He has worked to galvanize the world in opposing North Korea's provocative and destabilizing behavior. Under the President's leadership, the United States has built a global coalition, including China and Russia, to impose sanctions against North Korea.

There is an international consensus that North Korea's actions violate international law and threaten our allies and partners in the region. Here in the Capitol there is also broad bipartisan agreement that there must be consequences for North Korea's provocations. The House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed new sanctions legislation. Now the Senate must act. We need to do it today. Two weeks ago the Senate Foreign Relations Committee unanimously approved the sanctions bill that is now before this body.

This legislation would require the President to investigate and sanction any person who knowingly imports into North Korea certain goods, technologies, service, training or advice

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

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concerning weapons of mass destruction. It also directs the President to investigate and sanction people who engage in human rights abuses, money laundering and related activities, and cyber terrorism or other cyber vandalism.

In addition, the legislation authorizes $15 million to transmit radio broadcasts to North Korea for the next 5 years. These are commonsense steps that Congress should take in response to North Korea's unwarranted provocation. Everyone in the Senate agrees that North Korea's aggression cannot go unanswered. Its actions threaten the peace and security of the region and, actually, the world. I hope my colleagues will join with me in passing this legislation today to send a message to Kim Jong Un that his reckless behavior will not go unanswered.

TRIBUTE TO ED PESCE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I so admire the family we have here in the Senate. Many people work ceaselessly to make sure the Senate runs well. In the Senate Periodical Press Gallery, a small group of nonpartisan staffers helps the congressional press office to work together with the communications staff of Senators and their committees. Their fingerprints can be found on nearly every part of the Senate's business.

The Senate Periodical Press Gallery facilitates key parts of Senate business, including press access, print and digital media planning, security protocols, and communications across hundreds of thousands of media platforms. For over 15 years, one man has been at the helm of this exceptionally fine team. His name is Ed Pesce. After graduating from Loyola University in 1990, Ed began working in the Senate Periodical Press Gallery. During his 26 years of service, Ed has always acted with warmth and professionalism.

As the news industry transitioned from sole dependence on print and traditional mediums to a thriving combination of print and digital media, Ed ensured the Senate Periodical Press Gallery was not left behind. He created the first Web site for the Senate Periodical Press Gallery way back in 1999 and developed a social media communications program since then.

Ed has been a trailblazer in the news industry and a principal leader here in the Senate. He has served under 11 Sergeants at Arms. During countless historic achievements here in the Senate, he has seen so much. When asked what they will miss most, Ed's coworkers recall his infectious laughter and dedication to team building.

Last year, Ed announced that he would retire after more than two decades of service. I congratulate him for his many dedicated years of remarkable service. I wish Ed and John, his husband, all the best in the years to come. On behalf of my colleagues, our staff, and the entire congressional community, I extend my gratitude to Ed for his tireless commitment to the Senate.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

TRIBUTE TO ED PESCE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I too wish to say a few words about Ed Pesce, who today, after 25 years of Federal service, is retiring as the director of the Senate Periodical Press Gallery. Ed has been a fixture around here for years. You could usually find him right outside the Chamber, behind the saloon swinging doors of the Senate Periodical Press Gallery.

When George Mitchell was the majority leader, that is where you found him. When Bob Dole had the job, that is where you found him. It has been true ever since. But you can sometimes find Ed in other places too. Some mornings you can spot Ed at the gym on a spin cycle. Later in the evening, you might see Ed queuing for the premiere of a Star Wars sequel, maybe even a prequel.

At almost any other time, you likely would find Ed buried in a book. Fiction is one of his favorite genres; history is the other. He certainly witnessed plenty of it firsthand. He oversaw media planning and execution for six Presidential inaugurations, for half a dozen Republican Conventions, and for just as many Democratic ones, not to mention hundreds of congressional hearings and press conferences.

Ed is a Baltimore native who came to the Senate Periodical Press Gallery shortly after graduating from Loyola. He diligently worked his way through the ranks, and after a decade spent learning the tricks of the trade, he assumed his current role back in 2000. The job has brought Ed in contact with thousands of Senate staffers and congressional reporters. It necessitated many long hours and plenty of late nights. It presented ample amounts of tense situations as well.

But Ed never lost his good attitude or his boisterous laugh. Just ask his staff. ''Funloving,'' ''thoughtful,'' ''tough, but fair''—that is how people who work closest with Ed describe him.

At 6 feet 2 inches, Ed Pesce is hard to miss, but I know he will be missed here in the Senate when he leaves. He took on a tough job with a great attitude. He gained a lot of fans. It is a legacy that anyone could be proud of. I think I can speak for my colleagues when I say that we thank Ed for his many years of service. We send him our best, and we look forward to seeing what he will be able to accomplish in the next chapter of his life.

NORTH KOREA SANCTIONS LEGISLATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today the Senate has an opportunity to pass bipartisan legislation that would add to our Nation's ability to hold North Korea accountable for its growing aggression. North Korea threatens regional stability and our own national security. It threatens allies in the region, especially South Korea and Japan.

As General Clapper stated yesterday, it is a country that will continue to advance its nuclear program. I would urge my colleagues to vote yes to the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act today so we can work toward keeping our Nation and our allies safer.

CLEAN POWER PLAN REGULATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, now on yet another matter, a few years ago the Obama administration rolled out a massive regulatory scheme they dubbed a ''Clean Power Plan,'' an odd choice, given that it would not have a meaningful impact on global emissions or the health of our planet. Here is what those massive regulations likely would do, though: ship middle-class jobs overseas, punish the poor, impose more pain on Kentucky coal families who just want to put food on the table—all for the sake, one must assume, of letting well-off folks on the left feel better about themselves for ''doing something.''

It is pretty clear that the administration's energy regulations threaten a lot of middle-class pain for hardly any substantive environmental gain. There is another huge problem too. These regulations are, in my view, likely illegal. Yesterday's Supreme Court order is just the latest sign of that. If nothing else, it shows we were right to let Governors know their options. We thought Governors should know they could take a wait-and-see approach before locking their States into some massive regulatory scheme. We thought Governors should know the economic jeopardy they would place their States in by moving ahead without a clearer understanding first of what might be legally required. We thought Governors should not feel bullied by the heavy hand of this administration. That cautious approach was the most responsible one, in my view. Yesterday's decision shows it was a prudent one as well. We will see what the Supreme Court ultimately decides, but we are going to keep fighting against these regressive regulations regardless.

It is worth remembering how we got here in the first place. President Obama tried to push a regressive, anti-middle class energy tax through a Democratic-controlled Congress, and his own party said no. That was in 2010 when Democrats controlled the Senate. They said no. He simply went around Congress to impose a similarly regressive plan anyway.

Kentuckians in the eastern part of my State are experiencing a severe depression—a depression that policies

such as these are only making worse. I have repeatedly invited Gina McCarthy and the President to my home State to see the devastation firsthand. They have yet to accept. But even if they won't come to us, we have brought the concerns of Kentuckians directly to them. For example, we have brought constituents to administration hearings in Washington to try to make people here listen.

I put myself on the Appropriations Subcommittee on the Interior so that I could have a stronger influence in the oversight of the EPA budget. It has given me the opportunity to shed light on the struggles of my home State and question officials like Gina McCarthy. It has given me the chance to push for policy riders in legislation that would undermine or overturn these regulations in their entirety. I have repeatedly done so and will continue to do so. I have also worked successfully with Members of both parties to pass measures through Congress that would also overturn these anti-middle class regulations in their entirety.

President Obama pulled out all the stops to defeat previous attempts to pass riders. He vetoed the bipartisan measures we passed through Congress. But he cannot stop the Supreme Court from making the right decision, as we hope it ultimately will. He also cannot stop the American people from electing a successor who is ready to support the middle class.

Here is the bottom line. I think we owe it to the people under attack to represent them and to stand up on their behalf. The Americans whom these regulations attack have committed no crime. They have done nothing wrong. They are human beings with families. It is about time we had an administration that treated them that way. Until then, we will keep fighting and we will celebrate important progress along the way, just as we did with yesterday's Supreme Court action.

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 until 10:30 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Mr. McCONNELL. 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. CORKER. 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.

NORTH KOREA SANCTIONS ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2016

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of H.R. 757, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 757) to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Findings; purposes.
Sec. 3. Definitions.

TITLE I—INVESTIGATIONS, PROHIBITED CONDUCT, AND PENALTIES

Sec. 101. Statement of policy.
Sec. 102. Investigations.
Sec. 103. Reporting requirements.
Sec. 104. Designation of persons.
Sec. 105. Forfeiture of property.

TITLE II—SANCTIONS AGAINST NORTH KOREAN PROLIFERATION, HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES, AND ILLICIT ACTIVITIES

Sec. 201. Determinations with respect to North Korea as a jurisdiction of primary money laundering concern.
Sec. 202. Ensuring the consistent enforcement of United Nations Security Council resolutions and financial restrictions on North Korea.
Sec. 203. Proliferation prevention sanctions.
Sec. 204. Procurement sanctions.
Sec. 205. Enhanced inspection authorities.
Sec. 206. Travel sanctions.
Sec. 207. Travel recommendations for United States citizens to North Korea.
Sec. 208. Exemptions, waivers, and removals of designation.
Sec. 209. Report on and imposition of sanctions to address persons responsible for knowingly engaging in significant activities undermining cybersecurity.
Sec. 210. Codification of sanctions with respect to North Korean activities undermining cybersecurity.
Sec. 211. Sense of Congress on trilateral cooperation between the United States, South Korea, and Japan.

TITLE III—PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Sec. 301. Information technology.
Sec. 302. Strategy to promote North Korean human rights.
Sec. 303. Report on North Korean prison camps.
Sec. 304. Report on and imposition of sanctions with respect to serious human rights abuses or censorship in North Korea.

TITLE IV—GENERAL AUTHORITIES

Sec. 401. Suspension of sanctions and other measures.
Sec. 402. Termination of sanctions and other measures.
Sec. 403. Authorization of appropriations.
Sec. 404. Rulemaking.
Sec. 405. Authority to consolidate reports.
Sec. 406. Effective date.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS; PURPOSES.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) The Government of North Korea—

(A) has repeatedly violated its commitments to the complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement of its nuclear weapons programs; and

(B) has willfully violated multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions calling for North Korea to cease development, testing, and production of weapons of mass destruction.

(2) Based on its past actions, including the transfer of sensitive nuclear and missile technology to state sponsors of terrorism, North Korea poses a grave risk for the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

(3) The Government of North Korea has been implicated repeatedly in money laundering and other illicit activities, including—

(A) prohibited arms sales;

(B) narcotics trafficking;

(C) the counterfeiting of United States currency;

(D) significant activities undermining cybersecurity; and

(E) the counterfeiting of intellectual property of United States persons.

(4) North Korea has—

(A) unilaterally withdrawn from the Agreement Concerning a Military Armistice in Korea, signed at Panmunjom July 27, 1953 (commonly referred to as the ''Korean War Armistice Agreement''); and

(B) committed provocations against South Korea—

(i) by sinking the warship Cheonan and killing 46 of her crew on March 26, 2010;

(ii) by shelling Yeonpyeong Island and killing 4 South Korean civilians on November 23, 2010;

(iii) by its involvement in the ''DarkSeoul'' cyberattacks against the financial and communications interests of South Korea on March 20, 2013; and

(iv) by planting land mines near a guard post in the South Korean portion of the demilitarized zone that maimed 2 South Korean soldiers on August 4, 2015.

(5) North Korea maintains a system of brutal political prison camps that contain as many as 200,000 men, women, and children, who are—

(A) kept in atrocious living conditions with insufficient food, clothing, and medical care; and

(B) under constant fear of torture or arbitrary execution.

(6) North Korea has prioritized weapons programs and the procurement of luxury goods—

(A) in defiance of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1695 (2006), 1718 (2006), 1874 (2009), 2087 (2013), and 2094 (2013); and

(B) in gross disregard of the needs of the people of North Korea.

(7) Persons, including financial institutions, who engage in transactions with, or provide financial services to, the Government of North Korea and its financial institutions without establishing sufficient financial safeguards against North Korea's use of such transactions to promote proliferation, weapons trafficking, human rights violations, illicit activity, and the purchase of luxury goods—

(A) aid and abet North Korea's misuse of the international financial system; and

(B) violate the intent of the United Nations Security Council resolutions referred to in paragraph (6)(A).

(8) The Government of North Korea has provided technical support and conducted destructive and coercive cyberattacks, including against Sony Pictures Entertainment and other United States persons.

(9) The conduct of the Government of North Korea poses an imminent threat to—

(A) the security of the United States and its allies;

(B) the global economy;

(C) the safety of members of the United States Armed Forces;

(D) the integrity of the global financial system;

(E) the integrity of global nonproliferation programs; and

(F) the people of North Korea.

(10) The Government of North Korea has sponsored acts of international terrorism, including—

(A) attempts to assassinate defectors and human rights activists; and

(B) the shipment of weapons to terrorists and state sponsors of terrorism.

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are—

(1) to use nonmilitary means to address the crisis described in subsection (a);

(2) to provide diplomatic leverage to negotiate necessary changes in the conduct of the Government of North Korea;

(3) to ease the suffering of the people of North Korea; and

(4) to reaffirm the purposes set forth in section 4 of the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7802).

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) APPLICABLE EXECUTIVE ORDER.—The term ''applicable Executive order'' means—

(A) Executive Order 13382 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to blocking property of weapons of mass destruction proliferators and their supporters), Executive Order 13466 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to continuing certain restrictions with respect to North Korea and North Korean nationals), Executive Order 13551 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to blocking property of certain persons with respect to North Korea), Executive Order 13570 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to prohibiting certain transactions with respect to North Korea), Executive Order 13619 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to blocking property of persons threatening the peace, security, or stability of Burma), Executive Order 13687 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to imposing additional sanctions with respect to North Korea), or Executive Order 13694 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to blocking the property of certain persons engaging in significant malicious cyber-enabled activities), to the extent that such Executive order—

(i) authorizes the imposition of sanctions on persons for conduct with respect to North Korea;

(ii) prohibits transactions or activities involving the Government of North Korea; or

(iii) otherwise imposes sanctions with respect to North Korea; and

(B) any Executive order adopted on or after the date of the enactment of this Act, to the extent that such Executive order—

(i) authorizes the imposition of sanctions on persons for conduct with respect to North Korea;

(ii) prohibits transactions or activities involving the Government of North Korea; or

(iii) otherwise imposes sanctions with respect to North Korea.

(2) APPLICABLE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION.—The term ''applicable United Nations Security Council resolution'' means—

(A) United Nations Security Council Resolution 1695 (2006), 1718 (2006), 1874 (2009), 2087 (2013), or 2094 (2013); and

(B) any United Nations Security Council resolution adopted on or after the date of the enactment of this Act that—

(i) authorizes the imposition of sanctions on persons for conduct with respect to North Korea;

(ii) prohibits transactions or activities involving the Government of North Korea; or

(iii) otherwise imposes sanctions with respect to North Korea.

(3) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Financial Services, and the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives.

(4) DESIGNATED PERSON.—The term ''designated person'' means a person designated under subsection (a) or (b) of section 104 for purposes of applying 1 or more of the sanctions described in title I or II with respect to the person.

(5) GOVERNMENT OF NORTH KOREA.—The term ''Government of North Korea'' means the Government of North Korea and its agencies, instrumentalities, and controlled entities.

(6) HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE.—The term ''humanitarian assistance'' means assistance to meet humanitarian needs, including needs for food, medicine, medical supplies, clothing, and shelter.

(7) INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY.—The term ''intelligence community'' has the meaning given such term in section 3(4) of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3003(4)).

(8) LUXURY GOODS.—The term ''luxury goods''—

(A) has the meaning given such term in section 746.4(b)(1) of title 15, Code of Federal Regulations; and

(B) includes the items listed in Supplement No. 1 to part 746 of such title, and any similar items.

(9) MONETARY INSTRUMENTS.—The term ''monetary instruments'' has the meaning given such term in section 5312(a) of title 31, United States Code.

(10) NORTH KOREA.—The term ''North Korea'' means the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

(11) NORTH KOREAN FINANCIAL INSTITUTION.—The term ''North Korean financial institution'' means any financial institution that—

(A) is organized under the laws of North Korea or any jurisdiction within North Korea (including a foreign branch of such an institution);

(B) is located in North Korea, except for a financial institution that is excluded by the President in accordance with section 208(c);

(C) is owned or controlled by the Government of North Korea, regardless of location; or

(D) is owned or controlled by a financial institution described in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C), regardless of location.

(12) SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES UNDERMINING CYBERSECURITY.—The term ''significant activities undermining cybersecurity'' includes—

(A) significant efforts to—

(i) deny access to or degrade, disrupt, or destroy an information and communications technology system or network; or

(ii) exfiltrate information from such a system or network without authorization;

(B) significant destructive malware attacks;

(C) significant denial of service activities; and

(D) such other significant activities described in regulations promulgated to implement section 104.

(13) SOUTH KOREA.—The term ''South Korea'' means the Republic of Korea.

(14) UNITED STATES PERSON.—The term ''United States person'' means—

(A) a United States citizen or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence to the United States; or

(B) an entity organized under the laws of the United States or of any jurisdiction within the United States, including a foreign branch of such an entity.

TITLE I—INVESTIGATIONS, PROHIBITED CONDUCT, AND PENALTIES

SEC. 101. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

In order to achieve the peaceful disarmament of North Korea, Congress finds that it is necessary—

(1) to encourage all member states of the United Nations to fully and promptly implement United Nations Security Council Resolution 2094 (2013);

(2) to sanction the persons, including financial institutions, that facilitate proliferation, illicit activities, arms trafficking, cyberterrorism, imports of luxury goods, serious human rights abuses, cash smuggling, and censorship by the Government of North Korea;

(3) to authorize the President to sanction persons who fail to exercise due diligence to ensure that such financial institutions and member states do not facilitate proliferation, arms trafficking, kleptocracy, or imports of luxury goods by the Government of North Korea;

(4) to deny the Government of North Korea access to the funds it uses to develop or obtain nuclear weapons, ballistic missiles, cyberwarfare capabilities, and luxury goods instead of providing for the needs of the people of North Korea; and

(5) to enforce sanctions in a manner that does not significantly hinder or delay the efforts of legitimate United States or foreign humanitarian organizations from providing assistance to meet the needs of civilians facing humanitarian crisis, including access to food, health care, shelter, and clean drinking water, to prevent or alleviate human suffering.

SEC. 102. INVESTIGATIONS.

(a) INITIATION.—The President shall initiate an investigation into the possible designation of a person under section 104(a) upon receipt by the President of credible information indicating that such person has engaged in conduct described in section 104(a).

(b) PERSONNEL.—The President may direct the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the heads of other Federal departments and agencies as may be necessary to assign sufficient experienced and qualified investigators, attorneys, and technical personnel—

(1) to investigate the conduct described in subsections (a) and (b) of section 104; and

(2) to coordinate and ensure the effective enforcement of this Act.

SEC. 103. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.

(a) PRESIDENTIAL BRIEFINGS TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and periodically thereafter, the President shall provide a briefing to the appropriate congressional committees on efforts to implement this Act.

(b) REPORT FROM SECRETARY OF STATE.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall conduct, coordinate, and submit to Congress a comprehensive report on United States policy towards North Korea that—

(1) is based on a full and complete interagency review of current policies and possible alternatives, including with respect to North Korea's weapons of mass destruction and missile programs, human rights atrocities, and significant activities undermining cybersecurity; and

(2) includes recommendations for such legislative or administrative action as the Secretary considers appropriate based on the results of the review.

SEC. 104. DESIGNATION OF PERSONS.

(a) MANDATORY DESIGNATIONS.—Except as provided in section 208, the President shall designate under this subsection any person that the President determines—

(1) knowingly, directly or indirectly, imports, exports, or reexports to, into, or from North Korea any goods, services, or technology controlled for export by the United States because of the use of such goods, services, or technology

for weapons of mass destruction or delivery systems for such weapons and materially contributes to the use, development, production, possession, or acquisition by any person of a nuclear, radiological, chemical, or biological weapon or any device or system designed in whole or in part to deliver such a weapon;

(2) knowingly, directly or indirectly, provides training, advice, or other services or assistance, or engages in significant financial transactions, relating to the manufacture, maintenance, or use of any such weapon, device, or system to be imported, exported, or reexported to, into, or from North Korea;

(3) knowingly, directly or indirectly, imports, exports, or reexports luxury goods to or into North Korea;

(4) knowingly engages in, is responsible for, or facilitates censorship by the Government of North Korea;

(5) knowingly engages in, is responsible for, or facilitates serious human rights abuses by the Government of North Korea;

(6) knowingly, directly or indirectly, engages in money laundering, the counterfeiting of goods or currency, bulk cash smuggling, or narcotics trafficking that supports the Government of North Korea or any senior official or person acting for or on behalf of that Government;

(7) knowingly engages in significant activities undermining cybersecurity through the use of computer networks or systems against foreign persons, governments, or other entities on behalf of the Government of North Korea;

(8) knowingly, directly or indirectly, sells, supplies, or transfers to or from the Government of North Korea or any person acting for or on behalf of that Government, a significant amount of precious metal, graphite, raw or semi-finished metals or aluminum, steel, coal, or software, for use by or in industrial processes directly related to weapons of mass destruction and delivery systems for such weapons, other proliferation activities, the Korean Workers' Party, armed forces, internal security, or intelligence activities, or the operation and maintenance of political prison camps or forced labor camps, including outside of North Korea;

(9) knowingly, directly or indirectly, imports, exports, or reexports to, into, or from North Korea any arms or related materiel; or

(10) knowingly attempts to engage in any of the conduct described in paragraphs (1) through (9).

(b) ADDITIONAL DISCRETIONARY DESIGNATIONS.—

(1) PROHIBITED CONDUCT DESCRIBED.—Except as provided in section 208, the President may designate under this subsection any person that the President determines—

(A) knowingly engages in, contributes to, assists, sponsors, or provides financial, material or technological support for, or goods and services in support of, any person designated pursuant to an applicable United Nations Security Council resolution;

(B) knowingly contributed to—

(i) the bribery of an official of the Government of North Korea or any person acting for on behalf of that official;

(ii) the misappropriation, theft, or embezzlement of public funds by, or for the benefit of, an official of the Government of North Korea or any person acting for or on behalf of that official; or

(iii) the use of any proceeds of any activity described in clause (i) or (ii); or

(C) knowingly and materially assisted, sponsored, or provided significant financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services to or in support of, the activities described in subparagraph (A) or (B).

(2) EFFECT OF DESIGNATION.—With respect to any person designated under this subsection, the President may—

(A) apply the sanctions described in section 204, 205(c), or 206 to the person to the same extent and in the same manner as if the person were designated under subsection (a);

(B) apply any applicable special measures described in section 5318A of title 31, United States Code;

(C) prohibit any transactions in foreign exchange—

(i) that are subject to the jurisdiction of the United States; and

(ii) in which such person has any interest; and

(D) prohibit any transfers of credit or payments between financial institutions or by, through, or to any financial institution, to the extent that such transfers or payments—

(i) are subject to the jurisdiction of the United States; and

(ii) involve any interest of such person.

(c) ASSET BLOCKING.—The President shall exercise all of the powers granted to the President under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) to the extent necessary to block and prohibit all transactions in property and interests in property of a designated person, the Government of North Korea, or the Workers' Party of Korea, if such property and interests in property are in the United States, come within the United States, or are or come within the possession or control of a United States person.

(d) APPLICATION TO SUBSIDIARIES AND AGENTS.—The designation of a person under subsection (a) or (b) and the blocking of property and interests in property under subsection (c) shall apply with respect to a person who is determined to be owned or controlled by, or to have acted or purported to have acted for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to this section.

(e) TRANSACTION LICENSING.—The President shall deny or revoke any license for any transaction that the President determines to lack sufficient financial controls to ensure that such transaction will not facilitate any activity described in subsection (a) or (b).

(f) PENALTIES.—The penalties provided for in subsections (b) and (c) of section 206 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) shall apply to any person who violates, attempts to violate, conspires to violate, or causes a violation of any prohibition of this section, or an order or regulation prescribed under this section, to the same extent that such penalties apply to a person that commits an unlawful act described in section 206(a) of such Act (50 U.S.C. 1705(a)).

SEC. 105. FORFEITURE OF PROPERTY.

(a) AMENDMENT TO PROPERTY SUBJECT TO FORFEITURE.—Section 981(a)(1) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(I) Any property, real or personal, that is involved in a violation or attempted violation, or which constitutes or is derived from proceeds traceable to a prohibition imposed pursuant to section 104(a) of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016.''.

(b) AMENDMENT TO DEFINITION OF CIVIL FORFEITURE STATUTE.—Section 983(i)(2)(D) of title 18, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(D) the Trading with the Enemy Act (50 U.S.C. 4301 et seq.), the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.), or the North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act of 2016; or''.

(c) AMENDMENT TO DEFINITION OF SPECIFIED UNLAWFUL ACTIVITY.—Section 1956(c)(7)(D) of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking ''or section 92 of'' and inserting ''section 92 of''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following: '', or section 104(a) of the North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act of 2016 (relating to prohibited activities with respect to North Korea);''.

TITLE II—SANCTIONS AGAINST NORTH KOREAN PROLIFERATION, HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES, AND ILLICIT ACTIVITIES

SEC. 201. DETERMINATIONS WITH RESPECT TO NORTH KOREA AS A JURISDICTION OF PRIMARY MONEY LAUNDERING CONCERN.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The Under Secretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence, who is responsible for safeguarding the financial system against illicit use, money laundering, terrorist financing, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and has repeatedly expressed concern about North Korea's misuse of the international financial system—

(A) in 2006—

(i) stated, ''Given [North Korea's] counterfeiting of U.S. currency, narcotics trafficking and use of accounts world-wide to conduct proliferation-related transactions, the line between illicit and licit North Korean money is nearly invisible.''; and

(ii) urged financial institutions worldwide to ''think carefully about the risks of doing any North Korea-related business'';

(B) in 2011, stated that North Korea—

(i) ''remains intent on engaging in proliferation, selling arms as well as bringing in material''; and

(ii) was ''aggressively pursuing the effort to establish front companies.''; and

(C) in 2013, stated—

(i) in reference to North Korea's distribution of high-quality counterfeit United States currency, that ''North Korea is continuing to try to pass a supernote into the international financial system''; and

(ii) the Department of the Treasury would soon introduce new currency with improved security features to protect against counterfeiting by the Government of North Korea.

(2) The Financial Action Task Force, an intergovernmental body whose purpose is to develop and promote national and international policies to combat money laundering and terrorist financing, has repeatedly—

(A) expressed concern at deficiencies in North Korea's regimes to combat money laundering and terrorist financing;

(B) urged North Korea to adopt a plan of action to address significant deficiencies in those regimes and the serious threat those deficiencies pose to the integrity of the international financial system;

(C) urged all jurisdictions to apply countermeasures to protect the international financial system from ongoing and substantial money laundering and terrorist financing risks emanating from North Korea;

(D) urged all jurisdictions to advise their financial institutions to give special attention to business relationships and transactions with North Korea, including North Korean companies and financial institutions; and

(E) called on all jurisdictions—

(i) to protect against correspondent relationships being used to bypass or evade countermeasures and risk mitigation practices; and

(ii) to take into account money laundering and terrorist financing risks when considering requests by North Korean financial institutions to open branches and subsidiaries in their respective jurisdictions.

(3) On March 7, 2013, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2094, which—

(A) welcomed the Financial Action Task Force's—

(i) recommendation on financial sanctions related to proliferation; and

(ii) guidance on the implementation of such sanctions;

(B) decided that United Nations member states should apply enhanced monitoring and other legal measures to prevent the provision of financial services or the transfer of property that

could contribute to activities prohibited by applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions; and

(C) called upon United Nations member states to prohibit North Korean financial institutions from establishing or maintaining correspondent relationships with financial institutions in their respective jurisdictions to prevent the provision of financial services if such member states have information that provides reasonable grounds to believe that such activities could contribute to—

(i) activities prohibited by an applicable United Nations Security Council resolution; or

(ii) the evasion of such prohibitions.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING THE DESIGNATION OF NORTH KOREA AS A JURISDICTION OF PRIMARY MONEY LAUNDERING CONCERN.—Congress—

(1) acknowledges the efforts of the United Nations Security Council to impose limitations on, and to require the enhanced monitoring of, transactions involving North Korean financial institutions that could contribute to sanctioned activities;

(2) urges the President, in the strongest terms—

(A) to immediately designate North Korea as a jurisdiction of primary money laundering concern; and

(B) to adopt stringent special measures to safeguard the financial system against the risks posed by North Korea's willful evasion of sanctions and its illicit activities; and

(3) urges the President to seek the prompt implementation by other countries of enhanced monitoring and due diligence to prevent North Korea's misuse of the international financial system, including by sharing information about activities, transactions, and property that could contribute to—

(A) activities sanctioned by applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions; or

(B) the evasion of such sanctions.

(c) DETERMINATIONS REGARDING NORTH KOREA.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State and the Attorney General, and in accordance with section 5318A of title 31, United States Code, shall determine whether reasonable grounds exist for concluding that North Korea is a jurisdiction of primary money laundering concern.

(2) ENHANCED DUE DILIGENCE AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—If the Secretary of the Treasury determines under paragraph (1) that reasonable grounds exist for concluding that North Korea is a jurisdiction of primary money laundering concern, the Secretary, in consultation with the Federal functional regulators (as defined in section 509 of the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (15 U.S.C. 6809)), shall impose 1 or more of the special measures described in section 5318A(b) of title 31, United States Code, with respect to the jurisdiction of North Korea.

(3) REPORT REQUIRED.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the Secretary of the Treasury makes a determination under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that contains the reasons for such determination.

(B) FORM.—The report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

SEC. 202. ENSURING THE CONSISTENT ENFORCEMENT OF UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS AND FINANCIAL RESTRICTIONS ON NORTH KOREA.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) All member states of the United Nations are obligated to implement and enforce applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions fully and promptly, including by blocking the property of, and ensuring that any property is prevented from being made available to, persons designated for the blocking of property by the Security Council under applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions.

(2) As of May 2015, 158 of the 193 member states of the United Nations had not submitted reports on measures taken to implement North Korea-specific United Nations Security Council resolutions 1718, 1874, and 2094.

(3) A recent report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO–15–485)—

(A) finds that officials of the United States and representatives of the United Nations Panel of Experts established pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1874 (2009), which monitors and facilitates implementation of United Nations sanctions on North Korea, ''agree that the lack of detailed reports from all member states is an impediment to the UN's effective implementation of its sanctions''; and

(B) notes that ''many member states lack the technical capacity to enforce sanctions and prepare reports'' on the implementation of United Nations sanctions on North Korea.

(4) All member states share a common interest in protecting the international financial system from the risks of money laundering and illicit transactions emanating from North Korea.

(5) The United States dollar and the euro are the world's principal reserve currencies, and the United States and the European Union are primarily responsible for the protection of the international financial system from the risks described in paragraph (4).

(6) The cooperation of the People's Republic of China, as North Korea's principal trading partner, is essential to—

(A) the enforcement of applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions; and

(B) the protection of the international financial system.

(7) The report of the Panel of Experts expressed concern about the ability of banks to detect and prevent illicit transfers involving North Korea if such banks are located in member states with less effective regulators or member states that are unable to afford effective compliance.

(8) North Korea has historically exploited inconsistencies between jurisdictions in the interpretation and enforcement of financial regulations and applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions to circumvent sanctions and launder the proceeds of illicit activities.

(9) Amroggang Development Bank, Bank of East Land, and Tanchon Commercial Bank have been designated by the Secretary of the Treasury, the United Nations Security Council, and the European Union as having materially contributed to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

(10) Korea Daesong Bank and Korea Kwangson Banking Corporation have been designated by the Secretary of the Treasury and the European Union as having materially contributed to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

(11) The Foreign Trade Bank of North Korea has been designated by the Secretary of the Treasury for facilitating transactions on behalf of persons linked to its proliferation network and for serving as ''a key financial node''.

(12) Daedong Credit Bank has been designated by the Secretary of the Treasury for activities prohibited by applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions, including the use of deceptive financial practices to facilitate transactions on behalf of persons linked to North Korea's proliferation network.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the President should intensify diplomatic efforts in appropriate international fora, such as the United Nations, and bilaterally, to develop and implement a coordinated, consistent, multilateral strategy for protecting the global financial system against risks emanating from North Korea, including—

(1) the cessation of any financial services the continuation of which is inconsistent with applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions;

(2) the cessation of any financial services to persons, including financial institutions, that present unacceptable risks of facilitating money laundering and illicit activity by the Government of North Korea;

(3) the blocking by all member states, in accordance with the legal process of the state in which the property is held, of any property required to be blocked under applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions;

(4) the blocking of any property derived from illicit activity, or from the misappropriation, theft, or embezzlement of public funds by, or for the benefit of, officials of the Government of North Korea;

(5) the blocking of any property involved in significant activities undermining cybersecurity by the Government of North Korea, directly or indirectly, against United States persons, or the theft of intellectual property by the Government of North Korea, directly or indirectly from United States persons; and

(6) the blocking of any property of persons directly or indirectly involved in censorship or human rights abuses by the Government of North Korea.

(c) STRATEGY TO IMPROVE INTERNATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF UNITED NATIONS NORTH KOREA-SPECIFIC SANCTIONS.—The President shall direct the Secretary of State, in coordination with other Federal departments and agencies, as appropriate, to develop a strategy to improve international implementation and enforcement of United Nations North Korea-specific sanctions. The strategy should include elements—

(1) to increase the number of countries submitting reports to the United Nations Panel of Experts established pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1874 (2009), including developing a list of targeted countries where effective implementation and enforcement of United Nations sanctions would reduce the threat from North Korea;

(2) to encourage member states of the United Nations to cooperate and share information with the panel in order to help facilitate investigations;

(3) to expand cooperation with the Panel of Experts;

(4) to provide technical assistance to member states to implement United Nations sanctions, including developing the capacity to enforce sanctions through improved export control regulations, border security, and customs systems;

(5) to harness existing United States Government initiatives and assistance programs, as appropriate, to improve sanctions implementation and enforcement; and

(6) to increase outreach to the people of North Korea, and to support the engagement of independent, non-governmental journalistic, humanitarian, and other institutions in North Korea.

(d) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that describes the actions undertaken to implement the strategy required by subsection (c).

SEC. 203. PROLIFERATION PREVENTION SANCTIONS.

(a) EXPORT OF CERTAIN GOODS OR TECHNOLOGY.—A validated license shall be required for the export to North Korea of any goods or technology otherwise covered under section 6(j) of the Export Administration Act of 1979 (50 U.S.C. 4605(j)). No defense exports may be approved for the Government of North Korea.

(b) TRANSACTIONS IN LETHAL MILITARY EQUIPMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall withhold assistance under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151 et seq.) to the government of any country that provides lethal military equipment to the Government of North Korea.

(2) APPLICABILITY.—The prohibition under paragraph (1) with respect to a government shall terminate on the date that is 1 year after the date on which the prohibition under paragraph (1) is applied to that government.

(c) WAIVER.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of State may waive the prohibitions under this section with respect to a country if the Secretary—

(1) determines that such waiver is in the national interest of the United States; and

(2) submits a written report to the appropriate congressional committees that describes—

(A) the steps that the relevant agencies are taking to curtail the trade described in subsection (b)(1); and

(B) why such waiver is in the national interest of the United States.

(d) EXCEPTION.—The prohibitions under this section shall not apply to the provision of assistance for human rights, democracy, rule of law, or emergency humanitarian purposes.

SEC. 204. PROCUREMENT SANCTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in this section, the head of an executive agency may not procure, or enter into any contract for the procurement of, any goods or services from any person designated under section 104(a).

(b) FEDERAL ACQUISITION REGULATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Federal Acquisition Regulation issued pursuant to section 1303(a)(1) of title 41, United States Code, shall be revised to require that each person that is a prospective contractor submit a certification that such person does not engage in any activity described in section 104(a).

(2) APPLICABILITY.—The revision required under paragraph (1) shall apply with respect to contracts for which solicitations are issued on or after the date that is 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) REMEDIES.—

(1) INCLUSION ON LIST.—The Administrator of General Services shall include, on the List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement and Nonprocurement Programs maintained by the Administrator under part 9 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation, each person that is debarred, suspended, or proposed for debarment or suspension by the head of an executive agency on the basis of a determination of a false certification under subsection (b).

(2) CONTRACT TERMINATION; SUSPENSION.—If the head of an executive agency determines that a person has submitted a false certification under subsection (b) after the date on which the Federal Acquisition Regulation is revised to implement the requirements of this section, the head of such executive agency shall—

(A) terminate any contract with such person; and

(B) debar or suspend such person from eligibility for Federal contracts for a period of not longer than 2 years.

(3) APPLICABLE PROCEDURES.—Any debarment or suspension under paragraph (2)(B) shall be subject to the procedures that apply to debarment and suspension under subpart 9.4 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation.

(d) CLARIFICATION REGARDING CERTAIN PRODUCTS.—The remedies specified in subsection (c) shall not apply with respect to the procurement of any eligible product (as defined in section 308(4) of the Trade Agreements Act of 1979 (19 U.S.C. 2518(4)) of any foreign country or instrumentality designated under section 301(b) of such Act (19 U.S.C. 2511(b)).

(e) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection may be construed to limit the use of other remedies available to the head of an executive agency or any other official of the Federal Government on the basis of a determination of a false certification under subsection (b).

(f) EXECUTIVE AGENCY DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''executive agency'' has the meaning given such term in section 133 of title 41, United States Code.

SEC. 205. ENHANCED INSPECTION AUTHORITIES.

(a) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that identifies foreign ports and airports at which inspections of ships, aircraft, and conveyances originating in North Korea, carrying North Korean property, or operated by the Government of North Korea are not sufficient to effectively prevent the facilitation of any of the activities described in section 104(a).

(b) ENHANCED CUSTOMS INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary of Homeland Security may require enhanced inspections of any goods entering the United States that have been transported through a port or airport identified by the President under subsection (a).

(c) SEIZURE AND FORFEITURE.—A vessel, aircraft, or conveyance used to facilitate any of the activities described in section 104(a) under the jurisdiction of the United States may be seized and forfeited under—

(1) chapter 46 of title 18, United States Code; or

(2) title V of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.).

SEC. 206. TRAVEL SANCTIONS.

The Secretary of State may deny a visa to, and the Secretary of Homeland Security may deny entry into the United States of, any alien who is—

(1) a designated person;

(2) a corporate officer of a designated person; or

(3) a principal shareholder with a controlling interest in a designated person.

SEC. 207. TRAVEL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UNITED STATES CITIZENS TO NORTH KOREA.

The Secretary of State shall expand the scope and frequency of issuance of travel warnings for all United States citizens to North Korea. The expanded travel warnings, which should be issued or updated not less frequently than every 90 days, should include—

(1) publicly released or credible open source information regarding the detention of United States citizens by North Korean authorities, including available information on circumstances of arrest and detention, duration, legal proceedings, and conditions under which a United States citizen has been, or continues to be, detained by North Korean authorities, including present-day cases and cases occurring during the 10-year period ending on the date of the enactment of this Act;

(2) publicly released or credible open source information on the past and present detention and abduction or alleged abduction of citizens of the United States, South Korea, or Japan by North Korean authorities;

(3) unclassified information about the nature of the North Korean regime, as described in congressionally mandated reports and annual reports issued by the Department of State and the United Nations, including information about North Korea's weapons of mass destruction programs, illicit activities, international sanctions violations, and human rights situation; and

(4) any other information that the Secretary deems useful to provide United States citizens with a comprehensive picture of the nature of the North Korean regime.

SEC. 208. EXEMPTIONS, WAIVERS, AND REMOVALS OF DESIGNATION.

(a) EXEMPTIONS.—The following activities shall be exempt from sanctions under sections 104, 206, 209, and 304:

(1) Activities subject to the reporting requirements under title V of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3091 et seq.), or to any authorized intelligence activities of the United States.

(2) Any transaction necessary to comply with United States obligations under the Agreement between the United Nations and the United States of America regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, signed at Lake Success June 26, 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947, or under the Convention on Consular Relations, done at Vienna April 24, 1963, and entered into force March 19, 1967, or under other international agreements.

(3) Any activities incidental to the POW/MIA accounting mission in North Korea, including activities by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency and other governmental or nongovernmental organizations tasked with identifying or recovering the remains of members of the United States Armed Forces in North Korea.

(b) HUMANITARIAN WAIVER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President may waive, for renewable periods of between 30 days and 1 year, the application of the sanctions authorized under section 104, 204, 205, 206, 209(b), or 304(b) if the President submits to the appropriate congressional committees a written determination that the waiver is necessary for humanitarian assistance or to carry out the humanitarian purposes set forth section 4 of the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7802).

(2) CONTENT OF WRITTEN DETERMINATION.—A written determination submitted under paragraph (1) with respect to a waiver shall include a description of all notification and accountability controls that have been employed in order to ensure that the activities covered by the waiver are humanitarian assistance or are carried out for the purposes set forth in section 4 of the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7802) and do not entail any activities in North Korea or dealings with the Government of North Korea not reasonably related to humanitarian assistance or such purposes.

(3) CLARIFICATION OF PERMITTED ACTIVITIES UNDER WAIVER.—An internationally recognized humanitarian organization shall not be subject to sanctions under section 104, 204, 205, 206, 209(b), or 304(b) for—

(A) engaging in a financial transaction relating to humanitarian assistance or for humanitarian purposes pursuant to a waiver issued under paragraph (1);

(B) transporting goods or services that are necessary to carry out operations relating to humanitarian assistance or humanitarian purposes pursuant to such a waiver; or

(C) having merely incidental contact, in the course of providing humanitarian assistance or aid for humanitarian purposes pursuant to such a waiver, with individuals who are under the control of a foreign person subject to sanctions under this Act.

(c) WAIVER.—The President may waive, on a case-by-case basis, for renewable periods of between 30 days and 1 year, the application of the sanctions authorized under section 104, 201(c)(2), 204, 205, 206, 209(b), or 304(b) if the President submits to the appropriate congressional committees a written determination that the waiver—

(1) is important to the national security interests of the United States; or

(2) will further the enforcement of this Act or is for an important law enforcement purpose.

(d) FINANCIAL SERVICES FOR HUMANITARIAN AND CONSULAR ACTIVITIES.—The President may promulgate such regulations, rules, and policies as may be necessary to facilitate the provision of financial services by a foreign financial institution that is not a North Korean financial institution in support of activities conducted pursuant to an exemption or waiver under this section.

SEC. 209. REPORT ON AND IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS TO ADDRESS PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR KNOWINGLY ENGAGING IN SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES UNDERMINING CYBERSECURITY.

(a) REPORT REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that describes significant activities undermining cybersecurity aimed against the United

States Government or any United States person and conducted by the Government of North Korea, or a person owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by the Government of North Korea or any person acting for or on behalf of that Government.

(2) INFORMATION.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) the identity and nationality of persons that have knowingly engaged in, directed, or provided material support to conduct significant activities undermining cybersecurity described in paragraph (1);

(B) a description of the conduct engaged in by each person identified;

(C) an assessment of the extent to which a foreign government has provided material support to the Government of North Korea or any person acting for or on behalf of that Government to conduct significant activities undermining cybersecurity; and

(D) a United States strategy to counter North Korea's efforts to conduct significant activities undermining cybersecurity against the United States, that includes efforts to engage foreign governments to halt the capability of the Government of North Korea and persons acting for or on behalf of that Government to conduct significant activities undermining cybersecurity.

(3) SUBMISSION AND FORM.—

(A) SUBMISSION.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter.

(B) FORM.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in an unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(b) DESIGNATION OF PERSONS.—The President shall designate under section 104(a) any person identified in the report required under subsection (a)(1) that knowingly engages in significant activities undermining cybersecurity through the use of computer networks or systems against foreign persons, governments, or other entities on behalf of the Government of North Korea.

SEC. 210. CODIFICATION OF SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO NORTH KOREAN ACTIVITIES UNDERMINING CYBERSECURITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—United States sanctions with respect to activities of the Government of North Korea, persons acting for or on behalf of that Government, or persons located in North Korea that undermine cybersecurity provided for in Executive Order 13687 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to imposing additional sanctions with respect to North Korea) or Executive Order 13694 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to blocking the property of certain persons engaging in significant malicious cyber-enabled activities), as such Executive Orders are in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, shall remain in effect until the date that is 30 days after the date on which the President submits to Congress a certification that the Government of North Korea, persons acting for or on behalf of that Government, and persons owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by that Government or persons acting for or on behalf of that Government, are no longer engaged in the illicit activities described in such Executive Orders, including actions in violation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1718 (2006), 1874 (2009), 2087 (2013), and 2094 (2013).

(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit the authority of the President pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).

SEC. 211. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON TRILATERAL COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES, SOUTH KOREA, AND JAPAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—It is the sense of Congress that the President—

(1) should seek to strengthen high-level trilateral mechanisms for discussion and coordination of policy toward North Korea between the Government of the United States, the Government of South Korea, and the Government of Japan;

(2) should ensure that the mechanisms specifically address North Korea's nuclear, ballistic, and conventional weapons programs, its human rights record, and cybersecurity threats posed by North Korea;

(3) should ensure that representatives of the United States, South Korea, and Japan meet on a regular basis and include representatives of the United States Department of State, the United States Department of Defense, the United States intelligence community, and representatives of counterpart agencies in South Korea and Japan; and

(4) should continue to brief the relevant congressional committees regularly on the status of such discussions.

(b) RELEVANT COMMITTEES.—The relevant committees referred to in subsection (a)(4) shall include—

(1) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Armed Services, and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Armed Services, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives.

TITLE III—PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

SEC. 301. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.

Section 104 of the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7814) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(d) INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY STUDY.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2015, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a classified report that sets forth a detailed plan for making unrestricted, unmonitored, and inexpensive electronic mass communications available to the people of North Korea.''.

SEC. 302. STRATEGY TO PROMOTE NORTH KOREAN HUMAN RIGHTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State, in coordination with other appropriate Federal departments and agencies, shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives a report that details a United States strategy to promote initiatives to enhance international awareness of and to address the human rights situation in North Korea.

(b) INFORMATION.—The report required under subsection (a) should include—

(1) a list of countries that forcibly repatriate refugees from North Korea; and

(2) a list of countries where North Korean laborers work, including countries the governments of which have formal arrangements with the Government of North Korea or any person acting for or on behalf of that Government to employ North Korean workers.

(c) STRATEGY.—The report required under subsection (a) should include—

(1) a plan to enhance bilateral and multilateral outreach, including sustained engagement with the governments of partners and allies with overseas posts to routinely demarche or brief those governments on North Korea human rights issues, including forced labor, trafficking, and repatriation of citizens of North Korea;

(2) public affairs and public diplomacy campaigns, including options to work with news organizations and media outlets to publish opinion pieces and secure public speaking opportunities for United States Government officials on issues related to the human rights situation in North Korea, including forced labor, trafficking, and repatriation of citizens of North Korea; and

(3) opportunities to coordinate and collaborate with appropriate nongovernmental organizations and private sector entities to raise awareness and provide assistance to North Korean defectors throughout the world.

SEC. 303. REPORT ON NORTH KOREAN PRISON CAMPS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that describes, with respect to each political prison camp in North Korea, to the extent information is available—

(1) the camp's estimated prisoner population;

(2) the camp's geographical coordinates;

(3) the reasons for the confinement of the prisoners;

(4) the camp's primary industries and products, and the end users of any goods produced in the camp;

(5) the individuals and agencies responsible for conditions in the camp;

(6) the conditions under which prisoners are confined, with respect to the adequacy of food, shelter, medical care, working conditions, and reports of ill-treatment of prisoners; and

(7) imagery, to include satellite imagery of the camp, in a format that, if published, would not compromise the sources and methods used by the United States intelligence community to capture geospatial imagery.

(b) FORM.—The report required under subsection (a) may be included in the first human rights report required to be submitted to Congress after the date of the enactment of this Act under sections 116(d) and 502B(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151n(d) and 2304(b)).

SEC. 304. REPORT ON AND IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO SERIOUS HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES OR CENSORSHIP IN NORTH KOREA.

(a) REPORT REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that—

(A) identifies each person the Secretary determines to be responsible for serious human rights abuses or censorship in North Korea and describes the conduct of that person; and

(B) describes serious human rights abuses or censorship undertaken by the Government of North Korea or any person acting for or on behalf of that Government in the most recent year ending before the submission of the report.

(2) CONSIDERATION.—In preparing the report required under paragraph (1), the Secretary of State shall—

(A) give due consideration to the findings of the United Nations Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in North Korea; and

(B) make specific findings with respect to the responsibility of Kim Jong Un, and of each individual who is a member of the National Defense Commission of North Korea or the Organization and Guidance Department of the Workers' Party of Korea, for serious human rights abuses and censorship.

(3) SUBMISSION AND FORM.—

(A) SUBMISSION.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter for a period not to exceed 3 years, and shall be included in each human rights report required under sections 116(d) and 502B(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151n(d) and 2304(b)).

(B) FORM.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(C) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The Secretary of State shall publish the unclassified part of the report required under paragraph (1) on the website of the Department of State.

(b) DESIGNATION OF PERSONS.—The President shall designate under section 104(a) any person listed in the report required under subsection (a)(1) that—

(1) knowingly engages in, is responsible for, or facilitates censorship by the Government of North Korea; or

(2) knowingly engages in, is responsible for, or facilitates serious human rights abuses by the Government of North Korea.

(c) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the President should—

(1) seek the prompt adoption by the United Nations Security Council of a resolution calling for the blocking of the assets of all persons responsible for severe human rights abuses or censorship in North Korea; and

(2) fully cooperate with the prosecution of any individual listed in the report required under subsection (a)(1) before any international tribunal that may be established to prosecute persons responsible for severe human rights abuses or censorship in North Korea.

TITLE IV—GENERAL AUTHORITIES

SEC. 401. SUSPENSION OF SANCTIONS AND OTHER MEASURES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Any sanction or other measure required under title I, II, or III (or any amendment made by such titles) may be suspended for up to 1 year upon certification by the President to the appropriate congressional committees that the Government of North Korea has made progress toward—

(1) verifiably ceasing its counterfeiting of United States currency, including the surrender or destruction of specialized materials and equipment used or particularly suitable for counterfeiting;

(2) taking steps toward financial transparency to comply with generally accepted protocols to cease and prevent the laundering of monetary instruments;

(3) taking steps toward verification of its compliance with applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions;

(4) taking steps toward accounting for and repatriating the citizens of other countries—

(A) abducted or unlawfully held captive by the Government of North Korea; or

(B) detained in violation of the Agreement Concerning a Military Armistice in Korea, signed at Panmunjom July 27, 1953 (commonly referred to as the ''Korean War Armistice Agreement'');

(5) accepting and beginning to abide by internationally recognized standards for the distribution and monitoring of humanitarian aid; and

(6) taking verified steps to improve living conditions in its political prison camps.

(b) RENEWAL OF SUSPENSION.—The suspension described in subsection (a) may be renewed for additional, consecutive 180-day periods after the President certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that the Government of North Korea has continued to comply with the conditions described in subsection (a) during the previous year.

SEC. 402. TERMINATION OF SANCTIONS AND OTHER MEASURES.

Any sanction or other measure required under title I, II, or III (or any amendment made by such titles) shall terminate on the date on which the President determines and certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that the Government of North Korea has—

(1) met the requirements set forth in section 401; and

(2) made significant progress toward—

(A) completely, verifiably, and irreversibly dismantling all of its nuclear, chemical, biological, and radiological weapons programs, including all programs for the development of systems designed in whole or in part for the delivery of such weapons;

(B) releasing all political prisoners, including the citizens of North Korea detained in North Korea's political prison camps;

(C) ceasing its censorship of peaceful political activity;

(D) establishing an open, transparent, and representative society; and

(E) fully accounting for and repatriating United States citizens (including deceased United States citizens)—

(i) abducted or unlawfully held captive by the Government of North Korea; or

(ii) detained in violation of the Agreement Concerning a Military Armistice in Korea, signed at Panmunjom July 27, 1953 (commonly referred to as the ''Korean War Armistice Agreement'').

SEC. 403. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated for each of fiscal years 2017 through 2021—

(1) $3,000,000 to carry out section 103 of the North Korea Human Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7813);

(2) $3,000,000 to carry out subsections (a), (b), and (c) of section 104 of that Act (22 U.S.C. 7814);

(3) $2,000,000 to carry out subsection (d) of such section 104, as add by section 301 of this Act; and

(4) $2,000,000 to carry out section 203 of the North Korea Human Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7833).

(b) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Amounts appropriated for each fiscal year pursuant to subsection (a) shall remain available until expended.

SEC. 404. RULEMAKING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The President is authorized to promulgate such rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act (which may include regulatory exceptions), including under section 205 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1704).

(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this Act, or in any amendment made by this Act, may be construed to limit the authority of the President to designate or sanction persons pursuant to an applicable Executive order or otherwise pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).

SEC. 405. AUTHORITY TO CONSOLIDATE REPORTS.

Any and all reports required to be submitted to appropriate congressional committees under this Act or any amendment made by this Act that are subject to a deadline for submission consisting of the same unit of time may be consolidated into a single report that is submitted to appropriate congressional committees pursuant to such deadline. The consolidated reports must contain all information required under this Act or any amendment made by this Act, in addition to all other elements mandated by previous law.

SEC. 406. EFFECTIVE DATE.

Except as otherwise provided in this Act, this Act and the amendments made by this Act shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be up to 7 hours of debate equally divided in the usual form.

The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I start by thanking the leader for bringing to the floor today the bipartisan North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act.

This legislation passed unanimously out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to address a critical national security issue—the nuclear and ballistic missile threat from North Korea.

We know all too well that the past two decades of North Korean policy, including both Republican and Democratic administrations, have been an abject failure. While there is no silver bullet solution, it is clear that Congress must play a proactive role in providing a more robust policy tool to the executive branch to confront this threat.

There has been a lot of attention on North Korea in the weeks following North Korea's fourth nuclear test, but Senators CORY GARDNER and BOB MENENDEZ demonstrated leadership on North Korea long before recent events, and I thank them personally—Senator GARDNER chairing the subcommittee that looks after policy relative to North Korea and Senator MENENDEZ coming together with a robust piece of legislation. I thank Senator GARDNER for his leadership. He is new to the committee but certainly not new to addressing problems our Nation faces, and I thank him for that. I thank them for their efforts over many months to focus attention on the threat posed by North Korea and to work with Senator CARDIN and myself to develop a bipartisan Senate bill.

I want to single out Senator CARDIN and his staff for the collaborative and constructive manner in which they worked with my team on this important bipartisan piece of legislation. Senators SHAHEEN and MARKEY also made important contributions as well.

Senator CARDIN just arrived late, but I want the Senator to know I was just boasting about his tremendous efforts. If he would please know that has occurred.

This was truly an all-hands-on-deck bipartisan committee effort to ensure a piece of legislation that the Senate, the Congress, and the country can be proud of.

Over the past decade, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has convened every couple of years at the full committee level to assess the state of U.S. policy toward North Korea. There has been surprisingly little variation in their overall descriptions of the danger and recommended policy prescriptions. Former U.S. officials have all characterized North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile activities as posing serious and unacceptable risk to U.S. national interests. These same officials also all stressed the importance of standing with our close regional allies, South Korea and Japan, in the face of destabilizing North Korean provocations. In addition, they all cited the necessity of cooperating with the international community to deter further North Korean provocations and prevent the spread of sensitive technologies to and from North Korea. They all noted the importance of enforcing U.N. Security Council sanctions on North Korea, specifically the need for China to exercise greater influence over Pyongyang.

Let me say this. I am personally very disappointed at the way the U.N. Security Council is functioning—whether it is Iran, where we had two ballistic missile tests and yet nothing has been done at the U.N. Security Council level. Most recently, China sent a delegation to meet with North Korea right before this last test in order to try to influence them, and the country of China was embarrassed by the fact that

North Korea went ahead with this ballistic test. Yet, in spite of that embarrassment, in spite of the fact it is their neighbor on their border that is conducting these provocations, they still have not agreed to U.N. Security Council resolutions to put into place sanctions against North Korea. That is very disappointing.

In the recent years, U.S. officials have spoken increasingly of the deplorable human rights situation in North Korea, including highlighting North Korea's notorious prison camps. Of course, there have been some differences in approaches toward North Korea over the years, particularly with respect to the tactics of engaging North Korea and the appropriate balance of carrots and sticks. Yet it is apparent that the past several decades of U.S. policy are not working. North Korea continues to advance their nuclear and ballistic missile capabilities unchecked. They have orchestrated malicious cyber attacks that threaten our allies as well as our own national security. Meanwhile, the North Korean people remain impoverished and subject to brutal treatment at the hands of the Kim regime.

I appreciate the complexity of risks posed by North Korea and our limited options. However, there is certainly more we can and should be doing in addressing this issue. Our bill sets precedent and puts in place strong mandatory sanctions and establishes for the first time a statutory framework for sanctions in response to North Korean cyber threats. The President will be required to investigate a wide range of sanctionable conduct, including proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, arms-related materials, luxury goods which affect the elite in that country, human rights abuses, activities undermining cyber security, and provision of industrial inputs such as precious metals or coal for use in a tailored set of activities, including WMD, proliferation activities, and prison and labor camps. Penalties include the seizure of assets, visa bans, and denial of government contracts.

I am also pleased this bill goes beyond just these sanctions—which, by the way, are very strong—and I want to underline the word ''mandatory.'' It establishes a more robust policy framework, including tools to improve enforcement, and shines a brighter spotlight on North Korea's abhorrent human rights record, such as their forced labor practices. The bill requires a strategy to promote improved implementation and enforcement of multilateral sanctions, a strategy to combat North Korean cyber activities, and a strategy to promote and encourage international engagement on North Korean human rights issues. There are reporting requirements related to these strategies as well as a report on political prison camps and a feasibility study on providing communications equipment to the people of North Korea.

After the careful work over many months by a bipartisan coalition in Congress, we have a piece of legislation that I believe will begin to allow our country, working with our allies, to begin seizing the initiative in constraining North Korea's ability to threaten its neighbors and the world with nuclear weapons while also continuing to focus world attention on the plight of the North Korean people.

I look forward to hearing the perspectives of my colleagues on the significance of this legislation that I expect will receive wide bipartisan support and eventually become law.

Mr. President, I yield the floor to my distinguished friend and the ranking member, Senator CARDIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, let me first start by thanking Chairman CORKER.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee has a proud tradition of working on national security and foreign policy issues in the best interest of our country and putting partisan differences aside so we can speak with a strong voice. Chairman CORKER has carried out that tradition and has elevated it to a level that I think has been not only in the best interest of the Senate but the best interests of our country. That is particularly true in the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016. So I thank him for the manner in which he brought different views together. We all had the same objectives, but as the Presiding Officer knows, when dealing with 100 Members of the Senate and the 19 Members of our committee, we each have different views, and to try to harmonize that so we can get legislation done in a timely way takes a great deal of talent and patience. Senator CORKER has both talent and patience, and I thank him very much for the way he led our committee to bring a bill to the floor of the Senate that I think will get overwhelming support, will become law, and will advance U.S. national security interests.

I have my two chairmen here. Senator GARDNER is the chairman of the East Asia and Pacific Subcommittee in the Foreign Relations Committee. He understood the importance of North Korea, its nuclear weapon program, its weaponization program, and the impact it has globally. That is for sure, but East Asia is a particular concern, and Senator GARDNER understood that, working with our allies in East Asia to develop the right U.S. leadership so we will have an international coalition isolating North Korea because of its conduct. So I thank Senator GARDNER for introducing the original bill in the Senate and working with Senator MENENDEZ particularly—who introduced it on our side—to bring together legislation that is a proper role for Congress.

I want to underscore that. This legislation represents what Congress needs to do. We are the policymakers of America. We pass the laws. Then the executive branch, which is critically important to foreign policy—don't get me wrong—but we enable the tools to be able to carry out this foreign policy. What this legislation shows is Congress speaks with a very clear voice, that we will not tolerate North Korea's proliferation of weaponry, its intimidation of its neighbors, its human rights violations, and that we will use the strongest possible measures to ensure that we contain that type of nefarious conduct.

Quite frankly, the legislation we have before us is similar to the approach we took with Iran and the congressionally mandated sanctions we had on Iran that made it clear we were going to isolate Iran until they changed course on their nuclear weapons program. What this legislation does is take the product that came over from the House of Representatives—it was a good bill that came over from the House of Representatives, but we strengthened it. We made it more effective through the input of the members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. So it is a strong message—unified, bipartisan, working with the administration to produce a strong policy.

North Korea's foreign policy challenges are known by all. It has been known by every American President since the start of the Korean war. They have tested four nuclear weapons and they tested a long-range ballistic missile in defiance of numerous international obligations.

U.S. leadership is absolutely critical in standing up to North Korea's activities. We must isolate North Korea to prevent it from getting international help to further its illegal weapons program. That is the basic point of sanctions. We want to prevent commercial interests anywhere in the world from trying to help North Korea get the type of weapons, equipment, and resources it needs in order to further its illegal weapon program. The United States must lead in effective diplomacy to provide incentives and disincentives toward North Korea's conduct. We need to form strong alliances and partnerships in the region. We have to work in close coordination with our allies, and quite frankly our goal is a peaceful and reunified peninsula. We think that is in the best interest of all the Korean people.

Over the last two decades, the North Korean regime has moved steadily forward in their nuclear weapons development program and in the production of nuclear material. They have continued to develop this ballistic missile program, they possess hundreds of short- and medium-range missiles, and they are seeking ICBM capabilities. They have active uranium and plutonium programs that pose a proliferation threat. They have tried in the past to help Syria build a nuclear reactor and have been a source of nuclear material

missile technology to rogue states, including terrorists. It is not just about one country-state. It is about what they are doing in helping other countries that support terrorism and terrorist groups itself. It is critically important we act.

North Korea represents a grave and growing threat to the United States, the region, and the international community. To respond to North Korea's continued belligerence, the legislation we have before us includes mandatory sanctions—and the chairman mentioned that these are mandatory sanctions—directed against specific entities that violate U.S. law and United Nations Security Council resolutions, including proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, arms-related materials, human rights violations—and we will get to that because it is an important part of this legislation—and activities that undermine cyber security.

Our legislation targets for investigation those who support these activities by providing the regime with industrial inputs, such as coal that provides economic support for North Korea's illicit activities or luxury goods that allow the regime to continue to exercise its control.

We are going after the source of their financing of their illegal weapons program. It is not always the direct equipment that goes into building the weapons; in many cases, it is the mineral wealth of the country that they are using in order to finance that. This legislation targets those sectors. The President is mandated to sanction any person who has contributed to or engaged in or helped to facilitate these actions.

Even isolated regimes like North Korea are nonetheless tied to the global financial order in ways that provide the international community with leverage to seek changes in North Korea's behavior.

This legislation also codifies existing cyber security sanctions in response to North Korea's increasing capability and provocations in the cyber domain, including the attack on Sony. This is an important step in building and enforcing international norms when it comes to cyber space. One of the areas that we have strengthened in the House bill is to make it clear that our concerns about North Korea go well beyond their nuclear weapons tests but also to their cyber attack activities.

The vast majority of North Koreans endure systematic violations of their most basic human rights. Chairman CORKER talked about this. Many of these violations constitute crimes against humanity. It is a fact that is well-documented by the United Nations Commission of Inquiry. Widespread malnutrition, torture, and fear have made North Korea one of the most egregious human rights violators, unparalleled in the contemporary world. They are the worst.

These crimes by the North Korean regime should shock the conscience of humanity. Building on the important work of the U.N. Commission of Inquiry, the United Nations Human Rights Commission and General Assembly adopted by overwhelming margins resolutions calling for accountability for North Korea's human rights abuses. Just last year, the United Nations Security Council took up the DPRK's grave human rights injustices on their standing agenda for the very first time. These multilateral resolutions need to be backed up by appropriate action, and that is exactly what we are doing.

It is well past time to hold North Korea responsible for its human rights violations, and this legislation does just that. In response, this legislation imposes sanctions not just for North Korea's nuclear programs and continued provocative behavior but for the severe human rights abuses committed in North Korea as well. This is new and necessary policy ground for the United States with regard to North Korea.

Although tough sanctions have worked on North Korea when applied in the past—and I think it is important to point out that sanctions do work. In 2005 the United States designated Banco Delta Asia, BDA, as a money laundering concern for facilitating North Korean illicit activities and banned all U.S. financial institutions from dealing with that bank. It worked. It had a major impact on North Korea. The problem is, that was 2005 and we let up. We didn't keep the pressure on. This legislation will correct that oversight and remedy the reasons why these sanctions are not effective today.

This legislation acknowledges that sanctions and diplomacy are the most effective way when integrated into a comprehensive strategy that engages all of our instruments of national policy. The North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 includes instruments to improve the enforcement of multilateral sanctions, an overall strategy to combat North Korea's cyber activities, and other efforts to address human rights abuses. The legislation also protects important humanitarian assistance programs.

This is another point I want to underscore: We have no problem with the people of North Korea. It is the government. It is the government that is not only threatening its neighbors, it has damaged, threatened, and killed its own people. This legislation makes it clear that we will continue to try to get humanitarian assistance to the people of North Korea.

Finally, effectively enforcing sanctions against North Korea is not something the United States can do alone. It requires our allies, our partners, and the rest of the international community to join us in this effort. This legislation seeks to create the policy environment that makes such a multilateral effort at the United Nations Security Council possible.

The onus is now on China. Chairman CORKER is actually right in what he said. China is as much a threat as any country in the world as a result of North Korea's activities. China can make a huge difference in isolating North Korea and changing their behavior to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula. That is their objective. China has told us that. They need to take action. They shouldn't be blocking U.N. Security Council action. They should not only be supporting that, they should be using their influence over North Korea to bring about a change of behavior of North Korea as it relates to proliferation of weapons. So it is on China.

The United States will do what it must do to safeguard our interests and that of our allies. And that, we will do. But we hope China, which claims to share our same goals on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, will agree on the meaningful steps necessary so that we can achieve that goal.

Let me be clear. The United States and Republic of Korea alliance remains as firm and resilient as ever and stands ready to support the Korean people against any and all provocations by North Korea. Just this weekend, the alliance made a decision to begin formal consultations regarding improvements to the THAAD missile defense system operated by U.S. Forces Korea. I support this decision, as it is both an important element of our extended deterrence architecture and it sends the right signal of U.S. resolve to protect our allies and partners in the region. We will look for new defense systems to help the Republic of Korea and our friends in the Korean Peninsula.

I also wish to commend President Park for her leadership in responding to this growing threat. She has demonstrated the necessary political will to strengthen cooperation and consultations within the alliance and with partners in the region to forge a united and strong international response to North Korea's reckless behavior.

We must also continue to look for opportunities to enhance trilateral cooperation between the United States, Japan, and South Korea. Japan and South Korea are our most important allies in the region, and as we approach North Korea, to be most effective, we need to act together.

Strong, clear-eyed, forward-looking leadership will be necessary if we hope to pursue eventual denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula. It calls for close coordination with our regional allies, South Korea and Japan, particularly in the areas of missile defense and information sharing. And it calls for U.S. leadership to strengthen the existing counterproliferation regime, to ensure that North Korea's most dangerous weapons are contained as we work toward their elimination. This legislation does that. It strengthens U.S. policy and allows us to ensure that North Korea will pay a price for its continued nuclear ambitions, while providing the administration with the toolkit it needs to develop and implement a more

effective approach to North Korea. I urge all my colleagues to join us in supporting this very important legislation.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I want to add to the comments made by Chairman CORKER, my colleague from Tennessee and chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, as well as Senator CARDIN, my colleague on the Subcommittee on East Asia, about the work we have done over the past year to put this before the Senate today.

One of the first meetings we held in the office of Chairman CORKER was to speak with my colleagues on the concern we shared about North Korea, the concern that while we have rightfully focused on the Middle East and the conflicts that have arisen in Syria and in various places around the country, at the same time we cannot take our eyes off of North Korea.

Of course, Senator CARDIN from Maryland and I have worked together on a variety of committee hearings. The first series of committee hearings we held on the East Asia Subcommittee were to address cyber security issues, the cyber attacks from North Korea, and the situation in regard to security on the North Korean Peninsula. I think the work we have laid out over the past year is setting ground for this strong sanctions bill today.

I rise to speak in support of H.R. 757, the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act, as amended by the unanimous amendment that came out of the Foreign Relations Committee on January 28. This legislation is a momentous achievement, and I thank the members of the committee and particularly Senator MENENDEZ for working closely with me as we came together with a strong bipartisan solution to what is the problem with North Korea. I also thank House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman ED ROYCE, the sponsor of the underlying House legislation, for his years of tireless work and dedication on this issue. Having served with Chairman ROYCE in the House for a number of years, I know his passion and his dedication and his commitment to bringing peace to the peninsula.

This legislation comes at a critical time. Those of you who had a chance to see the news this morning woke up to a story in Reuters where yet another top military official in the Kim Jong Un regime was assassinated by Kim Jong Un, following a long list of others in his administration who have been killed, assassinated, tortured, including his own uncle, including those who have been killed by anti-aircraft guns.

North Korea poses a serious and growing threat to its neighbors, our allies, South Korea, Japan, and others. It poses a threat to our homeland, the United States, and to global security. While the threat is growing daily, our policies are failing to deter the forgotten maniac in Pyongyang, Kim Jong Un.

This past weekend, on February 7, North Korea conducted a satellite launch, which is essentially a test of an intercontinental ballistic missile that would be capable of reaching the U.S. mainland. Last month, on January 6, North Korea conducted its fourth nuclear test, which is the third such test during the Obama administration. Moreover, North Korea has claimed that this test was a test of a thermonuclear device, also known as a hydrogen bomb—a vastly more powerful weapon than the atomic devices the regime has tested in the past. Regardless of whether the claim that it was a hydrogen bomb is true, this test represents a significant advancement in North Korea's nuclear weapons capability.

North Korea has violated a series of United Nations Security Council resolutions, including Resolutions 1718, 1874, 2087, and 2094—all while the regime's stockpile of nuclear weapons continues to grow exponentially. Most recently, nuclear experts have reported that North Korea may currently have as many as 20 nuclear warheads, with potential for over 100 in the next few years.

Yesterday James Clapper, the Director of National Intelligence, testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee that North Korea has restarted its plutonium reactor at Yongbyon and ''could begin to recover plutonium from the reactor's spent fuel within a matter of weeks to months.'' The regime's ballistic missile capabilities are rapidly advancing. DNI Clapper stated that ''North Korea has also expanded the size and sophistication of its ballistic missiles forces—from close-range ballistic missiles to intercontinental ballistic missiles [ICBMs]—and continues to conduct missile test launches. . . . Pyongyang is also committed to developing a long-range, nuclear-armed missile that is capable of posing a direct threat to the United States.''

ADM Bill Gortney, the head of U.S. Northern Command, NORTHCOM, which is based in my home State of Colorado, at Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado Springs, has publicly stated that North Korea may have already developed the ability to miniaturize a nuclear warhead, mount it on their own intercontinental ballistic missile—something called the KN–08—and ''shoot it at the homeland.'' Those are not the words of a committee chairman or the words of a subcommittee chairman; those are the words of our commander of NORTHCOM, who believes that they may have developed the ability to shoot it at the homeland.

North Korea has demonstrated time and time again that it is an aggressive, ruthless regime that is not afraid to kill innocent people. On March 26, 2010, North Korean missiles sank a South Korean ship, killing 46 of her own crew, and several months later, North Korea shelled a South Korean island, killing 4 more South Korean citizens.

Pyongyang is also quickly developing its cyber capabilities as another dangerous tool of intimidation, as demonstrated by the attack on the South Korean financial institutions and communication systems in March of 2013 or the Sony Pictures hack attack in November of 2014.

According to a November 2015 report by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, ''North Korea is emerging as a significant actor in cyberspace with both its military and clandestine organizations gaining the capability to conduct cyber operations.''

According to the Heritage Foundation:

> Contrary to perceptions of North Korea as a technically backward nation, the regime has a very robust and active cyber warfare capability. The Reconnaissance General Bureau, North Korea's intelligence agency, oversees 3,000 ''cyber-warriors'' dedicated to attacking Pyongyang's enemies. A South Korean cyber expert assessed that North Korea's electronic warfare capabilities were surpassed only by the United States and Russia.

We should also never forget that this regime remains one of the world's foremost abusers of human rights. The North Korean regime maintains a vast network of political prison camps where as many as 200,000 men, women, and children are confined to atrocious living conditions and are tortured, maimed, and killed.

On February 7, 2014, the United Nations Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights released a groundbreaking report detailing North Korea's horrendous record on human rights. The Commission found that North Korea's constituted a crime against humanity.

What then has been this administration's policy to counter the North Korean threat? Our policy is something called ''strategic patience,'' which started in 2009 under then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. The main idea behind strategic patience, it seems, is to patiently wait until Kim Jong Un peacefully surrenders.

The latest developments show that we are reaping the rewards of this ill-conceived policy, and it can no longer be allowed to remain in effect. The simple fact is that strategic patience has been a strategic failure. All that our so-called ''patience'' has done is to allow the North Korean regime to continue to test nuclear weapons, to expand its testing of intercontinental ballistic missiles, to grow its military power, and to develop cyber warfare technologies while systematically continuing to torture its own people. We have neither militarily deterred this regime nor effectively used our punitive tools.

Our sanctions policy toward North Korea has been weak. This was noted in that same CSIS report:

> The sanctions against North Korea pale in comparison to the level of sanctioning

against Iran. . . . The number of individuals and entities sanctioned by the U.S. and UN are 843 (U.S.) and 121 (UN) for Iran, but only 100 (U.S.) and 31 (UN) for North Korea.

When we do impose sanctions against North Korea, they are often repetitive or ineffectual. Again, I quote from the Heritage Foundation report:

In response to the North Korean cyberattack on Sony, President Barack Obama issued Executive Order 13687, which, though expansive in legal breadth, was only weakly implemented. The Administration targeted 13 North Korean entities, three organizations already on the U.S. sanctions list, and 10 individuals not involved in cyber warfare.

That was our response to North Korea. To date, we have not imposed specific human rights sanctions on a single North Korean individual. There are 200,000 men, women, and children in political gulags in North Korea, and the United States has not imposed a specific human rights sanction on a single North Korean leader. It is a disgrace given the gravity of the abuses that have been perpetrated by this regime.

These policy failures are why a year ago I began working on the legislation that is before us today that would reverse course and apply the pressure necessary to stop the forgotten maniac in Pyongyang.

Last August, I had an opportunity to visit South Korea and meet with South Korean President Park. We talked about the situation on the peninsula, and we agreed that the status quo with North Korea is no longer sustainable. To witness the proximity of the threat for our South Korean allies, I visited the demilitarized zone, or the DMZ. Only days after I departed, North Korea fired artillery across the border, further illustrating the danger that South Koreans live under each and every day and the danger of armed escalation of this conflict.

I also traveled to China and met with Foreign Minister Wang as well as high-ranking officials of the People's Liberation Army to discuss North Korea. From my conversations, however, it became evident that although they are growing exasperated with the North Korean regime, Beijing has done little with the intention of undertaking meaningful action to stop Kim Jong Un.

Last October, I introduced S. 2144, the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act. I thank 17 of my colleagues in this Senate for cosponsoring this legislation. The substitute before us today represents a slightly modified version of S. 2144. In particular, this legislation mandates and not simply authorizes that the President impose sanctions against persons who materially contribute to North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile development and who import luxury goods into North Korea; mandatory sanctions against perpetrators who enable its censorship and human rights abuses, who engage in money laundering and manufacture of counterfeit goods and narcotics trafficking, who engage in activities undermining cyber security or have sold, supplied or transferred to or from North Korea precious metals or raw metals, including aluminum, steel, and coal for the benefit of North Korea's regime and its illicit activities.

These sanctions are tough, and we know that a significant portion of the foreign currency that North Korea receives is for trade in its precious metals, raw materials, aluminum, steel, and coal. We know that about 90 percent of North Korea's economy is through its relationship with China.

Senator CARDIN previously mentioned that nobody faces a greater threat than South Korea's neighbors Japan and China, which border a regime that is killing its own people and testing ballistic missiles in violation of China's determinations, the United States' determinations, and certainly the United Nations determinations.

I will note that the mandatory sanctions on North Korea's cyber activities and the mandatory sanctions on the minerals are unique to the Senate legislation. This bill also codifies the Executive orders that the President issued last year, 13687 and 13694, regarding cyber security as they applied to North Korea, which were enacted last year in the wake of the Sony Pictures hack and other cyber incidents. That is also a unique feature of the Senate bill.

Lastly, if enacted and signed into law, the mandatory sanctions on cyber violators will break new ground for Congress. It is something that we can take as a model and apply to other nations that perpetrate against the United States. We need to look for every way to deprive Pyongyang of income to build it weapons programs, strengthen its cyber capabilities, and abuse its own people.

We have to send a strong message to China, North Korea's diplomatic protector and largest trading partner, that the United States will use every economic tool at its disposal to stop Pyongyang.

Finally, I would like to quote the Washington Post editorial board from this past Monday, February 8:

President Obama's policy since 2009, ''strategic patience,'' has failed. The policy has mostly consisted of ignoring North Korea while mildly cajoling China to pressure the regime.

The editorial concludes:

Both China and North Korea must see that they will pay a mounting price for what, to the United States, should be Mr. Kim's intolerable steps toward a nuclear arsenal. ''Strategic patience'' is no longer a viable option.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Washington Post editorial be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Washington Post, Feb. 8, 2016]

NORTH KOREA'S ROCKET LAUNCH SHOWS THAT MR. OBAMA'S 'STRATEGIC PATIENCE' HAS FAILED

(By Editorial Board)

Assessing the behavior of North Korean ruler Kim Jong Un is necessarily a matter of guesswork In light of North Korea's launch Sunday of another long-range rocket, however, our favorite theory is a simple one: Mr. Kim is responding rationally, even shrewdly, to the outside world. The 30-something dictator no doubt noticed that after the regime's latest nuclear test, on Jan. 6, there was no response other than rhetoric from the U.N. Security Council, China and the United States. Moreover, he surely observed that his provocation served to widen a rift between Washington and Beijing over how to handle him. So why not double down?

The three-stage rocket launched Sunday, which supposedly put a satellite into Earth's orbit, could also serve as an intercontinental missile. If North Korea has succeeded, as it claims it has, in miniaturizing a nuclear warhead, Mr. Kim could target Hawaii and Alaska, or perhaps even the western U.S. mainland. The threat is not imminent—and yet it is likely to become so if the United States does not devise a more effective strategy for containing and deterring the Kim regime.

President Obama's policy since 2009, ''strategic patience,'' has failed. The policy has mostly consisted of ignoring North Korea while mildly cajoling China to pressure the regime. As the supplier of most of the isolated country's energy and food, Beijing has enormous leverage. But Chinese President Xi Jinping appears even more committed than his predecessors to the doctrine that it is preferable to tolerate the Kim regime—and its nuclear proliferation—than do anything that might destabilize it.

Since the nuclear test, China has been saying that it will support another U.N. resolution on North Korea, but it is balking at significant new sanctions. Instead it calls for ''dialogue,'' by which it means negotiations between North Korea and the United States. This sounds reasonable; the problem is that talks on curbing North Korea's nuclear program and missiles have failed repeatedly, and Mr. Kim is now insisting that the regime be accepted as a nuclear power.

What is needed is a return to the only nonmilitary strategy that brought results: sanctions that strike at the regime's inner circle. Mr. Kim and his cronies are still managing to import luxury goods from China, in spite of a U.N. ban; they still use Chinese banks to do business with the rest of the world. Those links could be curtailed if China, like Iran before it, were designated as a money launderer and U.S. sanctions were slapped on Chinese banks and other businesses that supply weapons and luxury goods.

Pending U.S. sanctions legislation, already passed by the House and scheduled for a Senate floor vote this week, would mandate these steps, while providing the administration with some flexibility. It should pass, and Mr. Obama should sign it. The administration and South Korea have taken one positive step, by announcing formal consultations on deploying an advanced missile defense system in South Korea as quickly as possible. That sensible step had been on hold because of China's objections.

Both China and North Korea must see that they will pay a mounting price for what, to the United States, should be Mr. Kim's intolerable steps toward a nuclear arsenal. ''Strategic patience'' is no longer a viable option.

Mr. GARDNER. This legislation begins the process of reversing course

from these failed policies toward building the strong policies that we need to stop the forgotten maniac.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill—this amendment—which passed with unanimous support out of the Foreign Relations Committee. We can make a difference today. We can strengthen our partnership among South Korea, Japan, and the United States. We can stop the torture of the people of North Korea, and we can lift the threat of a nuclearized North Korea, which threatens to harm not just its neighbors or our allies but the people of this country, our homeland.

I thank the Presiding Officer and yield the floor.

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

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I know we have a number of speakers who are interested in this legislation. I think they will be coming to the floor between now and vote time. I ask that the other Members who wish to speak on this legislation come to the floor so we can fill in the gaps.

Again, I thank Senator GARDNER and Senator MENENDEZ for their efforts on the front end of this legislation. I think this is a meaningful piece of legislation. I was with the Presiding Officer yesterday during a lunch meeting, and I think he is OK with my sharing the fact that the Senate is playing a role in really projecting our strength. We continue to do so both through the Armed Services Committee that he serves on and also through the Foreign Relations Committee. I think this is a very strong piece of legislation.

A lot of times it is difficult for us to make a difference. Let's face it. The Commander in Chief has such powers and such staff at their disposal. However this is one of those pieces of legislation where I am certain we are going to make a difference.

Will it end North Korea's activities? It will take collective efforts to make that happen, but I think this begins the process of moving that along.

I have to say that I am so disappointed in the way the U.N. Security Council is behaving. Again, I don't want to rehash old discussions, but I know when we looked at the snapback provisions that were a part of the Iran nuclear agreement—when you are dealing with partners like China, which wants to buy oil from Iran, and Russia, which wants to sell them arms, I hate to say it, but our European friends are just dying to do business in the different ways that they are—mean nothing. They mean nothing.

It is the fact that Iran had two ballistic tests that have taken place, violating U.N. Security Council resolutions, and nothing has happened because Russia and China have blocked those. In many ways that means that for us to continue the project to cause change to occur, this body itself has to be even more proactive.

Senator GARDNER has visited the DMZ, just as I have, and has seen the 28,500 troops that we have there. I know Senator SULLIVAN has done the same thing. We understand the constant danger that South Korea and Japan face, as well as others. North Korea is right on the border of China, and China is the entity that can make the biggest difference. Yet China—again, after being embarrassed when North Korea paid no attention whatsoever to their reach-out when they tried to keep this last test, in particular, from occurring—was unwilling to listen.

So when we have ''partners'' on the U.N. Security Council unwilling to take steps, it means even more so that this body, of probably the greatest Nation on Earth, has to be proactive.

I commend the Senator from Colorado. I commend the Members of this body who I think are certainly interested and will pass this piece of legislation overwhelmingly.

Again, I thank Senator MCCONNELL and Senator REID for allowing this legislation to come up in this manner. I too thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGLE. They have worked well together to cause us to project strength in this regard. They sent the base bill over, and it is a very good bill and a strong piece of legislation that the Senate, by passage later today, will strengthen.

This is a collaborative effort. I hate to even use words like that, but it is a collaborative effort by two bodies of Congress and two committees. Ultimately, at the end of the day, I think the two bodies will fully pass this legislation and it will become law. This is going to begin to make a difference in the way North Korea is behaving.

What is happening there is important. It is one of the greatest humanitarian crises, and this bill also addresses that.

I thank Senator GARDNER for his comments on the floor. More importantly, I thank him for his efforts in helping to bring this piece of legislation to the floor and for his leadership in the committee in helping to design this bill.

I look forward to our having a successful day in the Senate.

Mr. GARDNER. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. CORKER. Yes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. GARDNER. The Senator from Tennessee talked about his disappointment with the United Nations. I want to go back over some of the points we talked about earlier today.

Senator CARDIN, our colleague from Maryland, mentioned the fact that the United States has very similar approaches to our sanctions that brought Iran to the negotiation table in the first place—sanctions that we levied against Iran brought them to the negotiating table—and the fact that the United States has levied almost eight times more sanctions against Iran than we have a regime that does possess a nuclear weapon.

I think we have more work to do in the United States. This bill is a great step, but also the United Nations—and your expression of disappointment with the United Nations is well stated.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I think it is good that the Senator from Colorado brings up the fact that when we began putting these sanctions in place, there was a lot of push back because, in essence, for these things to work properly or make the biggest difference in outcomes, we need to have an international effort that takes place. When we began the Iran sanctions process, it was unilateral. And while we stressed on the front end—I know we passed an amendment in the Banking Committee where that one originated—to really put in place efforts to make it multilateral, over time it did and, because of that, the world community obviously is joining us, so we were able to force a behavior change.

I would have liked to have had a better outcome when they got to the table, and I think most people in this body would have. But this bill, I would point out, does seek and does push the administration not only to implement these by mandatory statements, but it also, again, encourages them to work with others.

I had those same conversations in China that the Senator from Colorado had years ago. The Chinese, with such emphasis on stability—and I understand it is right on their border which, to me, should make these provocations even more infuriating and more important, relative to the security of their own country. But it just seems that they, too, have exercised the patience the Senator spoke about earlier that our country has exercised.

I really do believe that passage of this bill today, and an ultimate signature by the President, has the potential to unleash the same chain of events that occurred relative to Iran, hopefully with a better outcome.

Again, I thank the Senator for his efforts.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that any time spent in a quorum call before the vote in relation to H.R. 757 be charged equally against both sides.

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 legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I rise to speak in strong support of the North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act.

This legislation serves as a critical component of the U.S. response to the North Korean regime's dangerous and destabilizing acts. These acts are just

the latest in a series of flagrant violations of the U.N. Security Council's resolutions against North Korea's use of ballistic missiles and nuclear technology.

North Korea's unpredictable behavior, combined with their commitment to advancing their nuclear and missile capability, present a serious threat to our country and our allies.

My support of this bill is grounded in my belief that the United States must stand with our allies and lead an international response that condemns North Korea's actions and reassures our allies, especially Japan and South Korea. Strengthening and expanding sanctions demonstrate that North Korea's behavior is unacceptable and that there will be consequences.

The Gardner-Menendez substitute amendment codifies and makes mandatory important cyber security sanctions on North Korea that were enacted in Executive orders in the wake of the Sony Pictures hacking incident. The amendment also requires the President to target Pyongyang's trade in key industrial commodities that are used to fund its weapons program.

The bill requires a strategy to promote improved implementation and enforcement of multilateral sanctions, a strategy to combat North Korea's cyber activities, and a strategy to promote and encourage international engagement on North Korean human rights-related issues, including forced labor and repatriation.

While passing this legislation is a critical part of the U.S. response, we also must work with our allies, as I mentioned before, to stand as a united international community.

Today, our allies Japan and South Korea took additional measures against Pyongyang. Japan declared that all North Korean ships, including those for humanitarian purposes, would be banned from coming to Japanese ports. Third-country ships that visited North Korea would also be banned from entering. South Korea announced it would pull out of a joint industrial complex that it ran with North Korea at Kaesong.

I agree with Secretary Kerry that the U.N. Security Council must act swiftly to impose penalties for North Korea's violations of U.N. resolutions. China needs to join the international community in supporting sanctions against Pyongyang and should use its leverage as North Korea's largest trading partner to expand U.S. sanctions.

This is an opportunity for the U.S. and China to work together toward a common goal—a denuclearized Korean peninsula.

While our country is engaged in the campaign to destroy ISIL, North Korea's serious provocations demonstrate that we cannot take our attention away from the Asia-Pacific region. The United States has longstanding strategic interests and commitments to the security of the Asia-Pacific area. It is a priority to maintain stability in the region where the United States has five treaty allies and many security partnerships. We must ensure that our solid commitment to defend South Korea and Japan remains firm.

While passing this sanctions bill is important to demonstrate our resolve and leadership, clearly this is not enough in the face of North Korea's provocations. We need to cooperate with our allies on missile defense. As the north continues its provocative missile launches, our alliance with South Korea means that we must enhance our defenses against these threats. Pyongyang's missile capabilities threaten not only our allies and our servicemembers stationed in South Korea and Japan, but also the U.S. territory of Guam, my home State of Hawaii, Alaska, and much of the west coast.

South Korea's decision yesterday to begin formal talks with the United States to deploy a THAAD missile defense system is a major step toward this kind of missile defense cooperation. THAAD can target short, medium, and intermediate ballistic missiles in flight.

Again, stability in the Asia-Pacific area with key allies, largest and fastest growing economies, and provocative actors like North Korea and China, is critical to our national security. We must continue our commitment to an all-of-government Asia-Pacific rebalance with military, economic, and diplomatic attention and resource priorities to this part of the world.

Since my election to the Senate, I have made it a priority to visit this region every year. Most recently, this past summer, I visited Japan and Guam. I traveled to South Korea in 2013, and I know that our allies are counting on us to keep our focus on the Asia-Pacific and work with them to maintain stability and prosperity in this part of the world.

I urge my colleagues to send a strong message to North Korea and our allies by not only supporting the North Korean Sanctions Enforcement Act, but also by supporting the rebalance to the Asia-Pacific.

I yield the floor.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, many of my colleagues, both Republicans and Democrats, have taken to the floor today in support of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act. It is a bill that I, too, am pleased to support.

This bill was developed in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee through the same spirit of collaboration and collegiality in America's best interests that we have seen in this committee time and again. Senators GARDNER and MENENDEZ deserve real praise for their work together drafting this bill, and I thank and commend Chairman CORKER and Ranking Member CARDIN for leading an open amendment process within the committee that strengthened the bill with truly constructive changes—among them an amendment from Senator MARKEY to crack down on transfers of conventional weapons to and from North Korea, and another from Senator SHAHEEN, which makes sure these new sanctions will not impede our ability to recover the remains of any lost American servicemember in North Korea.

I want to thank Senators CORKER and CARDIN not only for advancing this bill but, just as importantly, for leading the Foreign Relations Committee in a bipartisan spirit that reflects the best of the Senate in an uncertain world. This is a strong bill, and I am confident it will enhance sanctions against North Korea in response to the regime's nuclear test last month and its dangerous nuclear missile launch last weekend. It is a clear, direct response that sends an unmistakable signal to North Korea and the world that we intend to continue to be actively engaged.

Frankly, the floor debate this week at some moments has not always reflected that same bipartisan spirit and the same spirit in which the House overwhelmingly passed a similar bill last month. Somehow the debate has at times shifted from questions of how best to punish North Korea for its illegal actions and how we can pull together in that effort to questions about President Obama's broader policy goals and motives. Suggestions that the President somehow enabled North Korea to engage in this provocative behavior by pursuing a separate nuclear agreement with Iran only distract from our shared goal that serves as the foundation and bipartisan purpose of this legislation.

I urge a more constructive course. We should apply the same bipartisan spirit in which we developed the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act toward passage of the Iran Policy Oversight Act, which was led by Ranking Member CARDIN and which will ensure that Congress can exercise effective oversight of the nuclear agreement with Iran.

Just as members of the Foreign Relations Committee worked together to develop a sanctions bill on North Korea, Republicans and Democrats in this body should come together to enforce the terms of the nuclear deal with Iran and to push back on Iran's support for terrorism in the Middle East, its ongoing human rights violations, and its illegal ballistic missile tests. The Iran Policy Oversight Act offers us an incredible way to accomplish all of these goals.

When it comes to the recent nuclear agreement with Iran, also known as

the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action or the JCPOA, too often we find ourselves distracted from the core question as to whether that deal has made Iran less able to pursue development of a nuclear weapon. We are seeing the same tendency play out today as some of my colleagues have promoted a false comparison between the JCPOA and the 1994 agreed framework, which the United States negotiated with North Korea with the goal of stopping North Korea from developing a nuclear weapon. These comparisons make a false implication that just because the 1994 framework utterly failed to keep North Korea from pursuing an illicit nuclear weapons program, the JCPOA is destined to similarly fail with regard to Iran. I will take a moment to explain why this comparison is inaccurate at best and dangerously misleading at worst.

First the 1994 framework with North Korea was just that—a brief framework or outline, its text just three pages long. The nuclear agreement with Iran, on the other hand, is nearly 160 pages—thorough, detailed, and comprehensive, outlining the international community's expectations, specifying deadlines of deliverables, and laying out in clear terms the consequences for violations of the deal.

The second difference between the two is just as fundamental. The 1994 agreed framework with North Korea did not seek to block North Korea's plutonium pathway to a nuclear weapon. Not only does it eliminate its ability to produce weapons-grade plutonium, but international inspectors have recently certified Iran actually did so by filling the core of the Arak heavy water reactor with concrete.

The importance of including this provision in the JCPOA was made even clearer yesterday when James Clapper, the U.S. Director of National Intelligence, confirmed that North Korea has restarted its plutonium production reactor and may begin recovering spent plutonium fuel in a matter of weeks. If Iran even attempted to do the same, the international community would now know and would be able to take action long before it could achieve its objective.

The third key difference is this. The JCPOA allows the IAEA, the International Atomic Energy Agency, full access to monitor Iran's entire nuclear fuel cycle, from uranium mines to mills, to centrifuge production workshops, to enrichment facilities. Never before—including back in 1994 with North Korea—has a nuclear agreement given international inspectors such comprehensive access to monitor and inspect compliance. In fact, when I recently visited the IAEA headquarters in Vienna, Austria, the head of the agency said the access they have gotten to Iran's entire range of nuclear activities goes well beyond the access it had in North Korea in the 1990s.

The fourth difference is just as crucial. The JCPOA requires Iran to abide by the so-called Additional Protocol and other additional measures, which guarantee the IAEA can seek access to suspicious undeclared locations. This Additional Protocol, a key deterrent to cheating, didn't even exist in 1994. The nuclear deal with Iran contains defined timelines for access to suspect potential nuclear sites and a dispute resolution mechanism that will resolve differences between Iran and the international community in favor of accessing inspection. The 1994 agreed framework didn't include any of these protections.

Fifth, the JCPOA is an agreement between Iran and the international community. While the United States maintains its ability to snap back international sanctions to punish Iran, the strength of the deal is not just from U.S. support but from buy-in from our P5+1 partners—the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Russia, and China—and we have to continue to work together tirelessly on a bipartisan basis to ensure that those partners remain partners in enforcement of the deal.

Sixth, the JCPOA puts incentives in the right place, halting any sanctions relief for Iran until after the international community verified it had complied with the core terms of the deal. The 1994 framework allowed North Korea compensation and sanctions relief simply for signing up before the agreement was even implemented—clearly a fatal flaw.

Finally, and in some ways most importantly, although Iran and North Korea are dangerous, radical regimes—revolutionary regimes—and they are both ostensibly led by Supreme Leaders, they exist in different regions, have different goals, and exist in different contexts. I do think that Iran, rightly or wrongly, seeks and needs integration with the world economy, and North Korea continues to be a rogue regime isolated from the rest of the world.

The seven differences this Senator has just briefly outlined show the fundamental differences between the 1994 agreed framework with North Korea, which failed, and the JCPOA with Iran, which I hope and pray will still prove to be successful. We must focus on enforcing rigorously the terms of the JCPOA and pushing back on Iran's bad behavior in a bipartisan fashion and in the same spirit in which my colleagues in the Foreign Relations Committee developed this vital and important North Korea bill.

One way we could do so is to pass the Iran Policy Oversight Act, a bill led and developed by Senator CARDIN and the members of the Foreign Relations Committee who were both supporters and opponents of the JCPOA. The Iran Policy Oversight Act would clarify ambiguous provisions in the JCPOA, establish in statute our commitment to enforcing the deal, engage in comprehensive efforts to counter Iranian activities in the Middle East, and provide increased support to our allies in the region, especially our vital ally, Israel.

I commend Senator CARDIN for his leadership in drafting a bill strong enough to earn the cosponsorship of both supporters and opponents of that nuclear deal.

Even in a dysfunctional Congress, today's debate and passage of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act shows that we can come together to make our country safer in the face of a dangerous world. Congress did the same last May when we came together to enact the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act, which gave Congress a clear and focused opportunity to review the terms of the JCPOA before it was finalized. We can and must do similar things again.

We should work together, Republicans and Democrats, in the spirit of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act and the Iran Nuclear Review Act to introduce, debate, and pass legislation to show Iran and our allies that the United States is serious about continuing to hold them accountable for their bad behavior and to continue to demonstrate our leadership in the Pacific region and our determination to contain North Korea's dangerous nuclear activities.

Thank you, Mr. President.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I rise today to speak on an amendment I submitted to the North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act. This bill we are considering today will provide a more robust set of tools to confront the nuclear threat from Pyongyang by expanding and tightening enforcement on North Korea.

This bill goes beyond sanctions and calls for a more forceful response to North Korea's cyber attacks and human rights abuses. We now have an opportunity to highlight North Korea's cooperation with Iran on nuclear weapons and ballistic missile development. North Korea's nuclear cooperation with Iran is widely suspected, and yet the Obama administration has been reluctant to disclose what it knows to Congress.

Last month, North Korea conducted its fourth nuclear weapons test. Iranian officials reportedly traveled to North Korea to witness its three previous nuclear tests in 2006, 2009, and 2013. Given this trend, it would not be surprising at all if Iranians were actually present in North Korea's test just last month. Just before North Korea's 2013 test, a senior American official was quoted as saying ''it's very possible that the North Koreans are testing for two countries.''

Yesterday, the Director of National Intelligence, Jim Clapper, provided written testimony to Congress, which stated that Pyongyang's ''export of ballistic missiles and associated materials to several countries, including Iran and Syria, and its assistance to

Syria's construction of a nuclear reactor . . . illustrate its willingness to proliferate dangerous technologies.''

We have known that Iran and North Korea have been cooperating on ballistic missile technology, and it has been suspected for over a decade that they are also working together on nuclear weapons development as well as ballistic technology. In the wake of the nuclear agreement with Iran, Iran is starting to see a flow of funds from sanctions relief of potentially over $100 billion. As Iran gets this flow of cash, this Senator is concerned that we will see this illicit cooperation increase and that Iran will use some of these funds to pay North Korea for further testing and technology.

This amendment No. 3294 would require a semiannual report to Congress; that is all. This report would cover North Korea's cooperation with Iran on nuclear weapon and ballistic missile testing, development, and research. We have been asking for this information and have not received it in a timely fashion.

The administration would also be required to disclose to Congress the identity of individuals who have knowingly engaged in or directed material support for or exchanged information between the governments of Iran and North Korea for their nuclear programs in this semiannual report. In order for us to tackle this problem head-on and to take steps to halt this illicit cooperation, we need a full report from the administration. It is as simple as that. That is all this amendment does.

I am glad to see this body moving so swiftly to enact punitive sanctions on North Korea for its recent actions, and this amendment will help further strengthen efforts to punish rogue regimes.

I would also like to applaud the efforts of my colleagues on the Foreign Relations Committee—Senator GARDNER, Chairman CORKER, and Senator MENENDEZ—for their work on getting this bill through committee and to the floor. Their leadership on this issue has been tremendous, and I look forward to working with them on the floor to see its passage.

Thank you, and I yield back.

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

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

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, while we are waiting on Senator PETERS to be here, I wanted to go through some of the history relative to the North Korean program. I think sometimes there has been so much focus on other countries' programs—I know Senator GARDNER alluded to some aspects of it in his comments—but North Korea's nuclear program actually dates back to the 1950s, when they pursued nuclear energy cooperation with the Soviet Union.

In ensuing years, North Korea acquired a full nuclear fuel cycle, including plutonium, reprocessing, and uranium enrichment capabilities. So this goes back to the 1950s, but in 2003 North Korea announced its withdrawal from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and conducted four nuclear weapons tests in 2006, 2009, 2013, and 2016.

Experts believe the first two nuclear tests were plutonium based, and analysts assess the third nuclear test may have used highly enriched uranium. So they are on a two-track route. On January 6, 2016, North Korea announced that it successfully tested its first hydrogen bomb. We don't have verification of that. We don't have intelligence back that would verify that was the type of test that took place.

Today North Korea possesses nuclear weapons, a longstanding plutonium nuclear program at Yougbyon, and a uranium enrichment capability which it revealed in 2010 after years of denials. Open-source estimates of North Korea's nuclear arsenal vary from 10 devices to nearly 100 weapons, but most experts believe North Korea's nuclear arsenal is somewhere in the range of 10 to 20 devices that are made of both plutonium and highly enriched uranium.

North Korea's weapons of mass destruction extend beyond its nuclear capabilities to include biological and chemical weapons programs. It also maintains an extensive long-range ballistic missile program which poses a direct threat to allies, U.S. forces in the Asia-Pacific, and the United States.

The Presiding Officer lives in a part of the world that is most directly certainly at threat. North Korea's nuclear program dates back to the 1970s. In 1984, North Korea conducted its first ballistic missile test of a Scud-B ballistic missile. North Korea's ballistic missile arsenal includes shorter range Scud missiles that can travel nearly 300 miles, No Dong missiles that can travel upward of 800 miles, and several longer range missiles that can travel from 4,000 upward to 6,000 miles.

In April 2012, North Korea displayed at a military parade a new long-range missile variant known as KN–08. The missile was displayed on a Chinese-made transporter erector launcher. In the fall of 2015, North Korea again displayed, at a military parade, the same missile on a Chinese TEL. In December 2012, North Korea successfully launched the Unha-3 launch vehicle, placed a satellite into orbit, representing a significant advancement in North Korea's missile technology capabilities.

On February 7, 2016, North Korea announced it had successfully launched another satellite into orbit using the Unha-3 launch vehicle. Although the KN–08 missile has not been tested, it is believed that the space launch vehicle technology has some similar technological features of an ICBM. The head of the U.S. Northern Command, ADM William Gortney, has stated our government assesses that North Korea could miniaturize a nuclear weapon and place it on the KN–08, which would reach the U.S. homeland. Pretty amazing, really, to think about the progress that has occurred without any real actions taking place.

Again, this has gone through multiple administrations. North Korea stands as one of the most foremost proliferators of WMD-related materials and ballistic missile technologies. North Korea has engaged in WMD-related and missile cooperation with several states, including Iran, Pakistan, and Libya.

North Korea also assisted Syria in the construction of a plutonium-based nuclear reactor at al-Kibar, until Israel destroyed that facility in 2007. In addition, it has been reported that North Korea assisted both Iran and Pakistan with nuclear weapons design activities. Again, I think it is very timely that we are taking this up—actually beyond time—with the most recent activities that have taken place. This is timely.

Obviously, the policy—again, through multiple administrations, multiple Congresses—has really been left untouched in a significant way. I truly do believe the legislation that hopefully will pass this body today with overwhelming support will be the beginning of a process. We just have seen, by the way, with it being known that the U.S. House and Senate were probably going to pass a very strong piece of legislation—we are now seeing other countries in the region stepping up.

Again, it speaks to the power of us speaking in one voice and again pushing, as we did on Iran years ago, pushing the international community to join in with us. Again, as I said earlier, I am still disappointed that the U.N. Security Council cannot function—cannot function—in a way to speak more collectively in that way, but I am glad to see that countries in the region, as a result of certainly the stances being taken here and as a result of their own concerns about what is happening with North Korea—I am glad to see it looks as though we are beginning to push toward more international efforts against North Korea.

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

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

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, one of the things that I think we have to continue to reiterate during today's debate is that this debate is not about the people of North Korea. It is about the dictator of the regime, the forgotten maniac, Kim Jung Un, and his

reign of terror in North Korea, not only with the 200,000 people who are subject to imprisonment in political camps—200,000 men, women, and children who have been tortured and maimed—but it is about his leadership that seems to go along with him, a leadership that would aid and abet in the torture and maiming of innocent people.

I think perhaps this chart, this picture, this satellite image of the Korean Peninsula, best illustrates what the people of North Korea are subjected to each and every day. You can see North Korea right here, a big vast, empty space at night, very little light, maybe Pyongyang, the brightest light point compared to Seoul, compared to South Korea, compared to their neighbors in the south, their family members in the south because they have been deprived of an economy, because they have been deprived of an opportunity, and because the people of North Korea have been deprived of the freedoms their South Korean neighbors have enjoyed.

Standing on the DMZ—and I know the Presiding Officer has been there as well—standing on the DMZ, you can see the differences between the development of North Korea and South Korean. In just a few moments—I notice my colleague from Michigan is here and is scheduled to speak. In just a few minutes I will go into this chart a little bit more about how this bill not only creates mandatory sanctions but also will give us tolls to help the people of North Korea.

With that, I will yield the floor to my colleague Senator PETERS from Michigan, whom I have had great opportunities to work with before on legislation from telecommunications to cars that communicate with each other. I am grateful he is here to speak on this bill as well.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I rise in support of legislation currently before the Senate to crack down on the North Korean regime's repeated nuclear provocations. I would certainly like to thank my colleague Senator GARDNER for his leadership on this issue as well.

Four days ago, on February 6, the world watched North Korea launch a rocket into space, in what was clearly an effort to test its advanced ballistic missile technology. The North Korean satellite is now tumbling in orbit and incapable of functioning in any useful way. Last month, the regime announced it had successfully detonated a nuclear device as part of its rogue nuclear program, the fourth test we have detected in North Korea since 2006.

This combination of incompetence, aggression, and defiance of the international community is dangerous and simply cannot stand.

Just yesterday, the Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, testified it is likely North Korea has restarted the plutonium reactor that has been shuttered since 2007 and could begin to recover fissile material within weeks.

These defiant acts fly in the face of existing international sanctions and must be met with a strong and unified response from the world community. It is a step in the right direction that the U.N. Security Council has strongly condemned North Korea's actions and vowed to adopt significant new punitive measures against the regime.

However, the dangerous path North Korea continues down poses a direct threat to the United States and our allies, particularly South Korea and Japan. We must go further and take action to punish the North Korean regime and those who aid and abet in its provocative actions.

The legislation before us today would significantly enhance our ability to curb the North Korean nuclear program. The bill requires the President to sanction anyone who knowingly supports the North Korean regime, whether by furnishing materials for North Korean weapons programs or by selling luxury goods to corrupt government officials while so many North Koreans live in poverty.

The bill also provides exemptions for humanitarian organizations that work to relieve the suffering of millions of North Koreans. We must continue to let the people under the rule of this brutal regime know that we stand with them in their democratic aspirations, even as their government continues to threaten the international community. I commend the efforts of the Foreign Relations Committee and particularly Senators Menendez and Gardner for their work on this important legislation.

The United States has long led the world in working to curb the threat of nuclear proliferation. We lead through sustained commitments to securing fissile material, such as spearheading the effort to secure loose nukes after the fall of the Soviet Union. We lead through precedence set in the bilateral 123 agreements, agreeing to share civilian nuclear technology so partner countries can diversify their energy mix while explicitly preventing them from enriching uranium on their own soil.

In the years to come, our leadership is necessary to raise this global standard even higher for every country regarding the enrichment of uranium. We do not aim to deny peaceful nuclear energy to nations that seek it, but we must make clear that there is no universal right to enrichment. The United States has moral authority on this issue because we have led by example, committing to reductions in our own nuclear arsenal in the interest of a safer world. We must continue to work with unity of purpose and act to stem the spread of nuclear materials to rogue states and terrorist organizations.

Nowhere is American leadership more necessary than in the case of the Iranian nuclear program. I was proud to cosponsor the initial effort to pass sanctions against Iran in 2009 and help pass additional sanctions in the years since. I firmly believe crippling sanctions are what brought Iran to the negotiating table and the threat of additional sanctions enhanced our bargaining position during the painstaking negotiations that led to the JCPOA. Our work to unite world powers behind this effort led to an agreement that curbs Iran's nuclear program in the short term, but in the longer term we need to stand ready to act swiftly and decisively against any Iranian violations of the JCPOA, large or small.

The JCPOA is not the end of our multilateral efforts against Iran and its illicit behavior, just as the legislation before us today is not the end of our multilateral efforts against the North Korean regime and its repeated affronts to international security. We will continue to punish regimes that support terrorism, violate human rights, and illegally seek nuclear weapons. Surely our response to the North Korean provocations will be watched closely by the Iranian regime, which is why we must respond swiftly and why we must respond strongly.

The sanctions bill before us today is not a Democratic issue, it is not a Republican issue. The goal of preventing nuclear proliferation has been a uniting principle of the American foreign policy for decades, and it must continue to be so. We must come together today to pass this bill quickly and without opposition to demonstrate in no uncertain terms our unity of purpose in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant majority leader.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Colorado, Mr. GARDNER, for his leadership on this issue—together with the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Senator CORKER—for bringing us to this moment. This is a rare bipartisan moment, where the Senate has come together and agreed to debate, vote, and pass an important bill that imposes sanctions on one of the most dangerous regimes in the world.

Recently, I was in Hawaii at the Pacific Command and we asked Admiral Harris, a four-star U.S. Navy admiral who heads Pacific Command, to rank the areas of the world that he was most concerned about, the regimes that he thought represented the biggest danger to peace. He listed North Korea as No. 1.

That may be because of the proximity of his area of responsibility to North Korea, but there is no question an unstable leader with nuclear weapons and intercontinental ballistic missiles is a threat not only to the region but to the United States as well.

We know over the weekend North Korea successfully launched a long-range rocket and put a satellite into orbit. This was done in defiance of sanctions and represents a dangerous

trend of an increasingly hostile and unstable North Korea. It was particularly alarming for several reasons.

First, the same technology that put that satellite in orbit can be used to deliver a nuclear weapon. Long-range ballistic missiles have the potential to hit the U.S. homeland. That is why North Korea has been considered a serious threat to our country, not just the region but our country as well. The timing of this launch was also very concerning because just last month North Korea claimed it had tested the components of a hydrogen bomb, a thermonuclear weapon that is more powerful than an atomic bomb—which we knew they had, but this represented an escalation, if it is true.

The idea that North Korea could soon develop advanced nuclear weapons, along with intercontinental ballistic missiles, and deliver them to our shores is a frightening proposition. Unfortunately, every day we grow closer to that reality.

I will just pause for a minute to say this is another reason why our missile defense systems are so important, not just to the safety of our friends and allies but also increasingly to the United States. I know in Colorado a lot of those efforts are headed up to provide that effective deterrent and missile defense system to the threat of the intercontinental ballistic missiles.

I have to be honest with you and say I am puzzled why the President hasn't done more on this issue to date, but while the President sits on the sidelines—I think somebody called it strategic patience—it has been a failure, not just patience. Patience I think of as a virtue but certainly not in this context.

Nevertheless, the Senate will do its part to make sure the regime in North Korea feels some consequences for its belligerent, illegal actions. Today we will vote on the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act. This bill mandates new sanctions on North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile program, and, importantly, it will provide an overall strategy to help address North Korea's human rights abuses and combat its cyber activities. I don't think most people realize that in addition to its belligerence and its violating international norms, North Korea is a serial human rights abuser. Literally, because of its focus on its finances on military arms and its standing army, North Korea has seen many, many, many of its people starve to death for lack of an adequate food supply. So this is a rogue regime, it is a dangerous regime, and one we need to make sure feels the consequences of its actions.

This bill will help hold North Korea accountable, which is more than we have seen from the administration. I want to point out that North Korea's provocative actions are just another symptom of the Obama doctrine gone wrong. I mentioned strategic patience, which is hardly a strategy for keeping the world safe.

Unfortunately, this is not an isolated incident. Through his words and deeds, the President continues to discredit and undercut American leadership around the world. As a result, the world is even more unstable and conflict-ridden than when he assumed office. It is absolutely the fact that in the absence of American leadership, tyrants, thugs, and bullies feel emboldened, and our friends and allies question our loyalty and whether they can rely on us or whether they have to go it alone and build the capacity to defend themselves in the absence of a strong America.

Many recall that when he ran for office, the President heavily criticized the foreign policy choices of his predecessor, particularly the surge in Iraq. I happened to be in the Senate during that time. I remember those debates. The Democratic leader, Senator REID, said the surge would never work, and many were skeptical because frankly it represented a bold dramatic move.

Well, not only did President Obama's decision to hastily withdraw in Iraq after the successful surge—not only did his decision to hastily withdraw from Iraq squander the hard-won progress achieved by the surge, that country is now one of a number of countries in the Middle East in shambles. We are seeing our friends and our allies—together with American advisers on the ground, special operations forces in a train-and-assist mission—trying to regain control of cities such as Ramadi that were won as a result of the blood and the treasure of the United States.

Let's look at a few things where they stand today. Over the past 2 years, ISIS has captured city after city where American troops shed that blood, sweat, and tears to bring relative peace. The border that used to exist between Syria and Iraq is gone. It has literally been erased. In spite of President Obama's misguided nuclear deal with Iran, Iranian influence in Iraq has grown, not waned. I do find it interesting that speaker after speaker—even though we are talking about North Korea—is trying to come to the floor and speak about Iran after having allowed the President's ill-advised nuclear deal to go through, which guarantees a pathway for Iran to acquire nuclear weapons.

As a result of the administration's paralysis, Syria, too, has plunged deeper and deeper into chaos. Now we not only have a security problem on our hands, we have millions of Syrian and Iraqi refugees internally displaced or flooding across international borders into places such as Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, and Europe. I have visited some of those refugee camps in Turkey and Jordan. These people are doing what we all would do. They are fleeing for their survival because frankly, once the President drew that red line in Syria, when it came to the use of illegal weapons, the President never did anything to enforce it or make sure that Bashar al-Assad felt or suffered any consequences. So the President's inaction, time after time, place after place, has real consequences. The vacuum left as a result of the U.S. retreat in the Middle East has provided an open door for other countries to expand their influence there, as we have seen and as we continue to see on a daily basis.

Russia is the prime example. It continues to extend its influence through indiscriminate bombing campaigns that yield little regard for civilian lives. The Russian bombing campaign doesn't distinguish between combatants and civilians. Russian forces are even actively fighting against American-backed groups and working to undermine them at every turn.

Of course this doesn't even touch on Russia's aggressive actions along its own border with respect to Ukraine in NATO's backyard. Unfortunately, Russia has no reason to believe that the United States, under the current leadership of the Commander in Chief, will challenge it anywhere—not in the Middle East, not in Europe.

I could go on and on about other countries that are feeling emboldened, like a belligerent China in the South China Sea, or, as I mentioned a moment ago, a newly financed and emboldened Iran, the No. 1 state sponsor of international terrorism. When the administration basically wrote a check for $50 billion to Iran, that Secretary Kerry, Vice President BIDEN, and others acknowledged could be used to finance international terrorism, it seemed to have no impact whatsoever because they were so determined to cut this bad deal with Iran.

The point is that our retreat and our lack of leadership around the world only underscore the President's lack of a larger foreign policy strategy. We have asked him time and again: Please tell us what your strategy is. The President sends over a proposed authorization for the use of military force against ISIS, and we find out the real reason he did that is not because he thinks he lacks authority to do what he is doing now but because they want to tie the hands of future Presidents in terms of what that President could do under that authorization for the use of military force. But we keep asking, and all we hear is crickets—silence. We keep asking for a serious, comprehensive strategy to guide the foreign policy and national security efforts of the United States, and the President simply doesn't feel like it is his obligation to deliver one, opting instead for tactics that are guaranteed not to win, saying: Well, we bombed ISIS.

Well, that is all well and fine. But at some point, once you bomb ISIS, unless you have somebody who can occupy that territory, the terrorists are going to come right back in. We have friends and allies, such as the Kurds and other countries in the Middle East that have said: Well, we will help be the boots on the ground if you will help supply us,

to which they are not provided any sort of answer.

I believe the American people do deserve better, and the men and women in uniform who have put their lives on the line deserve better. They deserve a strategy. They deserve the support to be able to accomplish the mission their country has asked them to accomplish.

So I am glad that in the absence of leadership from the White House, the Congress has decided to take up some of the slack here to fill the gap left by the President's inattention to this important issue. If the President won't step up to the plate and take these threats seriously enough to come up with a strategy to actually defeat them, the American people can trust the Senate to address it, and we will do so today on a bipartisan basis, insofar as it applies to the threat in North Korea.

So it is my hope that we will send a strong bipartisan message to North Korea that their repeated provocations will not go unanswered.

MENTAL HEALTH AND OUR CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Mr. President, I just came from a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing, which was one of the most unusual hearings I have attended since the time I have been in the Senate—certainly on the Judiciary Committee. Usually on the Judiciary Committee the habit is for the majority to select witnesses and then the minority gets to select witnesses, and then witnesses come out and are proxy fighters for the particular policy differences that members of the committee have—not today. Today, thanks to Chairman GRASSLEY, the senior Senator from Iowa, the Judiciary Committee had a consensus panel on the subject of mental health and its intersection with our criminal justice system.

What we heard was that, increasingly, our jails and our prisons, our criminal justice system, and the homeless that we see on our streets are a product of a failed policy—one that said: Yes, we need to move people out of institutions and out of hospitals. But, of course, there is the promise—or at least it was the hope—that they would have somewhere else to go to get treatment and housing and the like.

Today what we heard reaffirmed from the sheriff of Bexar County, TX—San Antonio, my hometown—and from so many of the other witnesses from across the country is that now our jails, our prisons, and the criminal justice systems have become de facto warehouses for the mentally ill, completely ill-suited to deal with what they need, which is treatment, supervision, and help—and the families, too, who need additional tools available for them to turn to when they need help with a loved one who has become mentally ill.

So I have introduced legislation that we talked about during the hearing today called the Mental Health and Safe Communities Act, modeled off of successful experiments and programs in places like North Carolina, which we heard from before, San Antonio, Virginia, and elsewhere. I am sure there are a number of good stories.

This is the way I think Congress ought to legislate, rather than to dream up here behind closed doors some grand scheme—the masters of the universe trying to decide what is good for all 320 million of us in a one-size-fits-all approach. We have seen the disastrous consequences of that sort of thinking. Rather than that, let's look at what has actually proven to work in our cities, counties, and our States, and then scale that up, where appropriate, to apply more broadly after we have proven that it actually works. That is what my legislation, the Mental Health and Safe Communities Act, is designed to do.

As we will look—I believe tomorrow—in the Judiciary Committee at the opioid and heroin crisis that is being experienced in so many parts of our country and as we look, as we have, at reforming our prison systems to provide more incentives for people who are low-risk and mid-level offenders, if they will accept the opportunity to help themselves to deal with their underlying drug or alcohol problem, to learn a skill, to get a GED, to better prepare for life on the outside based on the experiences in Texas and elsewhere, we can actually lower crime rates, lower recidivism rates, and save taxpayers a lot of money.

So whether it is dealing with the mental health issue and its intersection with the criminal justice system or dealing with our prison system, which used to believe that rehabilitation was an important part of what their obligation was, or dealing with this opioid and heroin abuse, we have a lot to do to make sure that our criminal justice system is brought into the 21st century and that we no longer punish people who mainly need help.

As somebody who is a recovering member of the Texas judiciary for 13 years, I certainly believe there are some people whom you can't help and whom you must punish. But there is a large segment of people—whether it is drug or alcohol related, or whether it is mental health issues—who will accept our help and will turn their lives around if given that opportunity.

I just wanted to say a few words about that because I feel so strongly about the importance of what we talked about at that hearing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I thank my friend from Texas for the work he is doing on the Judiciary Committee. I hope we can continue in that bipartisan spirit to deal with addiction and, I hope, improvements in our criminal justice system, providing resources to people who have addiction needs. I know there is a strong bipartisan effort to deal with community mental health so we can get services in our community. This is not a partisan issue. I am glad to see that the work by the Judiciary Committee is productive in trying to lead to those conclusions.

I do want to, though, comment a little bit on what was said in regards to the Obama administration. We are here together with a bill on North Korea that is not partisan at all. Democrats and Republicans are working together. There is no division between Congress and the White House. We all believe we have to isolate North Korea and its conduct. The administration has been very strong in actions in the United Nations, keeping us closely informed, and we very much want to work with a strong, united voice. That is how we keep our country the strongest, and that is what we should do on national security. So let me just try to fill in the record a little bit from the previous comments made about the Obama administration.

Let us remember that the Obama administration took over after, I would say, a failed policy in the Middle East in which we went into Afghanistan—as we should have because of the attack on our country. But before completing Afghanistan, the previous administration went into Iraq, using our military first rather than looking for a solution that would provide the type of stability in that region to prevent the spread of radicalization. Instead, governments were formed that didn't represent all of the communities, and we saw splinter groups formed and the recruitment for extreme elements.

President Obama was able to develop international coalitions to work together. I think America is always best when we lead and we can be joined by the international community. The President also understood that it shouldn't be up to America's military to solve all of the problems, that there is not a military solution to the spread of radicalization, that internal support in the countries must come from the countries themselves, that we do not want to be seen as a conquering power, and that it is for the region to defend itself. Yes, we will help, but we are not going to put our ground troops in a situation where they are used as a recruitment for radical forces. We also understand that America leads best when we can get our ideals of good governance with governments that represent all the communities so there is no void. President Obama and his administration have been very strong in those areas.

With regard to dealing with ISIL, the radical forces that exist today, a policy is well understood: Cut off their support. Cut off their support in regards to recruitment by having representative governments. Cut off their support by dealing with their oil supplies and their looting and extortion. Cut off their support by taking back territory in a way that we can control that territory. That is what we have seen happening, certainly in the last several months, as territory that was formally

held by ISIL is now being held by the Government of Iraq, particularly, but also Syria.

So I just wanted to correct on this day when we are bringing up the North Korea bill, that every President since the Korean War has had challenges in dealing with the problems in North Korea and that we are together on this issue as a Congress and as a Nation to isolate North Korea. It is not just their nuclear weapon program. As I pointed out earlier, it is their cyber attacks, their human rights violations, and all those issues to which we are speaking with a very strong voice today. I hope that as Democrats and Republicans, the House and Senate, the President and Congress speak with a strong, unified voice, America's national security interests will be better served.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, throughout this debate we continue to remind the people around America that this North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act is not intended to bow to the people of North Korea. Rather, our efforts are to try to help ensure that we are doing everything we can to help stand up for the people of North Korea, to give them the kinds of economic opportunities and freedoms from which they have been deprived by this regime under Kim Jong Un.

Today's sanctions act and the mandatory sanctions that will be levied here today by this act, if adopted and signed by the President—which I believe it will be with the overwhelming bipartisan support that it has—are about the Kim Jong Un regime itself. This is about a forgotten maniac in North Korea who has deprived his people of economic opportunity, who has imprisoned 200,000 men, women, and children, who has tortured his people, and who has assassinated members of his own inner circle and leadership. Today in the morning papers, an article outlined the death of his chief of staff of the army—again, the continued purge of top-level officials under the Kim Jong Un regime.

You can see the situation the people of North Korea are facing each and every day. This is a satellite image of the Korean Peninsula at nighttime. You can see the developments in South Korea, and you can see Seoul, Korea. There are millions of people who live right across the DMZ. And you can see the conditions the people of North Korea are suffering under—an economy that has failed, an economy that has failed to develop to give them the same kinds of opportunities other people in the Korean Peninsula are sharing.

This bill also promotes human rights. I want to point out section 301. This section requires the President to study the feasibility of bringing unmonitored and inexpensive cellular and Internet communications to the people of North Korea and trying to break through the emptiness of North Korea—the communication barriers, the firewalls—to try to get around the North Korean regime that doesn't want the people of North Korea to understand they can live better lives.

Section 302 directs the Secretary of State to develop a comprehensive strategy to promote human rights in North Korea and combat its forced labor practices, including a diplomatic outreach plan and a public diplomacy awareness campaign, what we can do together to try to bring awareness to North Koreans. Let them know that if they have family members in South Korea—what kind of opportunities people in South Korea are sharing.

It wasn't that long ago—a few decades ago—that North Korea had a more vibrant economy than South Korea, but that is certainly not the case today. If you stand on this line, if you stand on the DMZ and you look north into North Korea, you see the hillsides that have been completely deforested and all of the vegetation removed because people lacked food in North Korea, so they cut down the trees and created wood soup so they would have something to fill their stomachs because the North Korean regime of Kim Jong Un failed do so. You look at the south, and you can see the hills, vegetation, development, prosperity. We can help bring peace to the peninsula with the passage of this act today.

I know my colleague from New Jersey, Senator MENENDEZ, is coming to the floor today. He has been a great leader when it comes to North Korea, a great leader when it comes to the issue of human rights, and he has worked with me on this legislation. I worked with him to make sure we created a bipartisan solution to this great challenge that is North Korea today. I commend Senator MENENDEZ for the work and the opportunity to present the bipartisan solution before the Senate today.

I yield back and will listen to the words of Senator MENENDEZ.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, let me first start off by thanking the leadership of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Chairman CORKER and Ranking Member CARDIN, for creating the environment to have strong bipartisan legislation on a critical issue that affects the national interests and security of the United States and beyond that, in general, creating a strong bipartisan environment that I think is critical to U.S. foreign policy. It is a tone I tried to set when I had the privilege of being the chairman and Senator CORKER was the ranking member, and I appreciate his leadership in continuing in the same spirit, and, of course, Senator CARDIN, who worked very hard on maintaining that environment. I appreciate that they created the wherewithal to bring us here today.

I also thank Senator GARDNER, the East Asia Subcommittee chairman, for working with me to bring legislation in which we can come together in a strong bipartisan voice because when the Nation speaks with one voice, it speaks most powerfully to both friends and foes across the world. It has been a privilege to work with Senator GARDNER and to see his vision of how we deal with this and merge my vision of how we deal with it, and together I think we have come up with the most comprehensive strategic effort to deal with North Korea. I want to salute him, and I thank him for working with me.

Given the North Korean regime's recent test of what most agree is a ballistic missile—what U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon characterized as ''deeply deplorable'' and in violation of Security Council resolutions—one thing is abundantly clear when you look at this photograph: It is time to take North Korea seriously.

For too many years, the standard response of Republican and Democratic administrations alike whenever North Korea stages a provocation has been to dismiss the seriousness of the threat. We tend to see it as a strange regime seemingly disconnected from geopolitical reality, something of a parallel universe that doesn't function in the same way as the rest of the international community, a strange regime run by crazy leaders and certain to collapse any day, that there is no need to worry, it will not and it can't survive.

Well, four nuclear tests, three Kims, two violations of U.N. Security Council resolutions, and one attempt by North Korea to transfer nuclear technology to Syria later, it is clearly time for the United States to start taking the North Korea challenge seriously.

In fact, today it is estimated that North Korea has accumulated enough fissile material for more than a dozen nuclear weapons. It has now conducted four nuclear explosive tests, as you can see from this chart, starting in October of 2006, and with it, the quake magnitude has risen with virtually every test. It has developed a modern gas centrifuge uranium enrichment program to go along with its plutonium stockpile. It has tested ballistic missiles. It is seeking to develop the capability to match a nuclear warhead to an intercontinental ballistic missile.

Kim Jong Un has consolidated his grip on power, and he seems determined to proceed on a course of ''byungjin,'' Kim Jong Un's policy that strengthens both his military and his economy as opposed to strengthening one or the other.

Taken together, these developments present a growing danger that could set North Korea on a path to becoming a small nuclear power. It is a scenario which could lead other nations in the region to reconsider their own commitments to nonproliferation, and it could embolden North Korea in its relations with other bad actors such as Syria and Iran.

I know it has been referenced, but I think it is worthy that when the Director of National Intelligence—the person in charge of amassing all of our intelligence as a country—James Clapper, in testimony before the Armed Services Committee, says the following, it is worth repeating:

North Korea's export of ballistic missiles and associated materials to several countries, including Iran and Syria, and its assistance to Syria's construction of a nuclear reactor, destroyed in 2007, illustrates its willingness to proliferate dangerous technologies.

Director Clapper went on to say that following North Korea's third nuclear test, Pyongyang said it would ''refurbish and restart'' its nuclear facilities, to include the uranium enrichment facility at Yongbyon—shut down in 2007—and that it has followed through by expanding its Yongbyon enrichment facility and restarting the plutonium production reactor which has been online long enough to begin recovering plutonium from spent fuels within weeks or maybe months.

He told the committee:

Pyongyang is also committed to developing a long-range, nuclear-armed missile that is capable of posing a direct threat to the United States; it has publicly displayed its KN08 road-mobile ICBM on multiple occasions. We assess that North Korea has already taken initial steps toward fielding this system.

Finally, according to the Director of National Intelligence:

North Korea probably remains capable and willing to launch disruptive or destructive cyberattacks to support its political objectives.

Although it hasn't received the attention it deserved during today's debate, the Gardner-Menendez substitute addresses the cyber security threat with robust sanctions against those who control North Korea's cyber warfare apparatus. The adoption of the Gardner-Menendez legislation creates a new policy framework that combines effective sanctions and effective military countermeasures that can stop North Korea's nuclear ambitions, address cyber security issues, and bring some sanity back to the political calculus—a new policy framework that leaves no doubt about our determination to neutralize any threat North Korea may present, with robust, realistic diplomacy toward the clear goal of a denuclearized Korean Peninsula.

This bipartisan bill, approved unanimously by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in January, expands and tightens enforcement of sanctions from North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile development and other destructive activities of the Kim regime. It requires the President to investigate sanctionable conduct, including proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, arms-related materials, luxury goods, human rights abuses, activities undermining cyber security, and the provision of industrial materials, such as precious metals or coal, for use in a tailored set of activities, including weapons of mass destruction proliferation activities or for use in prison and labor camps.

Under our substitute, the President is mandated to sanction any person found to have materially contributed to, engaged in, or facilitated any of those above activities. Penalties would include the seizure of assets, visa bans, and denial of government contracts.

To provide some flexibility, we have ensured that this and future administrations retain the discretionary authority to sanction any entity or person transferring or facilitating the transfer of financial assets and property of the North Korean regime.

The bill also requires the Secretary of the Treasury to determine whether North Korea is a primary money laundering concern, and if such a determination is made, assets may be blocked and special measures applied against those involved.

From a strategic perspective, the bill would promote a strategy to improve implementation and enforcement of multilateral sanctions, a strategy to combat North Korean cyber activities, and a strategy to promote and encourage international engagement on North Korean human rights-related issues. There are reporting requirements relating to these strategies as well as a report on political prison camps and a feasibility study on providing communications equipment to the people of North Korea so we can permeate the opportunity for information to flow to the people of North Korea.

Last but not least, under the Gardner-Menendez substitute, the State Department is required to expand the scope and frequency of travel warnings for North Korea.

That is what we think about most of the time when we think about North Korea, but there is another dimension beyond nuclear challenges, missile challenges, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and that is the concern that there remain serious, unanswered questions about human rights and the lot of the North Korean people. We need only read headlines like the ones on this chart: ''Life in a North Korean Labor Camp: 'No Thinking . . . Just Fear' ''; ''Kim's former bodyguard tells of beatings, starvation in North Korean prison camp''; ''North Korean prison camp is one of the most evil places on earth—home to 20,000.''

Under the rule of Kim Jong Un, North Korea is one of the most harshly repressive countries in the world. All basic freedoms have been severely restricted under the Kim family's political dynasty. A 2014 U.N. Commission of Inquiry found that abuses in North Korea were without parallel in any other country. Extermination, murder, enslavement, torture, imprisonment, rape, forced abortions, and unspeakable sexual violence are part of the ongoing story of this bizarre regime.

We know that North Korea operates a series of secretive prison camps where opponents of the government are sent and are tortured and abused, starved on insufficient rations, and forced into hard labor. Collective punishment is used to silence dissent and instill fear in the North Korean people that they could be next. The country has no independent media. It has no functioning civil society, and there is, of course, not even a hint of religious freedom except for the bizarre worship of the line from which Kim Jong Un hails. That is the reality, making it abundantly clear that, though security concerns may be our most important priority on the Peninsula, they are not and should not be our only priority.

The legislation we are proposing creates for the first time the basis in law to designate and sanction North Korea for its human rights violations. Such sanctions would elevate human rights and the fundamental issue of human dignity to be as important as nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles.

At the end of the day, there is no basis for successfully dealing with the North, absent a solid foundation for a policy that is rooted in the U.S.-South Korea alliance. In President Park we have an important partner. I have visited South Korea and met with President Park. He is someone we can easily consult with and work closely with to chart out a future course in dealing with North Korea. Our partnership with Japan presents new opportunities for building a more effective approach to dealing with Pyongyang.

Whatever one's views on the various U.S. policy efforts of the past 2 decades—what has worked, what has not worked, and why—there can be little question that these efforts have failed to end North Korea's nuclear ambitions or end its missile programs. They have failed to reduce the threat posed by North Korea to our allies, failed to alleviate the suffering of North Korea's people, and failed to lead to greater security in the region.

Let me be clear. I have no illusions that there are easy answers when it comes to dealing with a regime like North Korea. With the passage of this legislation, we have acted in concert not only in a bipartisan effort but with our values, and we will have established a policy for dealing with an unpredictable, rogue regime equal to the challenge. I urge this body to have a unanimous vote. It is not enough to condemn North Korea's provocation, which is, by all accounts, a violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions and international will. It is not enough to convene the United Nations Security Council for another round of hollow rhetoric that does nothing to the Kim regime but signal a lack of international commitment to enforcing international will. It is not enough to do what we have always done and minimize the obvious threat from a rogue state living in its own false reality.

As the coauthor of the sanctions that brought Iran to the negotiating table, I know that the sanctions regime we are structuring here can have a real effect.

Those who want to deal with North Korea and North Korea's pursuit of missile technology and nuclear weapons will see a consequence to them far beyond North Korea. With this bipartisan legislation, we have before us a series of meaningful steps that speak the only language North Korea's regime can understand: aggressive, material consequences for aggressive, reckless provocations.

This legislation is the most comprehensive strategy to deal with the challenge that North Korea presents. The launch over the weekend and recent nuclear tests makes it clear that when I introduced this bill last year, it was timely then. We didn't get to act on it then, but we can do so now.

I urge the Senate, and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, to unanimously pass the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act. I urge my colleagues in the other Chamber to concur, and I look forward to the President quickly signing this legislation into law.

If the international community is serious about meeting the threat that North Korea poses, we should see measures like this act adopted by the United Nations and implemented by all of its member states. The international community should stand together with a single voice and one clear message: Any provocation will be met with consequences that will shake the Kim regime to its foundation. That is the opportunity we have to set the course here today in the Senate. I think one of the most powerful moments is when the Senate acts in a strong, bipartisan fashion that sends a message that will create a ripple effect not only here but across the world.

I look forward to what I hope will be an incredibly robust, if not unanimous, vote on this legislation.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I thank Senator GARDNER and Chairman CORKER for their leadership and tireless efforts within the Foreign Relations Committee in dealing with the national security challenges posed by North Korea.

As a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, I periodically receive intelligence briefings on North Korea's military capacity and the political will of North Korea's leaders to threaten the United States and our interests abroad. Based on these briefings and the extensive intelligence in forming them, I believe we need to embrace an ''all of the above'' approach to confront North Korea's continued development of ballistic missile, nuclear, and cyber technologies. These threats have become too serious to ignore and far too complex to confront with anything short of a coordinated strategy that is prepared to employ the full force of the United States Government, including all of our diplomatic, intelligence, economic, and military resources.

As Americans, it can be easy for us to forget just how lucky we are to live in a free and open society. Most of us, myself included, simply have no idea of what it is like to live under a totalitarian regime like the one that has kept North Koreans in a state of impoverished servitude, cut off from the rest of the world for generations. But every so often the mask slips, and there is an event that gives the world a clue about what can happen when a nation-state operates and thrives behind a veil of mystery and secrecy. For me, and many of my fellow Utahans, one of these clues came nearly 12 years ago when a young man from Utah suddenly went missing in southern China.

In August 2004, David Louis Sneddon disappeared while hiking in the Yunnan Province of China. He was 24 years old at the time and a student at Brigham Young University in Provo, UT. Having spent his summer studying Mandarin in Beijing, David wrote to his family about his plans to hike the scenic Tiger Leaping Gorge along the Jinsha River in southern China. That was the last time David's family would ever hear from him. His passport and credit cards were never used again; they were never seen again. David Sneddon was never seen again.

What happened to David Sneddon? To my knowledge he is the first American since the 1970s to go missing in China without an explanation. What happened to him? How can a young man, who is skilled in a country's language and knowledgeable of their culture, simply vanish without a trace?

These questions have answers. For more than a decade, David's family members, friends, and loved ones, as well as regional experts, reporters, and embassy personnel have searched for those answers in vain. For their part, local authorities point to the Jinsha River for answers. They contend that the lack of physical evidence surrounding David's disappearance could indicate that he fell and was swept away by the river, despite the fact that his body was never found. Well, it is certainly possible for that to happen to an unsuspecting tourist hiking on unfamiliar terrain, but David was not a novice outdoorsman by any stretch of the word. He was an Eagle Scout and an avid hiker who had years of experience trekking over rugged landscapes across the American West.

In recent years investigational reporters and regional experts have suggested an alternative explanation of David's disappearance. For instance, on April 25, 2013, Melanie Kirkpatrick, a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute and a well-regarded expert on North Korea, wrote an excellent article in the Wall Street Journal.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the The Wall Street Journal, April 25, 2013]

NORTH KOREA'S KIDNAPPERS AND THE FATE OF DAVID SNEDDON

(By Melanie Kirkpatrick)

North Korea's recent bellicosity seems to have subsided for the moment, but the regime's malign practices continue. The United Nations Human Rights Council last month established an international commission of inquiry into what it describes as North Korea's ''systematic, widespread and grave violations of human rights.'' The commission's mandate includes examining North Korea's abductions of foreigners and the likelihood that some victims are imprisoned in the North. Pyongyang is believed to have kidnapped nationals of at least 12 countries.

One such victim may be an American citizen. David Sneddon disappeared in China in August 2004, when he was a 24-year-old student at Brigham Young University. He was vacationing in Yunnan Province after completing several months of study at Beijing International University and before returning to the U.S. for his senior year. Speaking in Tokyo last month about Mr. Sneddon's disappearance, Keiji Furuya, Japanese minister of state for the abduction issue, told me: ''It is most probable that a U.S. national has been abducted to North Korea.''

The charge that an American citizen was likely kidnapped by North Korea is noteworthy in and of itself. It is even more so coming from a cabinet-rank member of the Japanese government about a citizen of another country. The minister added: ''I would not like to speak further about it because it would be an intervention in the domestic affairs of the United States.''

Japan is in a unique position to evaluate North Korea's kidnapping operation, having investigated it for more than 30 years. North Korean agents infiltrated Japan in the 1970s and 1980s, snatched Japanese citizens and took them back to North Korea. Japanese traveling in Europe were also kidnapped. North Korea forced the abductees to teach Japanese language and customs at its spy schools so that its agents could travel the world posing as Japanese nationals.

In 2002, the late dictator Kim Jong Il admitted to the visiting Japanese prime minister, Junichiro Koizumi, that North Korea had kidnapped 13 Japanese citizens. Kim did so in the expectation that his confession would pave the way for the normalization of relations with Japan. The move could have had the salutary effect for North Korea of attracting Japanese investment and reducing North Korea's economic dependence on China. Instead, Kim's confession inflamed Japanese public opinion and made normalization impossible.

North Korea allowed five of the abductees to go home. It said the other eight victims had died, but the death certificates supplied by Pyongyang were found to be fake. Japan believes those eight victims—as well as others whom Kim Jong Il did not acknowledge—are alive in North Korea.

In recent years, Pyongyang's kidnappers have turned their attention to China, where they have abducted South Korean humanitarian workers. The South Koreans were targeted because of their work helping North Koreans escape on an underground railroad across China to eventual sanctuary in Seoul.

This brings us back to David Sneddon. In addition to speaking Chinese, Mr. Sneddon is fluent in Korean, having spent two years in South Korea as a Mormon missionary. This unusual linguistic ability may have thrown suspicion on him. The Sneddon family believes that David was kidnapped by North Korean agents who mistakenly thought he was helping North Korean defectors. Yunnan

Province, which borders Laos, Burma and Vietnam, is along the underground railroad's usual route out of China. North Korean security agents are known to operate there, apparently with Beijing's permission.

At the time of David's disappearance in August 2004, China told the Sneddon family that its investigation had concluded that the young man likely had a fatal mishap while hiking through Tiger Leap Gorge. That theory was disproved by facts uncovered by David's father and two of his brothers three weeks after he went missing. The three Sneddons retraced the young man's steps in Yunnan and found witnesses who reported seeing him during and after his hike through the gorge.

The Sneddons have had their share of frustrations in dealing with the U.S. State Department. A senior diplomat wrote the family last year that ''Under the Privacy Act, we are not permitted to release any information about David's case unless we have his written consent to do so.'' The diplomat noted a health-or-safety exception but only if the family ''has convincing information as to where the U.S. citizen is located or what his/her condition may be.''

''We're living a Catch-22,'' says David's brother, Michael Sneddon. ''If our family had 'convincing information' as to David's whereabouts, David would no longer be missing. It's absurd.'' The Washington-based Committee for Human Rights in North Korea plans to file a Freedom of Information Act request for information on actions the State Department has taken on the Sneddon case, says executive director Greg Scarlatoiu.

The Sneddons refute speculation that David may have disappeared voluntarily. He had purchased a plane ticket home, put a down payment on his student housing for the fall semester, and made arrangements to take the LSAT exam for entry to law school. His Beijing roommate, who traveled with him until a few days before his disappearance, says David was planning to go home.

Last year, a Tokyo-based research organization published a report citing new evidence that North Korea kidnapped Mr. Sneddon. A source in China told the National Association for the Rescue of Japanese Abducted by North Korea that in August 2004—the date of his disappearance—Yunnan provincial police arrested an American university student who was helping North Korean refugees. A second Chinese source told the Japanese researchers that the Yunnan police handed over the American to North Korean security agents. In both cases, personal details about the unnamed student correspond with facts known about David Sneddon. Seven Japanese parliamentarians traveled to Washington last May to present this evidence to the State Department and Congress.

For one former Japanese intelligence official, the Sneddon disappearance is a case of déjà vu. The official, who asked not to be identified by name, compares it to the abduction cases he tracked in the 1970s and 1980s. ''The evidence is always fragmented and isolated,'' he says. Until Kim Jong Il confessed to kidnapping 13 Japanese citizens, he notes, some in the Japanese government refused to acknowledge the abductions for fear of alienating Pyongyang. The former intelligence official has looked at the Sneddon evidence and believes there is a strong possibility that North Korea kidnapped the American.

The U.N. commission of inquiry will spend one year gathering and evaluating information on North Korea's abductions. Let's hope it discovers what happened to all those who disappeared—including the American David Sneddon.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, Kirkpatrick's research shows that David's disappearance in China fits the pattern of foreign national kidnappings by North Korea in East Asia since the 1970s. While this might sound strange to Americans—because it is indeed strange to us as Americans—it is an issue with which the people of Japan and South Korea are tragically all too familiar.

The circumstances of David's disappearance add a level of credibility to this theory. For instance, the area where David was traveling is a well-known thoroughfare on an underground railroad for North Korean dissidents trying to escape to Southeast Asia. As a result, this area is monitored and patrolled by North Korean Government agents who were involved in the capture of a high-level North Korean defector and his family in the area only months before August 2004.

David was fluent in Korean, thanks to having spent 2 years serving a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in South Korea. He matched the profile of activists in this area who were thought to be assisting North Korean escapees.

In a coincidental twist of fate, David disappeared only a month after Charles Robert Jenkins, an Army deserter, was released by the North Korean Government after having spent nearly 40 years imprisoned in the totalitarian state, forced to teach English to North Korean intelligence agents. An American who spoke fluent Korean would be an attractive replacement for Charles Jenkins.

Three weeks after his disappearance, David's father and two of his four brothers traveled to China and retraced David's planned steps through the Tiger Leaping Gorge. The results of their factfinding mission, including their conversations with local residents, businesses, tour guides, and travelers have been shared with the State Department and detailed in an excellent piece by Chris Vogel published in Outside Magazine in 2014.

One of the most compelling pieces of evidence discovered by David's father and brothers is that several people, including a trail guide who had been hiking the Tiger Leaping Gorge around the time of his disappearance, remember interacting with a young man fitting David Sneddon's description. David's family also met with the owner of a small Korean restaurant in the city of Shangri-La, a bustling tourist outpost with a convenient access to the Tiger Leaping Gorge. When she saw a photograph of David, the young restaurant owner lit up. She immediately remembered David, and for good reason. Not only did David stand out because of his fluency in Korean, but he reportedly visited the restaurant on three separate occasions over the course of 2 days while he was in that city.

Indeed, according to the Outside Magazine article, the last time anyone saw David, which was on August 14, 2004, he was reportedly leaving a Korean restaurant. At first glance, this may seem like a minor detail, but seen in the right light, it is, in fact, an ominous clue.

According to many regional experts, there is a historical pattern of North Korean agents using Korean-run restaurants in China, Japan, and elsewhere to prey on their targets for kidnapping and abduction. Despite these reports, there have been no further or more fruitful leads regarding David's whereabouts. People move away or change their stories. Embassy and State Department staff move to different assignments, and the trail grows cold.

For nearly 12 years, along with his family, we have been looking for David. There are many people who deserve credit for the contributions they made to this effort. In particular, I wish to thank Ambassador Robert King, the special envoy for North Korean human rights issues and a longtime personal friend of mine, as well as his office, for the attention they have given to David's case and the good-faith efforts they have made over the years to try to find answers. I commend Ambassador King for his work on this complex, sensitive, and very important issue.

There is still work yet to be done. An upstanding American citizen is still missing, and an aggrieved family—indeed, an entire community—continues to wait and pray for a resolution, which is what brings us here today.

The first and most important responsibility of the United States Government is to ensure the safety and freedom of the American people at home and abroad. When American citizens travel overseas, the State Department plays a critical role in fulfilling this core constitutional duty.

The amendment I am filing today—which I plan to submit as a stand-alone resolution with Senators HATCH, FISCHER, and SASSE—gives the sense of the Senate that the State Department, in conjunction with the intelligence community, should continue to fulfill that obligation to David Sneddon and his family. A companion bill will be introduced in the House of Representatives by my friend Congressman CHRIS STEWART and the rest of the Utah delegation.

The State Department's responsibilities in this matter include investigating all plausible explanations behind David's disappearance and leaving no stone unturned in trying to return one of our brothers to his family.

At the time of his disappearance, David had his whole life ahead of him. In fact, he was already planning for it. Before setting out to hike the Tiger Leaping Gorge on that fateful day in August of 2004, David had signed up to take the law school admissions test—the first step toward applying to law school, he had arranged business meetings back home in Utah to get an early start on pursuing his dreams of entrepreneurship, and, eager to get back to

BYU's beautiful campus, he had already paid for his student housing for the upcoming fall semester, but he never had the chance to do any of those things, and the Sneddon family deserves to know why.

The greatest threat to totalitarian regimes in any part of the world is the truth; that the world may learn of the horrors they perpetrate every day against their own people and that their people may learn that there is a world full of freedom and opportunity beyond the ironclad borders of their enslaved homeland.

It is in pursuit of the truth—about David Sneddon's whereabouts—that I file this amendment today.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

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

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for up to 20 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

CUSTOMS AND TRADE ENFORCEMENT LEGISLATION

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I rise this afternoon to speak about a matter that will come before the Senate tomorrow when the Senate votes on whether to invoke cloture on the customs and trade enforcement conference report.

Last year, Democrats and Republicans in both Chambers of the Congress came together and said it was time for a fresh policy on international trade—a fresh, modern policy that I describe as trade done right. At the heart of trade done right is a tougher, smarter plan to fight the trade cheats who are ripping off American jobs.

Now, the inventiveness of these ripoff artists takes our breath away. It is something I know a fair amount about because a few years back, as chairman of the Trade Subcommittee, we put together a sting operation and in effect invited those ripoff artists from around the world to cheat, and we were just flooded—flooded with those who were interested in skirting the laws. They have extraordinarily inventive ways of moving their operations, concealing their identities, and shipping their products into our country through shadowy, untraceable routes. Sometimes sneaking illegal imports into this country is as simple as slapping a new label on a box. We call it merchandise laundering, and we saw it again and again and again as we conducted this sting operation.

So it is long past time to come up with a new and tough approach to enforcing our trade laws. In my view that is what this debate is about and that is what the vote will be about tomorrow.

The lingo of trade policy, as we call it, TPA—the trade promotion authority—what are the rules for trade and then the various agreements and what, of course, is being considered now, the Trans-Pacific Partnership—it is hard to keep track of this lingo under the best of circumstances. I think in beginning this discussion, what I want to note for the Senate is this is not—not—about the consideration of a new trade agreement. No trade agreement—no new trade agreement—is going to be considered by the Senate this week. What this debate is about is whether the Senate is going to put in place tougher, smarter, more modern trade enforcement policies, and when we have these policies, actually follow up on them and stand up to anybody around the world who is trying to figure out a way to get around them. My view is that tough, smart trade enforcement ought to be a priority for every Senator, no matter how they choose to vote on a particular new trade agreement.

My bottom line is that past trade policies were too old, too slow or too weak to keep up with the trade cheats, but that is what this legislation is going to change. This legislation says those days are over.

I wish to take just a few minutes to describe why I believe this package we will vote on is the strongest set of trade enforcement policies the Congress has considered in decades.

At its core, what trade law enforcement is all about is rooting out the universe of scofflaw tactics that the cheats rely on. They use fraudulent records and shell games and sophisticated schemes to evade duties and undercut our American producers. Foreign governments bully American businesses into relocating factories and jobs are turning over lucrative intellectual property. They spy on American companies and trade enforcers, steal secrets, and then they lie about it in the aftermath, and they try to undercut American industries so quickly that our Nation has been unable to act before the economic damage is done.

With the vote we are going to cast this week, we have an opportunity to say strongly and loudly that we are done sitting back and just watching our companies get their clock cleaned by trade cheats. This country is going to take trade enforcement to a new level to protect workers and businesses in Oregon and nationwide.

In my view, the center of this effort is the ENFORCE Act, which goes after what I consider to be one of the biggest of the trade loopholes; that is, merchandise laundering. This is a proposal that a number of Senators have worked for years to get enacted. What it will do is put a stop to the evasion of duties that are put in place to protect our workers, protect our manufacturers, and particularly when it comes to the steel industry, a pillar of American industry. The ENFORCE Act ought to be understood to be clearly a priority matter for those who work in the steel industry and the companies for which they work.

Second, the legislation, once and for all, closes a truly offensive loophole that allowed products made with slave and child labor to be imported to the United States. My friend Senator BROWN has championed this issue. He and I believe that in 2016 and beyond, the Congress cannot allow for the perpetrators of slave or child labor to have any place in the American economy. So the old system that leaves the door open to child or slave labor, if it is used to make a product that isn't made in the United States, that system has to end and with this legislation it will. The old system essentially said that when it came to child labor, in the past, economics would trump human rights. Economics just mattered more than protecting vulnerable children. Senator BROWN said: No way. That is a grotesque set of priorities. And we closed that loophole. It is closed, once and for all.

Another major upgrade in this trade package is what I call an unfair trade alert. I have heard for years and years from union leaders, from companies and others that the trade cheats often try to exploit the fact that trade law enforcement moves along at a snail's pace. What happens is that the rip-off artists break the rules. They hope the damage is going to be done before anybody in Washington catches on. That way the factory lights go out at the plant, and the plant is shuttered before our country does anything about it. What we have done with this new unfair trade alert system is to ensure that there are going to be warning bells going off long before the damage is done.

Next, the package includes an important initiative from Senator STABENOW to mobilize the institutions of government into a permanent ongoing enforcement center so that we have all hands on deck to fight the trade cheats. With Senator STABENOW's proposal we are going to make sure that when it comes to fighting the trade cheats, the left hand and right hand are working in Congress.

The package creates a new trust fund for trade enforcement developed by Senator CANTWELL to drive America's investment in fresh ideas and do it in a way that will help protect our workers and businesses.

The proposal also ensures small businesses and their employees are going to be able to find an easier path into the winners' circle on international trade. It is going to lower the cost for a lot of small businesses in Oregon and nationwide that import products into our country. For my home State, this effort led by Senator SHAHEEN, who has done great work on the Small Business Committee, is hugely important because in my State, when you are done

counting a handful of big businesses, you have covered the big employers in our State. We are overwhelmingly about small business, and because of the good work of Senator SHAHEEN, we are going to give small businesses more tools they can use to reach new markets overseas. It is going to help guarantee that all our trade agencies are looking for opportunities to help small businesses grow.

I could go on with others. I think Senator FEINSTEIN has done very important work. For example, we have been looking for a model for trade-based humanitarian assistance. Senator FEINSTEIN's contribution has helped us secure that goal, and I appreciate greatly her leadership.

When it comes to trade policies, environmental protections are a special priority for me and for Oregonians and for the American people. I want one judgment about this bill to be very clear as we start this debate. This legislation cannot and will not in any way prevent the United States from negotiating a climate agreement. Not only that, the package tackles some particularly important environmental issues head-on. It directs our trade negotiators to act against illegal fishing and fishing subsidies that destroy our oceans. It is going to help guarantee that the Customs personnel are better trained to fight the trade of stolen timber from places like the Amazon. These are big improvements over the old playbook of trade enforcement.

Many Senators on both sides of the aisle are very concerned about currency manipulation. In the process of bringing this bipartisan, bicameral package together, it was clear that there were some differences between the Senate and the other body on this legislation and that the other body was willing to go only so far on currency questions. When Senators vote—and I know currency is important to them—I hope that they will reflect on the view that I am going to articulate. This legislation goes further than ever before to fight the currency manipulators. One of the major reasons it does is because of our colleague Senator BENNET. Senator BENNET has been working with all sides diligently on this issue. He has clearly given us a policy that we can build on in the years and days ahead. I intend to work with Senator BENNET and all of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle at every opportunity to head off the currency manipulators, to stop them from undercutting American jobs and American businesses. There is no question in my mind that this legislation goes significantly further than ever before to fight currency abuse and manipulation.

Now, it has been my judgment for years that a more progressive approach to trade and stronger trade enforcement are two sides of the same coin. Last year, the Senate said loudly and clearly that future trade deals have to raise the bar for American priorities such as labor rights and environmental protection. Because of Senator CARDIN, we will now have a new focus on human rights. Now the Senate has an opportunity to stand up for workers and businesses in Oregon and across the country by kicking the enforcement of trade law into high gear. This landmark trade enforcement proposal ought to have strong bipartisan support.

Also included in the conference report is a permanent extension of one of the most popular economic policies on the books today, the Internet Tax Freedom Act. Former Congressman Chris Cox and I introduced this bill back in 1998. For nearly two decades, this legislation protected working families, especially against regressive taxes on Internet access.

Working families are the focus of this bill. Working families who use the Internet, for example, get information about employment opportunities and educational opportunities. They shouldn't face a wave of new regressive taxes. Clearly, ensuring that they don't get hit by these regressive taxes has saved our working families and our small businesses hundreds of dollars a year.

But for all that time, this has been a kind of temporary stop-and-go policy that required its being renewed again and again. My hope is that, as Senators look at this bill, which in my view is the toughest trade enforcement law in decades, and move to the very new approach that I call ''trade done right,'' I hope Senators will see that this legislation also ensures that working families, senior citizens, and others of modest means don't get hit by this big regressive tax simply when they want to access the Internet for the kind of information so important to them, given a modest income and their desire to get ahead.

With this legislation and its extension running out this year, it is important for the Senate to act now so that you don't have a situation again at the end of the year with the prospect of the Internet Tax Freedom Act expiring and working families getting hit with these regressive taxes.

I urge Senators to support this proposal. There has been an awful lot of work done by Senators on both sides of the aisle to advance this legislation. I am particularly grateful to our colleagues on the Finance Committee with whom I have the honor to serve.

I will close simply by saying to colleagues that this is not about a new trade agreement. It is not exactly an atomic secret. There are pretty strong differences of opinion about new trade agreements here in this body. This is about whether we are going to get tough with the trade cheats who are ripping off American jobs. This legislation gives us the opportunity to do it, and I urge your support.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

OUR ''WE THE PEOPLE'' DEMOCRACY

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, the most important words in our Constitution are the first three words of that document: ''We the People.'' These are words that the authors put in supersized print to tell us that this is what our government is all about—and also, what it is not about.

They did not start out this document by saying that we are a government to serve the ruling elites. They did not establish this Constitution to serve the titans of industry and commerce. And they did not write our Constitution to serve the best off, the richest in our society—quite the contrary. The genius of America was a government designed, as President Lincoln so eloquently summarized, to be ''of the people, by the people, and for the people.''

This Senator will be rising periodically to address issues that affect Americans across our Nation. It is important to a government of, by, and for the people to address issues that we should be addressing in this Chamber.

Today I will use this time to talk about the challenge we face in climate change. Last month, scientists reported that 2015 was the single hottest year on record. NASA says that this past year was a full 0.9 degrees centigrade. That is well over 1.5 degrees Fahrenheit hotter than the average during the 20th Century. Moreover, it rose significantly warmer from 2014, which was the previous hottest year on record—0.23 degrees Fahrenheit hotter than 2014. That is an unexpectedly massive increase in the challenge of global warming.

These numbers come from the best scientific analysis. They take the combined temperatures from the land, water, and air to get a comprehensive picture of what is going on in our beautiful blue green planet. In total, 15 of the hottest years our planet has experienced while humans have tread this Earth have been in the last 16 years.

These temperature records send a strong message to us, but there is also a message coming from what is happening on the ground—the facts on the ground. We see the impact of global warming on our own communities. We see the impacts in terms of the pine beetle expansion because the winters are not cold enough to kill them off. We see it in terms of the red zone that comes from that. We see it in terms of the longer fire season—60 days longer in the last 40 years in my home State of Oregon. On the Oregon coast we are having trouble with oysters reproducing because the first few days it is difficult to form a shell with waters 30 percent more acidic than they were before the Industrial Revolution. We see it in the Cascade Mountains, where the snowpack has been smaller. It affects our winter sports, and it certainly affects the runoff that serves our farms. We have had massive, difficult droughts in southern Oregon in the Klamath Basin.

These changes are not just happening in Oregon. They are happening across

our Nation. They are happening across the world. This change is driving huge costs that can be measured in lost lives, lost homes, lost farms, lost businesses, burnt forests, and billions of dollars in disaster relief.

Scientists agree that we must keep the warming of our planet under 2 degrees Celsius to avoid catastrophic impacts. We are seeing severe impacts now, but these will be nothing compared to what is anticipated if we allow global warming to continue. At this stage below 2 degrees Celsius or 3.5 degrees Fahrenheit, we must pivot off of the fossil fuels to a clean energy economy. That means pursuing energy efficiency in our vehicles, in our freight transportation, and in our homes. It does mean investing in renewable energy, noncarbon electrical energy produced by sunlight and by wind.

The simple, sobering fact is this: Energy efficiency and renewable energy will not be enough to stop the warming of our planet unless we leave 80 percent of the currently known fossil fuel reserves in the ground. That is a powerful statement because there are enormous financial forces that seek to extract those proven reserves, to burn those proven preserves, and in doing so will destroy our planet.

You and I, fellow citizens, are owners together of a vast amount of fossil fuels, of coal, of natural gas, of oil. This is the oil and gas and coal that is underneath our public lands and water. We should use our ''We the People'' power to manage these fossil fuel reserves for the public good, and the public good is to move away from an era where the U.S. Government facilitates the extraction and burning of our citizen-owned fossil fuels to a new era where the Federal Government, together our ''We the People'' government, leads the transition from fossil fuels to a clean energy economy. As we face the threat of catastrophic climate change, the public good in regard to these fossil fuels is to keep them in the ground.

When we do a new lease for the extraction of our citizen-owned fossil fuels, we lock in carbon extraction for 20 years, 30 years, 40 years, even 50 years into the future. That is unacceptable. That is morally wrong because that extraction, decades into the future, will do enormous damage to our planet, to our forests, to our farming, and to our fishing. This is an assault, first and foremost, on rural America, and it is our responsibility to stop it.

That is why I introduced the Keep It in the Ground Act. This legislation ends new leases for coal and oil and gas on public lands and waters, and it would drive a transition from fossil fuel extraction and combustion toward a renewable energy economy.

Critics might argue that we cannot simply end consumption of fossil fuels tomorrow. They might point out that society still depends on fossil fuels for electricity and for transportation, and they might know the leases that have already been put out there provide extraction opportunities decades after this bill is enacted. That being said, it is all the more important that we not do new leases, that we not do new leases that empower more extraction decades into the future. Time is short and public lands and waters are citizen owned. Public lands and waters are the right place to start, and it is critical to the future of our planet.

The success of this moment, the ''keep it in the ground'' movement, will depend on grassroots organizing. The grassroots stopped the Keystone Pipeline, which would have turned on the tap for some of the dirtiest fossil fuels in the world. Grassroots organizing has driven the administration to suspend and possibly to stop drilling in the Arctic waters—drilling, which is the height of irresponsibility in the fragile Arctic region, and just recently grassroots organizing and energy has encouraged the President to put a pause on coal leasing to evaluate its climatic impacts.

While these are important steps in the right direction, I want to encourage our President to go further. Just as he has suspended new leases for coal, President Obama has authority to do the same for oil and gas. Last week I joined with nine other colleagues in calling on the Department of the Interior to strengthen its climate commitments by dropping all new fossil fuel leases from the 5-year Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program.

I emphasize grassroots organizing as critical because this building on Capitol Hill is full of individuals, such as I, who have been elected, and in our elections vast funds from the fossil fuel industry are holding sway. So it is going to take citizens and a ''We the People'' government—of, by, and for the people—to be able to continue to drive what we all know is right. It will be essential to sustain and expand the ''keep it in the ground'' movement.

Not so long ago, when individuals outside of this building were talking about ''keep it in the ground,'' and then inside this building we started to have that conversation, many said: It is just too much of a stretch. It is just too much of a paradigm change from the past, when we sought to lease out our fossil fuels, that this wouldn't work.

Where are we now? Not only did we have success in the Keystone, not only did we have success in the Arctic, not only did we have success in terms of suspension of coal leases, but we have a broader conversation about ending all of these new leases in each of these areas of fossil fuels on our citizen-owned property.

Senator BERNIE SANDERS, who is a cosponsor of my keep it in the ground bill, said in November:

> We cannot continue to extract fossil fuels from Federally owned land.

He continued and said:

> You can't talk the talk and say I'm concerned about climate change. And at the same time, say we're going to extract a huge amount of oil, coal, and gas from federal land.

Last Friday Secretary Clinton called for banning fossil fuels or banning fossil fuels on public land a ''done deal,'' and she went on to say: ''No future extractions, I agree with that.'' That is what she said. So we have come a long way in a short period, from action in three specific areas to the leading Presidential contenders on the Democratic side calling for moral action to take on this threat.

Moving forward, there are two options before us. Our Federal Government can be a government of, by, and for the titans, and it can be complicit in digging our carbon hole even deeper and doing more damage to the land we love or our Federal Government can be the ''We the People'' government that was laid out by our Constitution, and it can lead this effort to manage our fossil fuels on public lands for the public good and work with our partners around the globe to save our planet.

It has been said we are the first generation to see the impacts of global warming and that we are the last generation that can do something about it. So the choice is simple. Let's move aggressively away from a fossil fuel economy to a clean energy economy. Let's work in partnership with the world to take on this worldwide challenge and let's do the smart thing. When it comes to our publicly owned fossil fuels, let's keep it in the ground.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President I rise to join my colleagues in condemning North Korea's belligerence in East Asia.

For decades North Korea has starved its people, sponsored criminal misconduct and cyber attacks, and bullied South Korea. In the last month it has violated numerous U.N. resolutions regarding development of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. DNI Clapper recently stated that the regime is expanding its Yongbyon enrichment facility and restarting the plutonium production reactor. These actions are a threat to the United States, our allies, to their regional stability, and they remind us that the Kim regime has no interest in abiding by international rules.

The continued development of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles threatens our military forces in Japan and South Korea and poses a risk to Seoul, Tokyo, and other major cities in the region. While North Korea regularly exaggerates its capabilities, it is clear that its belligerence is unending and its technology is improving.

This legislation will strengthen and expand the U.S. sanctions against North Korea. We should use every tool we have to increase pressure on the regime so it dismantles its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs, but it is not at all clear that they are responding to direct pressure from our

own country. If there is going to be meaningful change in the security situation on the Korean Peninsula, then China is going to have to exert more leverage over its neighbor.

While we certainly do not see eye-to-eye with China on many things, we can and must work together to address our shared concerns. China has a tremendous amount at stake too. Unfortunately, Chinese efforts to rein in North Korea have so far been underwhelming. In response to China's diplomatic overtures to stop the missile launch last Saturday, North Korea actually accelerated its plans and launched its missile on the eve of the Lunar New Year celebrations in China. If that is how North Korea treats its only ally, then we face an uphill battle, especially without China recalibrating its approach and increasing its pressure.

China must step up to the plate and recognize that dealing with the Kim regime now is better than dealing with it later. China ought to communicate to its ally that it is fed up with its belligerence and supports stronger U.N. sanctions. This is the way China will demonstrate its commitment to international peace and security.

The goal of this sanctions legislation is not to target the North Korean people. They are the victims of the Kim regime. They have borne the cost of these ballistic missile launches. One estimate is that it cost $1 billion for the most recent launch, which would have fed the entire country for a year. Our goal is to convince North Korea that working with the international community is preferable to being isolated from it.

Since President Obama took office, the U.N. has adopted three major resolutions on North Korea's nuclear program. President Obama has signed three major Executive orders, further sanctioning North Korea's activities.

I support these efforts, and we must do more. This sanctions bill will give the administration additional tools to squeeze North Korea to change its behavior, but sanctions are not going to be enough. We need to reassure our allies in the region and provide the necessary resources to protect our forces in South Korea and Japan. After all, diplomacy is advanced when it is backed up by a strong defense.

To that end, we need to do three things. First, we must continue serious discussions with South Korea about deploying the Terminal High Altitude Defense System, or THAAD, to defend against the missile threat. This has probably become a necessity because of North Korea's recent actions. If it is deployed, we will have to reassure countries in the region that THAAD is intended to defend solely against the North Korean missile threat to avoid any misperceptions. Second, we need to pass a well-funded defense budget that provides for the readiness of the forces under Admiral Harris's command at PACOM, through which General Scaparrotti at United States Forces Korea can keep our men and women ready to ''fight tonight.'' Third, we ought to explore new opportunities to strengthen our ballistic missile defense, including increasing the protection of our forces in Hawaii and the Western Pacific by turning the Aegis Ashore Test Complex on Kauai into an operational site, a proposal Representatives GABBARD and TAKAI are working on with the Department of Defense.

These are preliminary steps we can take to reassure our allies and forces in the region that we are committed to their security, and we should refine our thinking as the threat evolves. The sanctions bill reinforces that commitment and sends a clear message that it is time to step up all levels of pressure on North Korea to end its belligerence in the region.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, recent developments in North Korea should have raised serious concern. As we have heard over and over again in the Senate from Members of both parties, they have raised serious concerns.

This weekend North Korea launched its latest so-called satellite into orbit. We know this was nothing but an attempt to conceal their development of ballistic missile programs that would actually check launch capability, not really launching a satellite.

On January 6, North Korea claims to have tested a hydrogen bomb, which, if true, would significantly increase and advance its nuclear capabilities. Even if not true, they have significant weapons in what everyone in the world would understand to be dangerous and even unstable hands.

In October 2014, the senior U.S. commander on the Korean Peninsula told reporters that North Korea has the capabilities to put together a miniaturized nuclear warhead that can be mounted on a ballistic missile. Now we see them continuing to check that launch and missile capability. They already tested atomic nuclear weapons in 2006, 2009, and in 2013, in all cases in violation of multiple U.N. Security Council resolutions and, frankly, in violation of the agreements they had made in the early part of 2003 and 2004.

Nuclear experts have reported that North Korea may currently have as many as 20 nuclear warheads and that the capital, Pyongyang, has the potential to possess as many as 100 warheads within the next 5 years.

Combined with what appears to be growing sophistication in their missile technology, they have been seeking a way to represent a direct threat—something potentially disastrous in a nuclear way—to the United States and certainly to our allies in the region.

They have shown capacity to proliferate nuclear weapons and technology to other dangerous regimes and, we have every reason to believe, dangerous individuals. U.S. officials recently connected Iranian officials to North Korea and specifically mentioned two Iranians who, according to the report, ''have been critical to the development of the 80-ton rocket booster, and both traveled to Pyongyang'' to work on this. According to reports, Iran might coincidentally conduct a nuclear launch later this month. Now we see Iran doing what it is doing, and we see Korea with the capacity to do what it is doing.

Frankly, what we see in both cases, as well as Russia, are economies that are faltering, and people have every reason to wonder about those in charge of their government. The more that occurs, the more dangerous a government might be in an unstable country, trying to do everything they can to enemies they feel they need to defend themselves against and people they need to advance against.

We also know they have significantly increased their cyber capabilities. We continually hear from our intelligence community that a cyber threat is one of the greatest threats we face. We saw North Korea launch a cyber attack on Sony Pictures in 2014, which did incredible damage in many ways, including their ability to disrupt the critical infrastructure of our country in the same way they were able to get involved in the cyber world of one major company.

According to a November 2015 report by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, ''North Korea is emerging as a significant actor in cyberspace with both its military and clandestine organizations gaining the ability to conduct cyber operations.'' When we look at North Korea's attempts to increase and/or exaggerate the potential they have with the weapons they have or their ability to develop those weapons and when we look at what North Korea is doing with their cyber activities, we see a continually growing threat.

The bill brought to the floor from Senator GARDNER's and Senator CORKER's committee, the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act, takes steps by providing the tools necessary to hold North Korea and its enablers accountable for what they do. The bill's overall goal is to peacefully disarm North Korea through mandatory sanctions that would deprive the regime of the means to build its nuclear and ballistic missile program and advance its malicious cyber activities. Specifically, it mandates sanctions against individuals who have materially contributed to North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile development; individuals who have engaged in money laundering, the manufacture of counterfeit goods, or narcotics trafficking that would benefit those programs; and individuals who have engaged in significant activities undermining cyber security against the United States or foreign individuals.

In addition to these sanctions, the legislation targets additional areas that would deny North Korea the resources it needs to continue its malicious activities. For example, the bill

mandates sanctions on individuals involved in trading minerals and metals that could be part of a nuclear program.

This section would send a strong message, certainly to China, North Korea's chief diplomatic protector and largest trading partner. The things that could be used as sanctions would surely make China think twice about what they are doing with North Korea but also think twice about what North Korea is doing with the world. China purports to have a significant influence in North Korea. China purports to not want to see nuclear destabilization occur. This bill would be an incentive for China to live up to those claims. It has consistently failed to leverage its political or economic influence up until now. If China is getting serious about getting North Korea to change its behavior, we would like to see that happen.

In a new view of sanctions, there is a waiver in this bill, as there has traditionally been. The President of the United States will have a waiver of these penalties. But this waiver is much stronger from the legislative perspective in that the President can only use the waiver on a specific basis and has to report, as I understand it, what that basis is.

This measure also goes beyond the traditional sanctions regime because it requires the administration to put forth a comprehensive strategy to promote improved implementation and enforcement of how these sanctions would work and what they would do to combat North Korea's cyber activities, to promote and encourage international engagement on North Korean human rights violations, and to report back to Congress on what they found.

There can be no doubt that other would-be nuclear regimes are going to be watching this carefully. We saw the lack of appreciation for U.S. commitment in the early weeks and months of the unfortunate Iranian deal. Frankly, the Iranians should and will look back at 2003 and 2004 and wonder why the agreements with North Korea didn't work and wonder if we are committed to those agreements and wonder if we still are determined to stop North Korea when we see the kind of activities we see today. This begins to send that message, but the required implementation and reports will send that message in more aggressive ways than the Congress and consequently the country have before.

Finally, we need to ensure that all U.S. forces deployed in the region are appropriately equipped with the most up-to-date surveillance and counterballistic missile platforms. Our regional allies—particularly South Korea and Japan—need to be assured that the United States is committed to both the stability and defense of all our partners and interests in the region. South Korea and Japan should also be encouraged to undertake any self-defense measures that are necessary to augment American forces already in the region.

North Korea remains a serious threat to peace and stability in the region and the world. North Korea continues to be a bad example of what happens when the United States makes agreements and isn't prepared to follow through on those agreements.

The world is watching. I hope my colleagues will join me in sending a clear message that North Korea's provocations are not acceptable and that its continuing pursuit of illicit nuclear weapons will not be tolerated. We will get a chance to vote on that issue today. I hope we send a strong message. I hope the administration becomes a stronger partner in this message than the messages we are failing to send right now on Iran. I think this is an important moment for the country and the world.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, we have heard a lot of great discussion and debate today about the sanctions bill on North Korea. Of course, one of the issues that continue to come up is the lack of response from the United Nations. As they are considering and deliberating what exactly to do with North Korea, I hope they will hear not only the words being discussed here on the floor of the Senate but also the actions that are taking place around the globe and particularly in South Korea.

We have long been aware of the Kaesong industrial complex. This is a look at it, somewhere just north of Seoul, basically right on the DMZ line, right in between North Korea and South Korea. It is actually inside North Korea, where this industrial complex is a joint venture, so to speak, a number of efforts from South Korea where they are funding manufacturing facilities using labor from North Korea.

The purpose of this manufacturing center, the Kaesong industrial complex, was to create additional opportunities for North Korea and South Korea to come together economically and for them to perhaps join together in unification efforts as they continue to see that they can work together economically.

Earlier this year, in one of the first committee hearings I held in the East Asia Subcommittee, we heard testimony from Dr. Victor Cha, a professor of government at Georgetown University. He is the senior adviser and Korea chair at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. We had testimony on North Korea several months ago—at the beginning of the year—as we focused on how we were going to address this challenge and the Kim Jong Un regime.

In his testimony in the House of Representatives a few weeks ago, Dr. Cha talked about some of the steps that could be taken by the United States and South Korea to address this North Korea threat. He talked about asymmetric pressure points that we have which we can apply to try to bring peace to the peninsula.

In his statement, he said, ''A new approach to North Korea must focus on those asymmetric pressure points.'' Then he talked a little bit about the Kaesong industrial complex:

> Another useful asymmetric pressure point is the Kaesong Industrial Complex. A legacy of the sunshine policy, this project now provides $90 million in annual wages (around $245.7 million from December 2004 to July 2012) of hard currency to North Korean authorities with little wages actually going to the factory workers. The South Korean government will be opposed to shutting this down, as even conservative governments in South Korea have grown attached to the project as symbolic of the future potential of a unified Korea, but difficult times call for difficult measures.

Again, this is Dr. Cha's testimony before the House of Representatives just a few weeks ago saying that this is an asymmetric pressure point and that if we were to address something to Kaesong, perhaps that could apply pressure to the North Korea regime to change its behavior. But because of the investments, because of the amount of work and the opportunities there, closing that wouldn't happen. It is not supported by the government.

This shows you how serious North Korea's recent behavior has become. The testing of a fourth nuclear weapon—they claim it is a thermonuclear bomb. We don't have evidence yet whether hydrogen was there or not, but either way, as we stated before, it significantly increases their technical capability, nonetheless, whether it is hydrogen based or not.

We saw recently a missile launch, a satellite launch that they used to disguise a test of an intercontinental ballistic missile. South Korea believes this is such a serious situation that South Korea has now shut down the Joint Factory Park at Kaesong over the nuclear test and the rocket. Just a few weeks ago, experts said this wouldn't happen, but the severity of North Korea's actions, violations, continued infringements on any number of U.S. sanctions and U.N. sanctions has forced South Korea to take the very dramatic step of closing this facility that they hoped could bring and be a symbol of further unification.

Kim Jong Un and his reckless activities, forgotten maniac of North Korea, is now responsible for the loss of employment of 45,000 people in North Korea, and we wonder why there is no economic development taking place in North Korea. We wonder why there are limited activities. Because this regime is willing to put his own totalitarian regime ahead of the people of North Korea, placing them in political prison camps, torturing them, maiming them—hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children.

So South Korea has taken a very serious step to express their displeasure with the actions of North Korea. The United Nations and the United States

both continue to discuss and impose sanctions. The U.N. delay is disturbing.

We talk about China. We talk about the impact China could have on North Korea and their willingness to change their behavior and to denuclearize North Korea. We know China is responsible for somewhere around 90 percent of the economic activity of North Korea—right around 90 percent of the economic activity. We know trade, precious metals, coal, and raw metals have resulted in about 70 percent of foreign currency in North Korea.

That is another step this bill takes, a step to assure we are addressing any activity such as exports, coal, precious metals if the money derived from that goes to the illicit activities. That is why Kaesong was closed. That is why it was closed by South Korea, because they traced the money back from this industrial facility. The 45,000 employees who weren't making all the wages they were paying, a lot of that money was being siphoned off from the hard-working people of North Korea and given to the government and then used to fund weapons of mass destruction, nuclear proliferation. This effort that was used to try to unify the peninsula, to employ people, to find economic partnerships and opportunities was instead used by Kim Jong Un to further the building of billion-dollar rockets while his people starved, to further the efforts of nuclear tests while his people are tortured.

This bill attempts to break through that curtain of silence in North Korea, providing ways to effectively communicate with the people of North Korea, to show them what the outside world has to offer in freedom and opportunity if they were to escape the regime in the reign of Kim Jung Un. I think the closure of the industrial complex in Kaesong is one further example of the steps South Korea is being forced to take as a result of these militant activities and provocative activities out of North Korea.

I see Senator SHAHEEN of the Foreign Relations Committee is joining us in this debate today. She was an active member of the sanctions debate on North Korea. I thank the Senator for being on the floor today, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FLAKE). The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am happy to join my colleague, also from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, CORY GARDNER from Colorado, in support of the North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act. This is legislation that will help hold North Korea accountable for its dangerous weapons programs.

I know Senator GARDNER talked about today's news, North and South Korea, and in the past month we have witnessed a string of actions by the North Korean leadership that has demonstrated their determination to advance the country's nuclear weapons and long-range ballistic missile programs. On January 6, North Korea conducted its fourth nuclear test, and just this weekend the country launched another long-range rocket. North Korea's goal could not be clearer or more serious. It is to place a nuclear warhead on an intercontinental ballistic missile capable of reaching the United States. Since North Korea's nuclear program was first uncovered in the mid-1980s, the United States has led the international effort to pressure the regime to abandon its nuclear activity. In large part, this pressure has come from the United States and United Nations sanctions. Although these sanctions have effectively halted most financial transactions between North Korea and the rest of the world, the North Korean regime and its benefactors continue to obtain hard currency to advance their illicit weapons programs.

One way the North Korean Government finances its nuclear program is by laundering money in banks outside of North Korea—banks that until this legislation have not been subject to secondary U.S. sanctions. This bill will change that situation. It gives the Obama administration the ability to effectively cut off offending banks from the international financial system. When faced with this prospect, I believe prudent actors in China and other parts of the world will cast aside those in North Korea who have supported its nuclear activity. I certainly hope so.

Let me also mention a provision I have added during the Foreign Relations Committee's consideration of the bill. It is an amendment that makes clear that the new and powerful sanctions this bill authorizes will not come at the expense of those American families still searching for their loved ones who served in the Korean war and who have never come home.

I especially want to thank a New Hampshire advocacy organization—the Coalition of Families of Korean and Cold War POW/MIAs—for working with me on this important provision. The coalition, led by Portsmouth's Rick Downes, expressed concerns that the new sanctions in this legislation could inadvertently hinder efforts to find the more than 7,800 Americans still unaccounted for from the Korean war. Obviously, no one here wants to interfere with this mission, and I am happy this final bill explicitly exempts POW/MIA accounting efforts from these new sanctions.

NOMINATION OF ADAM SZUBIN

Mr. President, I want to raise one concern that I do have as we are heading into a vote on this bill; that is, the ability of the Treasury Department to identify and target those who should be subject to these new sanctions because that is crucial to the success of this legislation and to our overall North Korea strategy.

The debate we are having today provides yet another illustration of why it is so essential to confirm Adam Szubin to be Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Crimes at the Treasury Department. As the Under Secretary, Mr. Szubin would lead the Department in identifying and disrupting financial support to a range of actors that threaten our national security—North Korea as well as ISIS, Al Qaeda, Hezbollah, and others. Not only would Mr. Szubin be responsible for directly implementing a significant portion of the legislation we are expected to pass today, but he would also lead the Treasury Department's efforts to rally international support for these sanctions.

I think this last point is critical and sometimes doesn't get a lot of attention. Enforcing sanctions requires cooperation. It requires often nudging other foreign governments and financial institutions to work within the sanctions regime. The lack of a Senate-confirmed appointee in this position undermines the Treasury Department and our efforts to build international coalitions to target terrorism and financial crimes.

I am pleased the Senate is poised to pass the North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act and increase the pressure on the North Korean regime, but I think it would make sense at the same time to confirm the person, Adam Szubin, who will be responsible for enforcing those very sanctions. Wouldn't it make sense for the Senate to strengthen Treasury's hand as they work to make the sanctions as effective as possible?

Adam Szubin was nominated on April 16, 2015—301 days ago. Although the Senate Banking Committee held a hearing on his nomination back in September, the committee still has not advanced that nomination to the Senate floor. No one doubts Mr. Szubin's qualifications for the position. At his nomination hearing, Chairman SHELBY called him eminently qualified.

Mr. Szubin has served in both Republican and Democratic administrations. He has bipartisan support in this body. When we are all here—Republicans and Democrats—talking about the need to increase the pressure on North Korea in order to deny Pyongyang the resources it is using to develop nuclear weapons and the missiles it needs to target the United States, shouldn't we be supporting a nominee whose job it is to do this exact work?

I think the Senate needs to vote on Mr. Szubin's nomination without further delay. I know he has the support of the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. As I said, he has bipartisan support in this body, and it is very disappointing that we can't move him at the same time we are moving this bill. I hope the committee will change their minds and they will decide to take up his nomination and move it so we can ensure that the important tenets that are in this bill to help address what North Korea is doing will actually be enforced.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, for some time now power has been gravitating from the legislature to the President. Many in Congress, including myself, have been critical of the President's overreach. However, Congress bears some of the responsibility and some of the blame in that this body continues to abdicate and transfer our power to the President. Nowhere is this more obvious than in foreign policy.

During the debate over the Iranian agreement to end sanctions, many congressional voices lamented that these sanctions were enacted by Congress and should not be unilaterally ended by the President without congressional approval. As many observers noted, Congress has only itself to blame. For decades now, Congress has granted the President national security waivers to just about anything. These allow the Executive to do what they want, to terminate sanctions or continue spending without any new vote of Congress.

A good example was when Egypt was overtaken by a military regime. This was not a democratic government. This became a military junta. Our laws on foreign aid said Egypt should no longer receive foreign aid if they are not a democratically elected government. Yet the President continues to give foreign aid to Egypt because he simply uses a waiver we wrote into the legislation.

It is a mistake to continue to grant so much power to the Presidency, and by doing so, we have abdicated our own power. For decades now, Congress has granted the President national security waivers on just about everything. The waivers are so flimsy and open-ended that all he has to do is write a report, claim that it affects national security, and then he can do whatever he wants. Congress then complains that the President is overreaching. Yet we give him that very power.

Looking back at the North Korean sanctions, we find that President Clinton removed sanctions by using the national security waiver that Congress provided him. Furthermore, about a decade later, President George W. Bush did the same thing, relieving sanctions against North Korea by taking advantage of national security waivers.

When we jump ahead to the Iran agreement, we find President Obama using national security waivers provided by Congress to unilaterally repeal Iranian sanctions without congressional authority. In fact, President Obama has utilized congressionally provided loopholes 40 times to remove Iranian sanctions. Everybody complains, and now we are going to do the same thing. We are going to write a sanction bill with the exact same boilerplate language that we had in previous sanctions bills, which will allow the President the leeway to end the sanctions if he desires.

When we fast-forward to these new North Korean sanctions before us, the new sanctions bill does exactly what previous sanction bills have done; namely, provide the President with the power to simply claim any nonspecific national security claim to waive sanctions.

Congressional critics of the President's use of national security waivers to end Iranian sanctions should decide now that they have no leg to stand on should a future President do the exact same thing with North Korean sanctions and decide to remove them without congressional approval. There are two examples of that—Clinton has already done this, and so did George W. Bush.

I propose that Congress take back their power. I propose that Congress not cede power to the Presidency, so I therefore ask unanimous consent to call up my amendment numbered 3301, which is at the desk. My amendment would remove national security waivers and give Congress its power back where it belongs.

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

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, I thank the Senator from Kentucky for his passion on this issue. We took great care in making sure we devised a sanctions bill that was strong in terms of its effect on North Korea and that it eliminated any of the shortcomings of the sanctions we faced when dealing with Iran.

I certainly agree with the Senator from Kentucky when he said that we faced a President willing to grant broad relief from sanctions in terms of national security waivers, and that is why we were very careful in making sure we constructed case-by-case waivers in this act, the North Korea act. The President must investigate and explain to Congress that there are no broad grants or wide swaths of discretionary ability to waive the sanctions. As I said, there are mandatory investigations with mandatory reporting requirements, and so I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Who yields time?

Mr. GARDNER. 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.

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

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

Ms. HEITKAMP. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes as in morning business.

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

NATIONAL TRIBAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES WEEK

Ms. HEITKAMP. Madam President, today I rise to honor 37 tribal colleges and universities operating across 16 States on more than 85 campuses, 5 of which are located in North Dakota. Thank you to the more than 20 bipartisan Senators, including Indian Affairs Committee Chairman BARRASSO and Vice Chairman TESTER, who joined me in introducing a Senate resolution designating this week as National Tribal Colleges and Universities Week.

This resolution received unanimous support in the Senate last week, as it should. It shows that Native American issues and the support for education are part of this country's treaty and trust responsibilities, and it continues to be a bipartisan issue. While we too often hear about the hardships Native communities face due to the geographic isolation and insufficient access to resources, we should also highlight those who are doing great work to build future leaders and a future generation of leaders across Indian Country. We see so much of that happening today at tribal colleges and universities.

Tribal colleges and universities act as unique community institutions that work to strengthen tribal nations and make lasting differences in the lives of American Indians and Alaska Natives. The tribal community colleges, technical schools, and 4-year institutions plant resilient seeds of hope by sustaining Native languages and building trusting and important tribal economies.

Supporting tribal colleges and universities both upholds our trust responsibility and provides much needed resources for students. Signed into law in 1978, the Tribally Controlled Community Colleges Assistance Act supported tribally chartered institutions of higher education to help uphold the Federal Government's unique relationship with federally recognized Indian tribes. Today, TCUs like Turtle Mountain Community College and Sitting Bull College in my State of North Dakota provide educational resources to Native students who otherwise surely would go without.

But tribal colleges and universities don't simply educate Native students. The American Indian Higher Education Consortium, a national network of this country's TCUs, estimates that because of the schools' often rural locations, more than 15 percent of the students attending these tribal colleges and universities are also non-Indian.

Tribal colleges and universities offer students access to a well-rounded education from an accredited institution that provides knowledge and skills grounded in cultural traditions and values, including the all-important education in indigenous languages. This enhances Native communities and enriches both tribes and the United States by preparing students to succeed in their academic pursuits as well as to enter a global competitive workforce.

The results have been telling. In the 2012–2013 school year, 75 percent of graduates earned degrees, with 22 percent earning certificates. But while

this success is admirable, the tribal colleges and universities have been hindered by chronic underfunding. Although the Federal Government provides funding to some minority-serving institutions at levels equal to $30,000 per student, tribal colleges receive literally a third of that. When we look at average numbers, it is around $6,700 per student. Tribes and tribal colleges and universities have consistently figured out how to do more with less, but Congress should not shy away from its Federal responsibility.

I wish to speak about my experience this morning meeting with a number of tribal students. We can give all of these numbers and the critical importance of making this kind of education accessible, but what we will never see is the hope and the opportunity in the eyes of these students. I can't do that for my colleagues here. I can only tell their stories.

I met a young woman who served our country in the military and after 10 years went home and discovered the opportunity to learn more about her culture and the opportunity to get an education at the tribal colleges. She said she wished she had known earlier. She probably would have gone to college at the tribal college at Sitting Bull first before she joined the armed services.

I met another young woman who told me of her early life of abuse and neglect. She said that after having two children and really no hope, she found a tribal college. In that tribal college she found not only an opportunity for advancement and the dream and the hope of becoming a lawyer someday, but she found a family. She described the faculty and the staff and the other students as the family she had never had.

I talked to another young woman, who is 18 years old and literally homeless. She sleeps on a friend's couch. The only family she has to nurture her is her tribe and the tribal college. She tells me—her words were this: I will be great. She would not have that hope, she would not have that belief, and she would not have that vision if she didn't have access to education. She is going to be a nurse. And I can tell you she is already great, from what I have heard.

So the stories go on and on and on.

Because of the involvement in the tribal college at Spirit Lake Reservation, we have a student now, who, for the first time, graduated with an engineering degree from one of our 4-year institutions. He started out at a tribal college—first engineer ever from that tribe.

These are messages of hope in a world that all too often is a world of despair, a world of neglect, a world of abuse, a world of challenges for young people. But a tribal college gave them the foundation, the connection to their culture, the connection to a family and a group of people who cared about them, and an opportunity for something better—an opportunity to be great, as the young woman I spoke with earlier said.

So I am very proud of the work we have done to support the tribal colleges. We need to do more. If we truly want to change the outcome and the paradigm for Indian people and for Indian children, we must invest in Indian education, and that goes all the way from our Head Start programs all the way up to our programs for higher education.

I want to give one last story. This past summer I attended the STEM education program for Native Americans at the University of North Dakota, and I met with a group of young people who talked about the difficulty of transitioning from the reservation into a major university—talking not so much about the challenges academically but about the challenges of loneliness, the challenges of the first time leaving what they knew and being the first generation in their families to actually attend a 4-year college. One young man said that he was so homesick and so shocked by the change in culture that he wanted to go home. I said: Well, did you? He said: No, I called my mom to tell her that I wanted to go, and she told me she would knock me upside the head if I came back. A brave mother—so he said he did what his mother asked him to do, and he was graduating with a degree in, I think, geology or some applied science.

That young man had a mother who kept him in that school. Many young people in Indian Country today do not have that kind of inspiration, and the great distrust people have for the outside world gets embedded. So these tribal colleges help prepare these students for the next step. They are critical for maintaining the cultural significance, critical for maintaining the pride that people have in who they are as a people, and then building on that for self-awareness, building on that for self-economic opportunity.

I am proud to represent five great institutions of higher learning in my State that are representative of the tribal colleges and universities.

Finally, I wish to talk about the wonderful men and women who run those institutions and what they do. These are people with Ph.D.s. These are people with amazing degrees who could go anywhere, and they continue to provide leadership to their people. Without their leadership and their support, these children would not have these opportunities. These returning vets would not have these opportunities, and these older-than-average students, with the challenges in their lives, would not have these opportunities.

So please join with me in recognizing tribal colleges and universities but also to take a look at the disparities in terms of reimbursements that these tribal colleges and universities incur, and let's make this investment. This is an investment in the lives and the changes we need to see in Indian Country.

Thank you, Madam President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I wish to comment on the statements that have been made by my colleague and friend from North Dakota, who has been an amazing leader, a very strong leader here in the Senate since she came, trying to shine a spotlight on issues particularly surrounding our Native American and Alaska Native children.

We are working together on a mission that really does help to drill down—to find those best supports that we possibly can for these children who in so many instances have been left behind.

The Senator from North Dakota spoke about our tribal institutions and our tribal colleges as that next step to launch our young people successfully, while recognizing that we have opportunities to grow and do better by our tribal colleges. I had an opportunity just yesterday to be visited by some students from Ilisagvik College, a small facility located in Barrow, AK. I had a chance to meet with two students, Olive and Jillian, from a very small village called Atqasuk. One described what it was like as a young student who wants that education—but just the idea that one would go hundreds of miles away to the big city in Fairbanks or Anchorage to pursue an education was simply not possible—and how these students have been given opportunities in ways that perhaps they and their families never dreamed possible.

So I stand with my colleague, as we have stood shoulder to shoulder on so many of these issues that impact our Native children, our young people, their futures, and their opportunities, and recognizing that education can be that key to a better life and a better path forward.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Madam President, will the Senator from Alaska yield for a question?

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Certainly.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Madam President, there is no better partner for me in this quest than the great Senator from the State of Alaska. We have spent so much time relating and recounting our experiences in visiting with Native Alaskans or, in my case, American Indians, talking about the challenges and talking about what needs to happen and how we need to shed a light on not only the despair, so that we all are motivated for change, but how we need to shed a light on the gratefulness and the great spirit that is happening. I know that my great friend has had those situations where you just wonder how resilient a young girl can be who experiences these kinds of challenges and this kind of abuse to come back and say: This is going to be a great future.

So I wanted to thank the Senator from Alaska for her strong and abiding

and great commitment to all the people of Alaska, and I want to thank her for her partnership.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I certainly appreciate the value of our partnership, and I know that we have a great deal of work ahead of us.

Madam President, I come to the floor today to express my support for the North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act and the substitute that we will be voting on later this afternoon.

It is fair to say that the people of Alaska take great interest in this legislation, and it is not simply an intellectual interest. It stems from our geography, quite simply. At its closest point, Alaska is 3,100 miles from North Korea. Let me put that in context with where we are here. The distance between Washington, DC, and my hometown of Anchorage is 3,370 miles. So Alaska is actually closer to North Korea than I am to my home when I am working here in Washington, DC.

We are talking about the main population center in Anchorage and in the Mat-Su Valley area in south central Alaska, which is about 3,600 miles from Pyongyang. Perhaps it is a little longer than a North Korean missile can travel today or even in the near future, but it seems to me that North Korea is committed to advancing its nuclear capabilities. Its covert nuclear tests and the so-called satellite launch that we saw over the weekend appear to be purposeful steps in that direction.

Just to give a little vignette about how Alaskans pay attention to North Korea—we all go around and visit schools around our respective States—I was at a middle school and I had an eighth grader ask me a question. When asked what was on anybody's mind, what do you want me to know about, and how can I be a better representative for you back in Washington, DC, the first eighth grader that raised his hand said to me: Senator MURKOWSKI, what are you doing in Washington about this Kim Jong Un guy? This is an eighth grader.

I am not going to suggest to you that perhaps Alaskan eighth graders are more attuned to politics around the world. The reason I raise this is because around the dinner tables back home, people are talking about North Korea because our geography puts us within that range of sight, if you will. I use that term loosely, but when looking at the maps and understanding where Alaska is and where North Korea is and reading the news about what is happening with North Korea's nuclear intentions, it causes Alaskans to be worried enough to be discussing it at the dinner table, and eighth graders are saying: What is going on? It is real for us.

North Korea's actions demand decisive action here in Washington, DC, in Beijing, and at the United Nations. The Washington Post editorial just yesterday noted that the Obama doctrine of strategic patience is no longer an option. Mr. Kim seems to view that as a sign of weakness. He seems to fancy playing Washington off against Beijing, and neither capital can afford him that luxury, lest North Korea make fools of both.

China has a major role to play in showing Mr. Kim the light. Mr. Kim wants the world to believe that he is smarter than all of us, and I would suggest that it is not in Beijing's interest to offer him a porous border. The United States and our allies have been patient enough with the carrot. We talk a lot about the carrot and stick when it comes to engagement. But this Senator suggests that we have been patient enough with the carrot, and now it is time to try the stick.

The sanctions bill that we are considering today is intended as a serious wake-up call to Mr. Kim's government. The sanctions are severe and they are targeted at those who enable Mr. Kim's regime to conduct business abroad. They are also intended as a wake-up call to Mr. Kim's advisers, who enjoy a pretty comfortable status quo, thanks to their leadership positions. But life is going to be a little bit tougher under our sanctions regime, if we advance this—no more luxury goods, no more creature comforts, and, if we are successful, no more access to hard currency—no exceptions.

This is an important shift for our government with regards to North Korea. As I mentioned, out of geographic necessity I follow developments in North Korea very closely, and I have since I came to the Senate. I have had the opportunity over the years to spend time with U.S. officials who have assumed the very difficult role of trying to conduct diplomacy with North Korea. Almost without exception, they have advised, when talking about North Korea, to choose respectful language, to avoid threats, to find ways to allow one's words and one's sincerity to penetrate. We are now at that point where some are saying quite strongly that this respectful approach hasn't really gotten us anywhere with this regime. This Senator would suggest that we can be and must be very firm while at the same time respectful.

Let me share a couple examples of some things that many of my colleagues may not have been aware of. I had an opportunity this past September to travel with a couple of my Senate colleagues to Svalbard, Norway. Svalbard is where one of the world's global seed vaults is located. The seed vault is intended to preserve a wide variety of plant seeds from around the world in the event there might be some kind of widespread regional or worldwide crisis that would wipe out local crops and seed. It is nicknamed ''the doomsday vault.''

I had an opportunity to go into this vault and just observe what various nations have sent to the top of the world up there. In that vault we saw one of the few instances of North Korean international cooperation. We saw boxes of seeds from North Korea. There was a box that came in with over 5,700 plant crop seeds from that hermit kingdom. Just last month, North Korea signed the Svalbard Treaty, giving North Korea access to the Svalbard Islands.

We have also heard that North Korea has made use of the Northern Sea Route to assist with shipments to Russia. I put this out there because whatever reason there may be that North Korea signed on to this Svalbard Treaty and whatever the reason may be for its newfound interest in the Arctic, the point is that when the regime in North Korea sees that it is in its best interests to cooperate internationally, there is a willingness to engage. But to this point, they have not shown a willingness to engage when it comes to their nuclear and ballistic missile programs—at least not to any reasonable level of engagement where the terms are not dictated by the North Korean regime.

Here we are today. We have a bill on the floor directed to North Korean economic sanctions. It is not about an invasion or the use of offensive weapons against the people of North Korea. It is about bringing about peaceful change, firmly and respectfully.

In that vein, let me acknowledge that the people of North Korea are a proud, nationalistic people. Like all of the world's peoples, they wish to be respected by others. Yet they are governed by an intolerant and a very perplexing regime that tolerates hunger and poverty when it is clear that there are other choices.

If the people of North Korea were allowed to look across the border they would see an example of prosperity. They would see a strong commitment to traditional values. They would see family members with whom someday they would hope to reunify.

None of the world's nations are out to deny North Korea the opportunities for that prosperity, traditional values, and the reuniting of families. But we do rightly demand—and it is legitimate that we demand—that North Korea be a part of the community of nations. That means that Mr. Kim must abandon these nuclear ambitions.

I believe that it is important that our Nation be prepared for anything that may come our way. My home State of Alaska is host to our Nation's ground-based missile defense capabilities. I was pleased to read in yesterday's budget announcement plans to make a $1 billion investment in the ground-based missile defense system. Significant investments are also made in the Long Range Discrimination Radar, or LRDR, which is slated for completion at Clear Air Force Station by the year 2020. That radar is exactly what the words imply—a radar that will enable our missile defenders to take a really good long look and better discriminate between threats and junk. I am also pleased to know that the United States is working through the

placement of missile defense batteries in South Korea.

These investments provide an increment of protection, but the truth is that they are second-best to a change in attitude coming out of Pyongyang. That is truly what I hope we will achieve through this sanctions vote today.

Thank you, Madam President.

I yield the floor.

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, today I wish to steadfastly support the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016.

Before I discuss the merits of this critical legislation, however, I wish to congratulate the author of the Senate version of this act, the junior Senator from Colorado. The bill he crafted will reinvigorate our Nation's efforts to thwart North Korea's continued development of nuclear weapons and ballistic missile technology. In addition, it seeks to further protect our Nation from cyber attack and begin to hold responsible those who have committed human rights abuses against the people of North Korea.

I also wish to commend the chairman and the ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for working together to shepherd this bill through their committee with strong bipartisan support.

Once again the Senate turns its attention to confront one of the most atrocious regimes of the modern era: the so-called Democratic People's Republic of Korea—or North Korea. Instead of working to create the workers' paradise, which is purported to be one of the autocratic regime's primary objectives, millions have starved as part of North Korea's policy of placing the military first.

But make no mistake, the threat posed by North Korea is not an inconsequential concern about the domestic affairs of a distant land. On January 6, the regime conducted a subterranean nuclear weapons test, claiming to have detonated a hydrogen bomb for the first time. Even Russia decried the test as ''a flagrant violation of international law and existing UN Security Council resolutions.''

Then, this past weekend, the North Korean satellite launched on Sunday passed almost directly over the stadium where the Super Bowl was played an hour after the game, according to press reports. This hostile act is even more disconcerting when we remember that the technology to launch such a satellite into orbit is virtually identical to what is required to launch an intercontinental ballistic missile with a warhead.

Unfortunately, these provocative acts are only part of a recurring pattern orchestrated by North Korea over the past several years.

The pattern of closely pairing a nuclear test with rocket launches began in 2006, when the regime fired seven ballistic missiles, including the long-range Taepo Dong-2. Three months later, North Korea conducted its first underground nuclear test.

These hostile acts prompted the U.N. Security Council to adopt, under Chapter VII, Resolution 1695—condemning the missile launch—and Resolution 1718—demanding that North Korea refrain from further nuclear tests and imposing sanctions on the regime.

Once again, in 2009, North Korea carried out a virtually identical pairing of rocket and nuclear tests. In April of that year, the rogue state launched a three-stage Unha-2 rocket. One month later, Pyongyang conducted another underground nuclear test. This second round of nuclear and rocket tests elicited U.N. Security Council Resolution 1874, which expanded sanctions, intensified inspections to prevent proliferation, and barred further missile tests.

Unfortunately, Pyongyang was not deterred and repeated its weapon and rocket pairing in late 2012 and early 2013. Specifically, in December 2012, the newly installed Kim Jung-un ordered the launch of another Unha-3 rocket. Two months later, North Korea conducted another underground nuclear test. The U.N. Security Council responded in kind with Resolution 2087—strengthening sanctions related to the missile launch—and Resolution 2094—tweaking sanctions related to North Korea's nuclear program.

In addition to the now-cyclical pairing of rocket launches and nuclear tests, North Korea has assumed the role of a petulant child in a variety of other areas. For example, North Korea has directly violated both the Korean Armistice Agreement and article 2 of the U.N. Charter by taking kinetic military action against South Korea.

In 2010 alone, North Korean forces sunk a South Korean patrol ship—according to a multinational commission that investigated the incident—and separately fired artillery rounds at a South Korean island, killing two Korean Marines and injuring 17 others.

North Korea has also been guilty of repeated acts of proliferation to rogue states around the world. The Washington Post and the New York Times reported that, in 2004, Libya received uranium hexafluoride of suspected North Korean origin. Similarly, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence revealed that North Korea assisted the Assad regime in constructing a nuclear reactor in northern Syria that Israeli forces destroyed in 2007.

I recite this partial history so that there is no misunderstanding. North Korea earned international condemnation not merely for its recent transgressions, but for countless bad dealings over the last decade. Unfortunately, previous U.N. resolutions and the sanctions imposed by our own government have not achieved the desired result of terminating North Korea's recalcitrant activity.

That is why the junior Senator of Colorado's legislation is so important. It provides our sanctions with greater teeth. It mandates sanctions on individuals who have materially contributed to North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile program.

I also think it is important to pause here to notice that, unlike North Korean autocrats who have imposed their will on the North Korean people by sending vast numbers to forced labor camps and early graves, the United States' sanctions are directed only at those who facilitate violations of international law.

In sum, North Korea's repression is indiscriminate. Our sanctions are focused on punishing the guilty. Accordingly, the junior Senator's legislation requires the administration to identify human rights abusers in North Korea and direct sanctions against them.

The bill also addresses one of the growing threats to our nation: cyber attack. Therefore, the administration is tasked to devise a strategy to confront and counter North Korea's cyber attacks against the United States. It also directs the executive branch to designate sanctions against those responsible for these belligerent acts.

This is an important piece of legislation which tightens the ring of deterrence against a regime that continues to defy international law. This bill's objective is not to needlessly interfere in the affairs of a foreign nation; rather, it is to provide a tool to force an aggressor into compliance with international law and to deter North Korea from committing hostile acts not only against the United States and its allies, but also against the North Korean people. I urge the prompt passage of this legislation.

Mr. REED. Madam President, today I join my colleagues in supporting the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016. This legislation will send a strong message to the North Korean regime that there are consequences to its dangerous and destabilizing activities on the Korean peninsula. Just in the past month, North Korea has conducted its fourth nuclear weapon test and launched a satellite into orbit, both of which violate several United Nations Security Council resolutions. The bipartisan bill before us makes clear that Congress will not tolerate the North Korean regime's continuing and flagrant violations of international law.

This bill is comprehensive and addresses a number of important concerns. First, it prohibits defense exports to North Korea and withholds foreign assistance to those governments that provide lethal military equipment to the government of North Korea. Second, it codifies and makes mandatory important cyber security sanctions under Executive Orders 13681 and 13694 that are essential to countering North Korea's dangerous cyber attacks, like the one perpetrated against Sony Pictures Entertainment in November 2014. Third, it includes sanctions on individuals who knowingly engage in the serious human rights abuses that are perpetuated by the regime against its own people.

I would like to commend my colleagues from the Banking and Foreign Relations Committees who have worked to move this legislation forward. It is critical that we use all of our diplomatic and legal resources to further restrict North Korea's ability to fund its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs.

I urge my colleagues to support adoption of this important legislation.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I wish to speak in support of the North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act.

Last week, North Korea launched a space satellite into orbit in direct violation of U.N. sanctions. Last month, North Korea tested its fourth nuclear bomb since 2006. North Korea's steady march toward expanding its nuclear arsenal continues unabated. Even more troubling is North Korea's willingness to sell its nuclear and ballistic missile technology to the highest bidder, as demonstrated by its previous cooperation with Iran.

The North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act is an appropriate and timely measure to expand U.S. sanctions against not only North Korea, but also those that facilitate North Korea's illicit and nefarious activities. In doing so, this legislation will deliver the message to the North Korean regime that its continued development and proliferation of nuclear weapons, material, and delivery systems will not be tolerated.

At the same time, the United Nations Security Council must address this issue with the same sense of urgency, unity, and commitment that the House has shown and the Senate will demonstrate in passing this bill later today.

First, U.N. member countries must fully understand and implement the many existing sanctions against North Korea already on the books. Unless they do, the sanctions will never work. The United States has minimal trade with North Korea, whereas China, a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, accounts for 70 percent of all of North Korea's economic trade.

Yesterday, a new report released by a panel of U.N. experts found that North Korea continues to evade international sanctions because the sanctions have been seldom implemented, and some countries do not fully understand their obligations under the relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions. In other instances, there is simply a lack of political will to enforce the sanctions. This has to stop for sanctions to be effective against North Korea.

Second, the U.N. Security Council must adopt new sanctions to demonstrate to the North Korean regime that further violations of U.N. sanctions will not be tolerated. Even though North Korea has continued to evade sanctions for the past decade, the response at the United Nations should be to identify the ways to make sanctions more effective and targeted rather than to walk away from sanctions entirely.

We know sanctions can work because they have before. In 2005, the U.S. Treasury Department froze $24 million in North Korean accounts important to the regime at the Banco Delta Asia bank. As a result of this action, which was taken pursuant to authority Congress provided in the USA PATRIOT Act, the North Koreans returned to the six-party nuclear talks. They stayed at the talks until the frozen assets were released 2 years later.

The bill we are considering today requires the Department of the Treasury to reevaluate whether North Korea should be considered a primary money-laundering concern, which would permit the President to enact the same type of sanctions that brought the North Koreans back to the negotiating table 10 years ago. I urge the Treasury Department to complete this review as quickly as possible so that the President has at his disposal the full array of options to persuade, coerce, and effectively contain the dangerous North Korean regime.

I thank Chairman CORKER and Ranking Member CARDIN for bringing this measure to the floor, and I thank Senator GARDNER and Senator MENENDEZ as well for their extensive work on this legislation to address the nuclear threat posed by the erratic and unstable North Korean regime.

I urge my colleagues to support this vital, bipartisan legislation.

• Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, the totalitarian state of North Korea is becoming more belligerent by the day. In January, the country detonated its fourth nuclear bomb since 2006—which the North Korean military claims was a small hydrogen bomb. Just last week, the country launched a rocket carrying a satellite into space, foreshadowing the possible development of a long-range ballistic missile capable of delivering a nuclear payload. According to National Intelligence Director James Clapper, North Korea recently expanded a uranium enrichment facility and restarted a plutonium reactor that could start recovering material for nuclear weapons within months or even weeks. I am deeply concerned by these actions.

We must exhaust every diplomatic option we have to pressure North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons program, halt its aggressive military posturing with South Korea, and adhere to the tenets of international human rights law. That is why I strongly support the bipartisan effort to strengthen sanctions on the rogue North Korean regime.

These sanctions are an important tool in resolving the growing threat from Pyongyang. The legislation before the Senate would help prevent North Korea from obtaining goods or technology related to nuclear weapons, ban foreign assistance to any country that provides lethal military equipment to North Korea, and target the country's trade in key industrial commodities. These steps are absolutely essential if we are to achieve our longstanding mission to end the North's nuclear weapons program. Certainly, sanctions are far preferable to preemptive military force, which I strongly oppose.

In addition to sanctions, the U.S. must work with the few nations that have diplomatic and economic relationships with North Korea—namely China—to pressure Kim Jong Un to stop threatening the stability of the region and join the community of nations. While China may have been a steadfast ally of North Korea's in the past, China now has far more shared interests with the U.S. than with Pyongyang. It is time to make resolving the Korean peninsula conflict a top diplomatic goal in terms of our own relationship with China.

I am pleased to see that the sanctions bill includes a waiver to allow humanitarian organizations to deliver much needed relief to ordinary North Korean citizens and authorizes $2 million for humanitarian assistance. Sanctions come at a cost, and we must do everything possible to make sure the North Korean people—who already suffer so much under Kim Jong Un—do not pay an even greater price.

While I will be necessarily absent for the expected bipartisan passage of the bill, I strongly support the North Korea sanctions legislation.•

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, today the Senate will vote on the North Korean Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act, a bill I am proud to cosponsor with my colleague from Colorado, Senator CORY GARDNER. This legislation mandates new sanctions on North Korea's ballistic missile and nuclear program, targets cyber criminals and officials involved in censorship, and addresses the regime's long history of human rights abuses.

The recent rocket launch and the fourth nuclear test by North Korea last month is a stark reminder that it is a rogue state, under unstable leadership that will stop at nothing until it fully realizes its nuclear ambitions. The current policy of ''strategic patience'' has yielded nothing more than a flagrant testing of American resolve around the globe and a weakening of our Nation's credibility. North Korea's recent provocations have acknowledged that reality. Congress must act and do so loudly. Now, more than ever, we need to send a message to North Korea that reassures our allies, forewarns our adversaries, and puts the world on notice. This legislation accomplishes that.

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

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

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, we have a very significant vote coming up,

and people are not talking about it as much as they should. We had a hearing, and, of course, the Chair was there at the hearing, where we had James Clapper talking about the threat that we are faced with here in the United States.

James Clapper—just to remind people—has been around as the chief intelligence director or involved with intelligence in hearings in Washington for 43 years. This guy knows what he is talking about. He made a statement yesterday that we have never been in as high of a threat position in all of the 43 years that he has been there.

In fact, there was an article released yesterday where it was stated that ''North Korea had expanded its production of weapons-grade nuclear fuel, making clear that the Obama administration now regarded the reclusive government in Pyongyang, rather than Iran, as the world's most worrisome nuclear threat.''

That threat is real. We all recall when Kim Jong Un replaced his father, and as bad as his father was, he was at least a little more dependable in terms of predictability than Kim Jong Un.

Just yesterday it was reported that he killed the chief of his general staff. It was a year ago that he did the same thing. So if someone disagrees with him, they execute him.

Under the leadership of Kim Jong Un, North Korea has repeatedly violated Security Council resolutions regarding weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them. Since assuming power in 2012, his regime has conducted satellite launches in December 2012, and in February 2016 continues to develop it's ballistic missile program. It has conducted missile tests from several launched locations, and he has conducted nuclear tests in February of 2013 and January 2016, so he just continued all the way through it. All of these things are in violation of the U.N. Security Council resolutions.

North Korea also continues to be involved in criminal activities around the world to include cyber attacks against organizations and governments. This bill that we are going to be considering—the passage of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act that we will be voting on—toughens the sanctions against North Korea by authorizing comprehensive sanctions against countries, companies, and individuals who engage in certain trade with North Korea.

This is something that is a fairly recent attempt to get compliance with the arrangements that are being made by saying to a country: If you continue to do business in North Korea, then we will have sanctions against your country.

This is something that has worked to a degree in Iran. It is a system that should be set up, and we will have the opportunity to do that this afternoon.

If anyone engages in trade with North Korea, as well as those determined to be responsible for human rights abuses, money laundering, counterfeiting, or undermining cyber security, this bill demonstrates America's resolve in holding North Korea responsible for its actions, along with those countries, organizations, and individuals who are assisting them.

Of course, it is very significant that we go ahead and move forward with this, get this passed today, and send a very clear message, not just to North Korea but to all of those countries who might be tempted to be trading with them that they could be subject to the same sanctions.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I know we have a little shift taking place, but I thank Senator INHOFE for his staunch national security support and certainly support of this legislation. I appreciate his comments, and I think we are going to have a successful day today in doing something that is important.

I think you know the administration has tried to work with the U.N. Security Council to get them to impose sanctions, as you would think they would wish to do. China has been the holdup there. You would think as a next-door neighbor they would be most apt to want sanctions and other actions to be put in place to push back against North Korea.

This is something that is important that we are doing in a proactive way, and hopefully it will spur other actions down the road.

Mr. INHOFE. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. CORKER. I yield to the Senator.

Mr. INHOFE. It was January 7 of 2013 that I was there on the DMZ. That is the largest active DMZ that is out there now—160 miles long, 2 miles wide. Even at that time, we were talking about the necessity of immediately getting sanctions in there to stop the threats. Because our intelligence—while it can be good and it cannot be so good, still there is speculation that they had that capability, and that capability has to be stopped.

I applaud the Senator and his team for moving forward with this issue.

Mr. CORKER. I thank Senator INHOFE. I think most Americans, unlike my colleague, don't realize we still have 28,500 troops there. It is an area where easily something can get out of hand. So, again, I thank him for his support and for being here today.

I know Senator FEINSTEIN now has the floor. I yield to our distinguished colleague, Senator FEINSTEIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I thank the chairman very much. I want Senator CORKER to know that I fully support his committee's recommendation and believe the time has come to enforce and place some sanctions against North Korea.

I think we all judge the world's leaders based on their actions and their stated intentions. To me there is no question that Mr. Kim's intentions are adverse to the well-being of our country. As a citizen of the western United States and a Senator representing nearly 40 million people in California, this is all very alarming, and it should alarm the world.

If you take stock of North Korea's recent actions and their capabilities, the cause for concern is apparent. On January 6 of this year, North Korea detonated its fourth nuclear device. Regardless of whether it was a hydrogen bomb or not, Mr. Kim's intention is clear: he seeks a nuclear arsenal.

Unfortunately, the measures the international community have adopted to date have been insufficient to stop him. In October of 2006, the North Koreans first detonated a device which had an estimated yield of less than 1 kiloton. In May of 2009, they detonated a second device, roughly 2 kilotons. In February 2013, they detonated a third device, 6 kilotons to 7 kilotons, and the one this year was the fourth. I would not be surprised if their most recent test had a greater yield than the last.

Not only have North Korean weapons become more lethal, but their stockpile has likely increased over time. According to a February 2015 analysis by the Institute for Science and International Security, North Korea has between 15 and 22 nuclear weapons. By the end of 2014, and they could have 20 to 100 nuclear weapons. That is deeply troubling, especially as North Korea continues to make advances in their missile program.

Again, experts at the Institute for Science and International Security have warned that North Korea likely has the capability to mount a nuclear warhead on its medium-range missiles.

Most of Japan and all of South Korea, each of which hosts tens of thousands of U.S. military and civilian personnel, are easily in range. And just this past weekend, they again tested an ICBM under the guise of placing a satellite in space. According to various reports, North Korea tested a three-stage likely Taepodong–2 rocket, which, in fact, did place a satellite into orbit.

Again, to me, the intention is clear. They want to build a missile capable of reaching the United States.

An ICBM on a launch pad is vulnerable to attack. So to evade this vulnerability, North Korea appears also to be developing a road-mobile ICBM, the KN–08, which it is estimated can reach the United States.

In April of this past year, ADM Bill Gortney, the head of the North American Aerospace Defense Command, said: ''We assess that it [the KN–08] is operational today'' and that the mobile nature of the KN–08 makes it a difficult target.

Gortney also said: ''Our assessment is that they [the North Koreans] have the ability to put a nuclear weapon on a KN–08 and shoot it at the [U.S.] homeland.''

It is not just the nuclear weapons and missile program that give me pause. In

the last several years, North Korea has committed highly provocative acts. North Korea chose to sink a South Korean naval vessel in 2010, killing 46 soldiers. It has shelled South Korean islands and planted mines along the DMZ that maimed South Korean soldiers. It has undertaken sophisticated cyber attacks against U.S. companies, Sony Pictures, and South Korean banks.

Previously, North Korea walked away from the 1994 Agreed Framework and withdrew from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Most recently, it has repeatedly flouted U.N. Security Council resolutions and proliferated weapons of mass destruction technologies.

With respect to its own human rights record, a 2014 United Nations Human Rights Council report makes clear that North Korea's leaders should be prosecuted for crimes against humanity. The United Nations has found that North Korea is committing systematic, widespread and gross human rights violations against its own people. The regime selectively distributes food to privileged individuals and routinely uses starvation to punish dissent. Torture, forced disappearances, and inhumane detention conditions are routine. In the past, the regime even jailed three generations of dissidents on the concept of guilt by association. In its prison camps alone, the United Nations estimates that hundreds of thousands of dissidents have died.

One anecdote from the U.N.'s report demonstrates the total and diabolical suffering put upon the North Korean people under this regime. Ordinary Koreans must go to extraordinary lengths to survive, including prostitution, theft, and smuggling.

A U.N. investigator was told of an instance when a woman was pulled off a train, and a dead, small child—no more than 2 years old—was strapped to her back. State security suspected the woman was smuggling copper but could find no evidence. After interrogating the woman for some time, they asked her to place her child on a desk before them. The woman then broke down and began to cry.

When she finally placed the quiet, dead child on the desk, the officials noticed its stomach was red. They then opened the child's stomach and found about 2 kilograms of copper inside. To survive, this woman was forced to smuggle copper in her own dead child's stomach. No mother anywhere on Earth should be forced to such extremes.

When it comes to the international response to North Korea and its provocative behavior, I very much regret that China has not seen fit to do more. In my view, China, in its size and capability, has the ability to rein in North Korea and is probably the only country in the region that can do so.

North Korea's nuclear test facilities are close to China's border. Just like Japan and South Korea, China's security is threatened by an unstable nuclear power in its neighborhood. Yet China continues to provide the fuel, food, trade, and international protection that sustains Mr. Kim's government.

In my meetings with China's Ambassador Cui in Washington, DC, I have expressed to him that China can and must do more. I have tried to impress upon him that a nuclear-armed North Korea, with ever-increasing weapons, is not in China's security interests.

The United States cannot sit in silence in the face of North Korea's ever-advancing nuclear and missile programs. For some, Iran has been a big threat. For me, reading the intelligence and seeing the progress over the years of North Korea's nuclear arsenal, I believe North Korea is a very serious threat to the well-being of this country. We must protect and reassure our allies in the region. That may include placing more advanced missile defenses, both in South Korea and Japan, as well as closer trilateral military cooperation with these countries.

The fact that the North Korean Government has resisted international overtures and condemnation leaves us little choice. So I come to the floor today to support the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enforcement Act of 2016. This bill will impose mandatory sanctions against North Korean persons and entities involved in weapons of mass destruction development, delivery, and proliferation; serious human rights abuses; trade in luxury goods; money laundering; smuggling; and narcotics trafficking. This legislation alone, though, will not cease North Korea's illegal activities. However, it is the beginning of a more comprehensive response to North Korea's increasingly dangerous behavior.

I thank the chairman and his committee for bringing forward this legislation. I certainly intend to support it. I thank the Senator.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I want to take one moment to thank Senator FEINSTEIN, who knows so much about the intelligence around this and has spent a great deal of her Senate career making sure she does, and she understands China probably as much as any Senator here. She has been involved in all kinds of bilateral meetings and discussions and has led the Senate in many ways in understanding what is happening within the country. So her comments—especially today with this important piece of legislation—are certainly well-received and appreciated. Again, we thank her for what she does to help keep our country safe and for her diligent efforts on the Intelligence Committee.

I know Senator MARKEY is next in line to speak. Before he does, I wish to thank him for his contributions to making this bill better. He amended the bill. I think he has other amendments he would like to see happen at some time.

I would say that there is probably no one here who focuses more on proliferation and ensuring that rogue countries—and actually some that aren't even so rogue but that have rogue constituents within their countries—don't continue to proliferate by sharing information, sharing technology, and sharing assets with other countries. So I thank him for his contribution in bringing this bill to the floor today, and I look forward to his comments.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, let me begin by thanking the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, the gentleman from Tennessee, for the focus he has brought to these issues of nuclear proliferation and for his great service to our country, having all of our people understand the threats that can come from Iran, from North Korea, and from other places across our planet. It is the ultimate issue. If we get it wrong, the consequences will be catastrophic. So I thank the chairman for continuing to have the hearings and continuing to develop legislation that focuses our people on this issue. We are the global leader. We have to set the example for the rest of the world to follow. I thank him for his great leadership on these issues.

The sanctions in this bill represent a firm response to North Korea's latest nuclear test on January 6 and to its launch of a long-range rocket last weekend. These brazen actions remind us of the serious threat Pyongyang poses to global and regional security and underscore the urgency of ending North Korea's nuclear and missile programs.

Together with our international partners, we must be vigilant against North Korea's development of boosted nuclear bombs which would allow Kim Jong Un's regime to shrink its weapons and load them onto missiles. And we must unequivocally convey to North Korea that any proliferation of nuclear technologies to other countries will lead to the gravest of consequences.

North Korea's nuclear and missile programs violate numerous U.N. Security Council resolutions. Those include Resolution 2094, which required North Korea to abandon ''all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs'' and imposed sanctions to pressure Kim to return to disarmament negotiations. These measures have not yet persuaded Kim to abandon his nuclear ambitions, in part because major gaps remain in the sanctions regime, particularly its enforcement by China.

In 2009 the Security Council imposed a conventional arms embargo on North Korea, but China insisted on a loophole allowing North Korea to import ''small arms and light weapons.'' North Korea has exploited this loophole to continue its lucrative international trade in conventional arms. According to the U.N.'s own council of experts on North Korea, this trade remains ''one of the

country's most profitable revenue sources.'' North Korea is especially well known for purchasing light weapons from China, which it then sells to other countries for cash.

Although North Korea's arms exports violate U.N. sanctions, the Chinese companies that sell the arms in the first place get off scot-free. The involvement of Chinese companies in North Korean arms smuggling is part of a larger pattern of China's lax enforcement of nonproliferation sanctions against North Korea.

As Assistant Secretary of State Tom Countryman acknowledged in a Foreign Relations Committee hearing last May and again in December, Chinese entities continue to sell technologies to North Korea that could assist in its development of nuclear-capable ballistic missiles. China's efforts to clamp down on these activities remain feeble at best.

If the United States is to continue to provide extensive assistance to China's nuclear power industry, China must in return crack down on those who enable North Korea's nuclear provocations and its weapons-smuggling networks.

The United States must also take action on our own. That is why I worked to include an amendment in this bill that will impose sanctions on anyone who facilitates North Korea's arms trade, including Chinese corporations. My provision will further reduce North Korea's access to revenue, undermine its international arms smuggling, and put pressure on Kim to return to negotiations.

We must also put financial pressure on North Korea by designating the country as a ''primary money laundering concern.'' This would allow the Treasury Department to exclude North Korea from using the dollar-based financial system. The use of this designation in 2005 against the Banco Delta Asia in Macao disrupted North Korea's access to revenue and led one North Korean negotiator to admit that ''you finally found a way to hurt us.''

North Korea is one of the leading counterfeiters of U.S. currency. It uses front companies to hide its illicit earnings from trade in narcotics, weapons, and proliferation technologies. Although the Treasury has designated 18 financial institutions and 4 countries—including Iran—as primary money laundering concerns, it has never designated North Korea. For this reason, I filed an amendment in the Foreign Relations Committee—which I will work to include in the final version of this bill—that would require the Treasury Secretary to determine on an annual basis whether North Korea is a primary money laundering concern and to provide Congress with information about that determination, as well as any financial restrictions that result from it.

Just as we protect the international financial system from North Korea's counterfeit currency and money laundering, we must protect American investors who may unknowingly invest their money in companies that do business with North Korea. The prospect of American companies investing in North Korea is quite real. One American company, Firebird Management, has publicly declared its intention to invest in North Korea's oil industry.

That is why I introduced another amendment in committee that would require companies that issue securities in the United States to annually disclose any investments in North Korea to the Securities and Exchange Commission. This requirement would not impose any regulatory burden on companies that do not invest in North Korea, but those companies that do should have that information made public because the American people deserve to know which American companies are investing in North Korea. Again, I hope to strengthen this bill down the line by incorporating that requirement.

We know that sanctions are not an end in and of themselves; rather, they are meant to pressure the Kim regime to return to disarmament negotiations. But at the same time, as we pursue that critical goal, we must work to reduce the risk that North Korea will use its nuclear weapon, whether deliberately or through miscalculation.

First and foremost, we must make clear to Kim that his regime will not survive any use of nuclear weapons. We must also reduce the risk of Kim lashing out in desperation. If he comes to believe that we intend to destroy his nuclear weapons in a preventive war, he will face pressure to ''use them or lose them.'' Thus, even as we work to deter Kim, we must establish a means of communicating during crises to avoid the risk of accidental nuclear war. Ensuring deescalation at the same time as we pursue deterrence and denuclearization will not be easy. Nevertheless, given the devastating consequences of nuclear war, it is critical that we take a comprehensive approach.

Without additional sanctions, Kim will never disarm, but without a means of controlling escalation, we could one day wake up to a nuclear disaster that no one wants and everyone would lament. We should work on a continuous basis to make sure that—in the same way the Soviet President and the President of the United States were able to communicate to reduce the likelihood that we would have an accidental nuclear war, we have to make sure we have done everything in our power to accomplish the same goal with the North Korean Government, whether we like them or not.

I want to compliment the chairman, the Senator from Colorado, and the Senator from New Jersey for their great work on this legislation. It is going to be a long struggle to ultimately deal with that regime. I think we will have to return to it over and over again, but I think, as we are going forward, it is critical—through the Chinese or through others—to make sure we have maximum communication. We could have an accidental nuclear war. It could happen. We have to make sure that is avoided.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I think Senator CAPITO is on her way down and is the next speaker. While we have a moment, I want to thank Senator GARDNER in his presence. And on an issue that is important to not just our security but the world's security, I thank Senator MENENDEZ for taking leadership in the way that he has and for working with Senator GARDNER, Senator CARDIN, and me to make sure we ended up with something that I believe is going to receive warm support. These are issues he has been concerned about for a long time. He has not only been concerned about them, he has shown leadership in putting together policies to combat them. Senator GARDNER knows and said earlier that even though this is a step—we all know it is a big step, really, especially with the U.N. Security Council unwilling to take actions in light of the violations that have occurred. There is going to be a lot of diligence that will be necessary to get in what we want to get in, but this is certainly a significant step, and I thank him for his efforts.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I thank the chairman. Earlier when the chairman couldn't be on the floor, I thanked him for his leadership in the committee, for creating an environment that is bipartisan. At a time in which bipartisanship in the Senate is a continuing challenge, it is particularly important in foreign relations—something that I tried to set out when I was a chairman. I appreciate the way his leadership has led the committee so that we could have moments like this and of course Senator GARDNER, who has very graciously worked together with me to bring a moment of what I hope will be an overwhelmingly, maybe unanimous vote in the Senate, because when we do that we send an incredibly strong message throughout the world. We generate leadership, where we may not see the will at the United Nations, particularly because of the Security Council's structure and the vetoes that exist on things like sanctions. Inevitably, when we have led as a country, we often get the world to join us and follow it, but sometimes it needs you to lead.

That is what I believe the Senate is doing today with an incredibly strong piece of legislation that, as I said earlier, was the most comprehensive strategy set to try to deal with the challenge that is North Korea itself. I appreciate the chairman's words and his leadership.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be allowed to

speak as in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

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

TRADE FACILITATION AND TRADE ENFORCEMENT BILL

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I rise to voice my opposition to an upcoming cloture vote on the conference report for the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act, commonly known as the Customs conference report. This vote is expected tomorrow.

While I am supportive of the conference report as it relates to the Customs legislation, added to the bill at the last minute is a measure known as the Internet Tax Freedom Act or ITFA for short. ITFA would put in place a moratorium to permanently prevent State and local entities from imposing existing sales and use taxes on Internet services.

In the past, I have expressed my support for ITFA as long as it was tied to the Marketplace Fairness Act, or MFA, which would allow State and local governments to collect sales and use taxes from online retailers without a physical presence within their State.

In South Dakota, this is a matter of fairness to the families who own small businesses and support our local communities. They collect sales taxes on their products and on their services. Internet sales providers are not required to provide a collection service for those States for services or products that are being delivered into those States. It requires congressional action in order to allow them to accomplish this.

Pairing these plans would have been a net benefit for States, local governments, and small business owners who are already required to collect sales and use taxes on their products and services. Together they would represent sound tax policy, but that is not what we are doing with the Customs conference report by including ITFA and not including the Marketplace Fairness Act.

ITFA, enacted by itself, would put in place a moratorium to permanently promote State and local entities from imposing taxes on Internet services at the State and local level with no consideration or offset for the tax revenue lost by States or local governments that already collect many of these taxes.

I am all for cutting taxes, but I am also a strong proponent for the Tenth Amendment and local control and tax fairness for South Dakota businesses. In places like South Dakota, we are actually pretty good at balancing budgets. In fact, we are required do it every single year. Washington has no business telling States or city commissioners how to run their books.

ITFA has zero impact on the Federal budget, but it really impacts States and local communities. I believe ITFA paired with the Marketplace Fairness Act continues to make sense. One without the other does not.

My opposition is not based on disagreement over Internet access. We need it. We should make it available. My opposition is based on the principle that we are taking away important revenue sources for State and local governments without any means for them to recoup their losses so they can continue to provide essential services to our communities.

Let me explain why sound and comprehensive tax policy is so important and why ITFA and MFA should continue to be a package deal. If the President signs a Customs conference report into law in its current form with ITFA attached to it, municipalities in my home State, South Dakota, will lose $4.3 million in revenue annually. That is a revenue they rely on to fund essential services, such as training for firefighters and police officers, maintenance for parks, upkeep of community centers and libraries, and repairs to critical roads and bridges.

Without any way of recouping the loss, local leaders will be forced to make a tough decision to cut those important services to the community or to raise other taxes. Why is Washington making this decision?

In addition to municipalities losing out on important funds, the State of South Dakota would also lose out to the tune of $9.3 million annually. Maybe in Washington DC we don't care about $9.3 million, but in South Dakota they do. Well, we don't balance our budget, but every single State out there or just about every State does.

When we step back in and we tell them we are going to unilaterally take away one source of revenue, but we still expect them to provide the services, it seems to me we are moving in the wrong direction. We don't have the luxury of South Dakota punting. We are required to balance our books every year. At the State and local level, every single dollar counts.

Singled out, it is not right for the Federal Government to dictate State and local budgets, as the ITFA part of the conference reports attempts to do, to cut a State and local revenue source.

It is unfair to States like ours, which operate under tight budgets and stretch every dollar to the maximum. In fact, in South Dakota we aren't overtaxing. Our State burden is the second lowest in the Nation. We don't have an income tax. We rely on a very broad sales tax. That is the way our people have wanted to do it. That is why conventional wisdom in this body and elsewhere has always been the ITFA, which would stop taxing the cost of Internet services, would be paired with the MFA—the Marketplace Fairness Act—because MFA lets State and local governments recover the losses from ITFA.

MFA would make certain that Main Street businesses aren't at a competitive disadvantage to companies that have no physical presence, employees or investments in States such as South Dakota because right now they don't have to collect that sales tax or the use tax for products that are being delivered into the State. Brick-and-mortar businesses have that requirement.

Right now Main Street businesses are operating under a disadvantage. MFA would level the playing field. These brick-and-mortar stores are the businesses that provide good-paying jobs in South Dakota, pay local property taxes, sponsor community baseball leagues, and send their kids and grandkids to South Dakota schools and invest in the future of our State.

We have an opportunity to level the playing field for them, rather than picking winners and losers so they can continue to be successful and enrich the lives of South Dakotans. Let's let the States and local governments decide how to manage their finances.

Under MFA, South Dakota would bring in approximately $25 million in new tax revenue, which would more than make up for the losses under ITFA. If we pass ITFA without MFA, it dramatically decreases the chance of MFA being passed in the years to come, which is a huge blow to the mom-and-pop businesses who are struggling to compete with online vendors.

MFA passing the Senate without ITFA is unlikely dead on arrival in the House. ITFA would see a similar fate if not dumped into the Customs conference report. It would not pass the Senate alone. There is simply no evidence to suggest that either measure would pass as stand-alone legislation, but together sound tax policy would move.

That is why it is so important that ITFA not be implemented without also implementing the Marketplace Fairness Act. Together the two can make a real impact on the lives of South Dakotans and all Americans by providing permanent tax relief to South Dakota families, leveling the field of play for brick-and-mortar businesses that are contending with an increasingly competitive online marketplace and at the same time assure State and local governments can continue to provide essential services to their constituents while balancing their budgets. That is something we could learn a lot about. Because the Customs conference report includes only ITFA and fails to address MFA, I will open oppose cloture on this legislation, and I encourage my colleagues to join me.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, today the Senate will vote on legislation to significantly expand sanctions against North Korea in response to the country's dangerous provocations in recent months. This legislation has my strong support. In light of North Korea's recent actions, it is time we act decisively and call on the international community, particularly the U.N. Security Council in China, to do the same.

On January 6, North Korea conducted a nuclear test involving the underground detonation of a nuclear weapon. One month later, on February 7, they effectively conducted a long-range missile test under the guise of a satellite launch. Just yesterday in the Senate Armed Services Committee, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper testified that North Korea has expanded a uranium enrichment facility and restarted a plutonium reactor capable of providing fissile material for nuclear weapons.

Together these actions point to a dangerous trend of advancing and expanding North Korea's nuclear weapons program. While the antics of Kim Jong Un and his cronies may seem outlandish, the threat posed by North Korea should be taken seriously. Though open-source assessments cast doubt on Kim Jong Un's claim that he detonated a hydrogen bomb in January, the fact remains North Korea tested a nuclear weapon that caused a magnitude 5.1 earthquake.

Though the satellite North Korea fired into space spent yesterday tumbling in orbit and it may be unusable, the fact remains that according to South Korean officials, if the rocket launched by North Korea on Sunday were successfully reconfigured as a missile, it could fly more than 7,400 miles. That is far enough to reach the shores of the United States.

Although North Korea has never tested a long-range ballistic missile capable of delivering a nuclear warhead, there can be no question that Kim Jong Un is intent on building up a nuclear arsenal capable of striking the United States.

In my role as ranking member of the Strategic Forces Subcommittee, I was in South Korea last July. I listened to the input of General Scaparrotti, the commander of U.S. Forces Korea. I heard from our servicemembers at Yongsan and Osan, and I sat with South Korea's Defense Minister to discuss our shared interests and the importance of this critical alliance. I then traveled directly to Beijing to meet with Rear Admiral Li Ji of the Chinese Ministry of National Defense. We had a frank and meaningful conversation about these topics. Despite our many differences, it is not in the interest of either the United States or China to have a nuclear-armed North Korea destabilizing Asia and destabilizing the globe with irresponsible rhetoric and dangerous actions.

It is my sincere hope that the U.N. Security Council and our international partners will follow our lead to expand international sanctions against North Korea, applying the lessons we learned in blocking Iran's nuclear program. In the meantime, we must continue to enhance our missile defense systems both at home and abroad.

I look forward to working with Senator SESSIONS to continue our bipartisan work on the Armed Services Committee, to provide necessary resources to the Missile Defense Agency, and to fulfill our commitment to key allies. We must continue to advance MDA's efforts to deploy additional sensors and to improve the reliability and effectiveness of ground-based interceptors.

This has the potential to be a pivotal moment for the international effort to counter North Korea's nuclear program, but the United States must lead the way. Strategic patience has worn thin, and it is time to act, by expanding tough sanctions, by strengthening our missile defense programs, and by calling on the international community—and especially China—to act responsibly and decisively in the face of the threat Kim Jong Un poses to global security.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, the pending legislation to enact tougher sanctions on North Korea is a welcome development as Congress once again begins to assert its role in defending national security and curtailing the growing number of nuclear weapons around the globe.

In the decade since North Korea's first successful nuclear test, the threat of nuclear proliferation has not diminished. The United States concluded an agreement with Iran that leaves its nuclear infrastructure in place, causing others in the region to declare their own interest in obtaining nuclear weapons.

Pakistan's nuclear arsenal is the fastest growing in the world, and it continues to destabilize the region through its ties to terrorist organizations. North Korea continues to build its nuclear stockpile and its ability to deliver future weapons.

In all three of these circumstances, Congress has been the source of pressure on these nations by enacting tougher sanctions on Iran, placing a hold on security funding for Pakistan, and now this legislation today builds on those previous efforts. The results may vary, but as I see it, my colleagues in this Chamber and in the House have been much more proactive than the administration in imposing costs for failing to adhere to international norms.

President Obama's approach of strategic patience has failed to accomplish the objective of bringing North Korea back to the negotiating table, and there is certainly no agreement by them to dismantle their nuclear arsenal and their nuclear program. North Korea has tested three nuclear weapons on the President's watch, and some experts believe its stockpile could grow to 100 weapons by 2020—from 10 to 15 weapons today. In addition to nuclear weapons, the regime is believed to possess chemical and biological weapons.

North Korea is advancing in missile technology and has engaged in cyber attacks against South Korea, Japan, and American entities. North Korean missiles might not yet be able to reach the continental United States, but American servicemembers stationed in South Korea and Japan and tens of millions of innocent lives are menaced by the threat of weapons of mass destruction in the possession of an aggressive regime with little regard for what the world thinks of it.

The Arms Control Association notes: ''North Korea has been a key supplier of missiles and missile technology to countries in the developing world, particularly in politically unstable regions such as the Middle East and South Asia.'' The recipients of such expertise are said to be Pakistan and Iran, among others. In fact, American intelligence judged the Syrian nuclear reactor destroyed by the Israeli Air Force in 2007 to have been constructed with North Korean assistance.

Equally worthy of attention is the brutal treatment by Kim Jong Un's regime of its own people. Just 2 years ago, the U.N. Human Rights Council published a report concluding that ''the gravity, scale, and nature of these violations reveal a State that does not have any parallel in the contemporary world.''

It would be disingenuous to stand here and place all the blame on the President or the administration. North Korea is one of the most difficult nations in the world to understand and regional complexities make it difficult to find a solution.

North Korea took advantage of lapses in American resolve during both the Clinton and Bush administrations by conducting its first nuclear test in 2006. Nevertheless, it is obvious to me that a change in approach is necessary. ''Strategic patience'' has been exhausted. Stronger measures are necessary. While the ideal approach is to work in concert with the U.N. Security Council, we cannot afford to wait for consensus on punitive measures from the U.N. that may never come.

The legislation that the Senate will pass today in a strong, bipartisan fashion seeks to compel Kim Jong Un to return to negotiations. My colleagues have written legislation that ensures sanctions are mandatory—to be waived only on a case-by-case basis that requires a written explanation justifying the waiver.

The secondary sanctions will penalize those outside of North Korea who assist in the regime's nefarious behavior. Without China's support in restricting North Korea's ambition, America and the world face an uphill battle. Up to this point, China has believed that an unstable North Korea is more dangerous than a North Korea with an advanced nuclear program; therefore, the enforcement of secondary sanctions is a necessary step to seek cooperation in dismantling their nuclear program.

I am pleased that the bill includes language to deter and punish cyber attacks by codifying sanctions as well as requiring the President to offer a counterstrategy to North Korea's cyber

capabilities. The ongoing cyber activities are damaging to our security and our economy as well as the economy and security of our friends. The bill also attempts to address the deplorable treatment of the North Korean people by their own government.

This legislation is certainly not without risk. China may retaliate in some manner, North Korea may become even more bellicose, and it could very well fail to pressure Kim's regime to surrender its nuclear program. Yet it is painfully clear that the status quo is not working and that global security is imperiled as our government stands by.

Fear of risk and failure will not stop us from exhausting all peaceful options to curb nuclear proliferation. Every effort must be made to convince North Korea to surrender its nuclear weapons. Congress is once again doing its part in the fight against proliferation.

Chairman CORKER, Senator GARDNER, and the members of the Foreign Relations Committee ought to be commended for their leadership on this issue, and I look forward to joining them in passing legislation later today that will put teeth to American diplomacy.

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

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

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I rise in support of the pending legislation to sanction the regime of North Korea for its belligerent behavior toward the United States and its neighbors. Today the Senate takes up a bill to increase sanctions on North Korea.

Most Americans would be surprised, I think, to learn it is still possible to increase and strengthen sanctions on North Korea. In fact, while we have had certain sanctions on North Korea in place for many years, these sanctions have never been as strong as they could be and should be, and that is why we are here today.

We are now dealing with a third generation of dictators in Kim Jong Un, who is proving to be as disastrous as his infamous father and grandfather, Kim Il-sung, the founder of the Kim regime. The Kim family has done whatever it thought necessary to stay in power, including use of criminal enterprise to raise revenues and engage in systematic human rights abuses against its own people.

The legislation before us today requires the President to sanction anyone contributing to North Korea's weapons program, money laundering activities, and human rights abuses. It also requires sanctions on anyone helping North Korea raise hard currency through the sale of minerals and precious metals.

Additionally, the bill requires sanctions on anyone engaging in activities that would threaten cyber security. Perhaps most importantly, the legislation urges the administration to designate North Korea as a jurisdiction of primary money laundering concern—a step that would block links between North Korea and the U.S. banking system. This is a very powerful sanction. If someone is doing business with the Kim regime, they should not be doing business with the United States banking system.

We need to pass this bill and push the administration to leverage the power of the Treasury Department to cut North Korea from the international banking system. As I have said, this is a very strong and powerful sanction. It needs to be put in place and then fully enforced by the administration.

The imposition of sanctions, however, cannot be the end of our North Korea policy. As we have seen over the past few months, the Kim regime is intent upon disrupting the East Asian security environment, threatening both the United States and our allies with ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons.

Sanctions can work, but they must be enforced and they will take time. In addition, we need to augment these sanctions with other steps to limit the North Korean threat.

First, we should accelerate efforts to develop missile defenses both in East Asia and in the United States. Sanctions can curtail progress in North Korea's nuclear and missile programs; however, we must deal with the capabilities North Korea already has. We must ensure we are prepared for any further advancements North Korea might make before the sanctions take hold.

Second, we need to ensure that we have a credible and reliable nuclear force available to deter North Korea and reassure our South Korean and Japanese allies. In 2014, and again earlier this year, a nuclear-capable B–52 flew over the Korean Peninsula to perform this vital deterrence and assurance mission. But to maintain strategic credibility, we must modernize our bomber fleet and our nuclear cruise missiles.

To bring the Nation's bombers up to date, the Air Force is embarking on plans to develop a new Long Range Strike Bomber capable of penetrating advanced enemy air defenses. North Korea's increasingly provocative behavior underscores our need for a bomber that can fly over any North Korean target. Now is the time to get to work on the Long Range Strike Bomber program.

Similarly, we need to upgrade the nuclear cruise missile carried on the B–52 bomber. Cruise missiles fired from a distance allow us the option of threatening North Korean targets without flying over North Korean airspace. This standoff capability is tremendously important, but the existing nuclear cruise missile is based on 1970's technology and is well beyond its intended service life. We need to ensure that the Air Force has the resources necessary to develop a new cruise missile that can defeat modern air defense systems for decades to come.

We also need to ensure that the National Nuclear Security Administration has the resources it needs to refurbish the warhead that flies on the cruise missile. Letting our bomber and cruise missile capabilities become obsolete would send a disastrous signal to the Kim regime that its nuclear program has yielded strategic benefits. On the other hand, modernizing our forces shows Mr. Kim that he will never get a nuclear upper hand in East Asia.

The bottom line is that we need a holistic approach to North Korea. We need the sanctions that we are considering here today in the Senate. We need a strong, strategic deterrent, as I have described.

I urge my colleagues to support the sanctions in front of us to put pressure on North Korea financially. This needs to be a comprehensive, ongoing, sustained effort. We have to stand strong against our adversaries and stand strong with our allies, we have to do it consistently, we have to do it over time, and we have to be steadfast. That is the type of foreign policy that can be effective. That is the kind of foreign policy we need to undertake. That is what we are trying to accomplish with this legislation.

I commend the sponsors of this legislation who are here on the floor today.

I further hope that my colleagues will support not only this legislation but critical investments in our nuclear bombers and cruise missile forces when we consider the annual Defense bills later this year. I am very familiar with these systems as the B–52s are based on Minot Air Force Base in my State. They provide a tremendous deterrent and a very important part of the nuclear triad, but we have to continue to invest in that nuclear triad—in the bombers, in the ICBM missiles, and in our submarine fleet.

I believe that both sanctions and a strong military are critical to our national security and that of our allies, as well as maintaining stability in this potentially volatile part of the world. As we have said before, the United States is the world's best hope for freedom, for peace, and for security.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

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

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, we have heard from a number of colleagues who have come to the floor in support of the legislation before us today, the North Korea sanctions legislation. Members of both sides of the

aisle recognize the need to address the forgotten maniac in North Korea.

We have also heard Members speak about a number of firsts that this legislation contemplates—the first time that this would put in place mandatory cyber sanctions for cyber attacks. This is something that applies, yes, to North Korea today but in the future could apply to any nation that wishes to use its means to attack the United States or our businesses. So it is critically important, that piece of legislation that we are going to pass today that can have a lasting impact on the security of this country.

We have also heard from a number of Members who have spoken about their concern with China. This legislation is not targeted at China; this legislation is targeted at North Korea. We have talked about how it is not targeted at the North Korean people but at the regime of Kim Jong Un. The legislation does everything we can to try to give the people of North Korea a better way of life; to try to find ways to communicate, to break down the silence they are faced with in this economic deprivation zone; to give them tools, perhaps radios and cell phone technology so they can find out what is happening beyond the confines of the torturous regime. But it does have an impact on those who try to get around the sanctions and the prohibited activities of the legislation—in fact, some of the strongest language in the legislation, whether exporting to or from North Korea, whether exporting to or importing from North Korea goods, raw metals, precious materials that can be funneled—the money from that funneled to weapons of mass destruction and other activities prohibited by the legislation. So when North Korea is exporting gold or coal—and we know that gold and coal are chiefly responsible for the North Korean foreign currency reserves—then that could be designated as a sanctioned entity under the legislation. Perhaps those entities are in China.

The fact is, we need cooperation with China. We need cooperation with Japan and South Korea. We had that so strongly, and there is a possibility we won't. We have an opportunity for trilateral alliance—that is cooperation between the three nations—and that will allow us to work together, to share intelligence, to share the cooperative efforts and exercises when it comes to North Korea, and to work with China to help make sure that it is sticking by what it says it wants to do, which is to denuclearize the North Korean regime peacefully. I think it is key to our cooperation with China as we work on any number of issues, whether it is trade issues, whether it is issues dealing with the Internet, whether it is issues dealing with the South China Sea.

Those are things that we continue to work with China on and are working to resolve, but we also have to make sure part of that conversation is North Korea. China controls a tremendous number of levers and power in North Korea. Ninety percent of their economic activities in North Korea can find their way to some way of subsistence with China, to create a reliance on China, an economic reliance that they have right now.

So this legislation will target those who are doing too much to empower the Kim Jong Un regime and to give them the money they have used to develop missiles and to develop weapons of mass destruction.

Just to give an example of some of the commodity trade that we have seen, trade commodity sanctions in this bill would address the issue of rare earth minerals and coal and steel and other goods that are exported to other countries to earn foreign currencies for the North Korea regime. To give people an idea of how much money that is, expert estimates put rare earth minerals and steel exports at around $1.8 billion and $245 million respectively. That is a lot of money that the regime is currently getting from outside in trading these goods. But if that $1.8 billion and that $245 million goes back to build weapons of mass destruction, this act will begin sanctions. The President is required to, unless the issue is a very narrow, case-by-case national security issue. There is a mandatory investigation into those activities. So I think this is a strong step that is receiving tremendous bipartisan support.

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

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

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, we have been discussing some of the opportunities to strengthen the alliance between Japan and South Korea and the United States. In the legislation before us today is language that addresses the trilateral cooperation between the United States, South Korea, and Japan; that we would seek to strengthen a high level of trilateral mechanisms for discussion and coordination of our policies toward North Korea; that we would work between the Government of the United States, the Government of South Korea, and the Government of Japan to meet these goals to ensure that the mechanisms North Korea is using when it comes to nuclear, ballistic, and conventional weapons programs are addressed by the three nations; that we address together in this trilateral alliance the human rights record, the atrocities of North Korea, and cyber security threats posed by North Korea.

It also talks about in the legislation before us that the United States, Korea, and Japan will meet on a regular basis. The legislation encourages that the United States and the trilateral alliance meet together, including the Department of State, the Department of Defense, the intelligence community, and representatives of counterpart agencies in South Korea and Japan, so that we can continue to focus our efforts on the trilateral alliance.

If you look at the conversations taking place today, we have heard our colleague from Hawaii, Senator SCHATZ, talk about the need for cooperation when it comes to THAAD. We talked about the concern that our allies, neighbors of North Korea, have when it comes to their air defense systems and how they are going to protect themselves from a possible missile strike from North Korea. Those conversations are continuing. We talked about continued and extraordinary cooperation opportunities we have in sharing intelligence among the three nations.

It all comes on the heels of what has been over the past year—last year, in particular, with the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II—some recognition of the historical complexity in the relationship between Japan and South Korea. Late last year and early this year we saw an agreement entered into by Japan and South Korea to address some of those historical complexities. That agreement was a new step forward in cooperation, in terms of working through these complexities.

That activity was followed shortly thereafter by North Korea's fourth nuclear test. What a great statement it was for Japan and South Korea to begin finding solutions to these historical complexities at a time that perhaps is needed now more than ever because of the challenges that their neighbor in the north poses to them.

While we work together to find ways to protect our allies and to assure them that our alliance and our commitment remains stronger than ever, we have to make sure we are continuing to focus on our trilateral alliance and on the efforts we have there.

I know the Senator from Minnesota is on the floor.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, today I join my colleagues in support of the North Korean Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act. I commend Senator GARDNER for his leadership, as well as Senator MENENDEZ, Chairman CORKER, and Ranking Member CARDIN for their leadership on this legislation, because protecting the American people and others in the region from national security threats like North Korea should, in fact, be our top priority.

The reason there is overwhelming bipartisan support for strong sanctions legislation against North Korea is because there is absolutely no doubt that North Korea is a well-established threat in the region. North Korea threatens global peace and security.

Experts at the United States-Korea Institute estimate that North Korea has 20 to 100 nuclear weapons. Since 2006, North Korea has tested four nuclear bombs.

Last month North Korea claims to have tested a hydrogen bomb. While our analysts in the United States are skeptical that it was in fact a hydrogen bomb, it was a nuclear bomb all the same. With each test, North Korea gets closer to testing a nuclear bomb small enough to fit on a long-range missile—the very same kind of missile that North Korea used over the weekend to launch a satellite into outer space. That missile has a range of 5,600 miles. That means that Alaska, California, and the rest of the west coast of the United States is actually within range of a North Korean bomb. Our European allies and Australia are also within range of a North Korean bomb. And, of course, Japan and South Korea—two of our key allies in East Asia—are closest to the danger North Korea poses. It is in our national security interests to protect these vital allies.

It is not just North Korea's nuclear threat that we need to be concerned about. North Korea funds its weapons regime through human trafficking—something I care deeply about—through the production of illegal drugs and selling counterfeit U.S. currency. North Korea is also one of the largest suppliers of the arms trade and has become the bargain-basement emporium for old Soviet weapons systems. North Korea has a pattern of shipping these illegal weapons on to terrorists in the Middle East.

North Korea also threatens our cyber security. North Korea's cyber attack on the Sony Corporation of America in 2014, which leaked private communications and destroyed the company's data systems, cost Sony, an American company, more than $35 million. Why this company? Because the company produced a movie that mocked North Korea's leadership.

Last summer North Korea pledged to follow up on its attack on Sony with more cyber attacks, promising to ''wage a cyber war against the U.S. to hasten its ruin.''

America is not the only target for North Korea's cyber attacks. In 2013, North Korea launched a cyber attack on three major South Korean banks, and two of South Korea's largest broadcasters were temporarily shut down after a cyber attack. This cost South Korea an estimated $720 million. This is real money and real jobs in our own country and in the countries of our allies.

We must take strong action to curb North Korea's nuclear program and to address the other threats that it poses to us and our allies. Weak sanctions against North Korea have proven unsuccessful. The legislation before us today represents the tough response that is necessary to send this message directly to North Korean leaders: Disarm or face severe economic sanctions.

This bill puts pressure on North Korea in three important ways. First, it requires the President to investigate those that help North Korea import goods used to make weapons of mass destruction. All people and businesses involved in helping North Korea obtain illicit weapons would be banned from doing business with the United States and would have their assets and financial operations immediately frozen and their travel restricted.

As we work with our allies to track down and bring to justice those who assist North Korea in its effort to harm the United States and our allies, we must also hit them financially. This bill will help to cut off North Korea's funding and further financially isolate them.

Second, this bill sanctions those who attack U.S. cyber security. This bill is the first piece of legislation to lay out a framework for sanctions against the North Korean cyber threat. Combatting cyber terrorism is a key national security priority. We must be proactive about rooting out those who enable cyber attacks.

Lastly, this bill addresses a serious human rights crisis in North Korea. North Korea is the most isolated economy and society in the world. The current regime exerts total control over daily life. Even haircuts are controlled—that is right. Women are allowed to pick from 1 of 14 hairstyles, and men cannot grow their hair longer than 2 inches. Thirty-two percent of people in North Korea are undernourished, and 34 percent of the population receives food aid.

As a Member who has worked extensively to fight modern-day slavery, I am particularly disturbed by the fact that North Korea is also among the world's worst human traffickers. The State Department's annual report on human trafficking consistently rates North Korea as one of the worst human traffickers. The United Nations considers human trafficking to be one of the three largest criminal enterprises in the world. The first two are illegal drugs and illegal guns.

Last year I was proud to be the lead Democratic cosponsor of legislation with Senator JOHN CORNYN to fight trafficking and help trafficking victims that was signed into law by President Obama last May. The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act tackles trafficking head-on. We are doing work in our own country, but we also need to be a beacon for those victims abroad.

Sex and labor traffickers treat North Korean men and women like commodities. Yemoni Park, a North Korean woman who escaped after being sold into the sex trade and raped at the age of 13, has dedicated her life to shining a light on what she calls ''the darkest place on Earth''—North Korea.

This bill calls for harsh sanctions against human rights violators. It calls for mandatory investigations into those who bankroll North Korean labor prisons and sex trafficking rings. But it also acknowledges the important work of human rights organizations that provide assistance to those suffering in North Korea and allows them to continue their lifesaving work.

China fuels much of the demand for North Korea's human trafficking, and they help fund the North Korean regime. Beyond enacting swift and severe sanctions against those associated with North Korea's weapons suppliers, hackers, and human rights violators, we must pressure China to get serious about sanctioning the North Korean regime. Unless we have China's help, the regime will not truly feel the repercussions of its actions.

We have come together today across party lines in a bipartisan effort to address the growing threat that North Korea poses to the United States and our allies. We are united in our belief that our national security—and the security of our allies—requires a swift and strong response to North Korea and those who fund its tyrants. We are also united in our belief that we must vigorously investigate and sanction those who in any way help North Korea develop weapons of mass destruction and those who seek to undermine cyber security.

We must do everything in our power to help improve the lives of innocent North Koreans. That is why I am supporting this bill, and I thank my colleagues for their leadership—Senator MENENDEZ, Senator GARDNER, Senator CARDIN, and Senator CORKER.

AMBASSADOR NOMINATIONS

Madam President, I wanted to add one more thing. As I try to do every day with Senator SHAHEEN, I address the issue of the Ambassadors to Norway and Sweden. It has been 864 days since we have had an Ambassador to Norway. It has been 468 days since the President nominated Azita Raji to be Ambassador to Sweden.

I appreciate Senator CORKER's leadership on this issue. We are working very hard to get these two Ambassadors confirmed. These countries are the 11th and 12th biggest investors in the United States. Senator CRUZ is the one holding up the vote on these nominations. We are hopeful that at some point we will be able to move ahead. This has been going on way too long.

They are some of our best allies in the fight against Russian aggression. Norway actually shares a border with Russia. We have to be by their side if they take in thousands and thousands of refugees. We have talked about the need for a strong Europe. These are the two major countries in Europe that don't have Ambassadors from the United States. That must change.

Again, I thank Senator CORKER and Senator CARDIN for their leadership.

Thank you, Madam President, and I yield the floor.

Mr. CORKER. Madam President, I think Senator CAPITO is next to speak, but I do want to just mention that I appreciate the way that Senator KLOBUCHAR has worked on the issue of the

Ambassadors to Norway and Sweden, and I do think we are on the cusp in the next 24 hours of that being resolved. I thank Senator KLOBUCHAR for her diligence and patience, and with that I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Thank you, Madam President.

I rise today in strong support of the North Korean Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act. I commend Senators CORKER, GARDNER, MENENDEZ, and CARDIN for their hard work on this bill, and I am proud to be a cosponsor.

North Korea poses a serious threat to the United States. Last month, the North Koreans tested a nuclear device as they continue to advance their weapons technology. Just this weekend the North Koreans launched a satellite as they work to build a ballistic missile program.

Cyber attacks launched by North Korea have crippled businesses such as Sony Pictures and targeted our allies in South Korea and Japan. The threats posed by North Korea will only continue to grow, and our current policy toward North Korea has failed to protect the safety and security of the American people.

This legislation takes significant steps to deny North Korea's capabilities and to limit the nuclear and ballistic missile programs, to stop cyber security attacks, and to end North Korea's horrendous human rights violations. Mandatory investigations and mandatory sanctions are the hallmark of this legislation. Under this bill, the administration is required to investigate the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, human rights abuses, and cyber crimes. When investigations reveal misconduct related to these activities, sanctions are required.

Importantly, this bill will target minerals and other items that the North Korean regime uses to finance its weapons programs at the expense of its own people. Sanctions under this bill would also apply to businesses or individuals around the world that help North Korea expand its nuclear weapons and cyber crime capabilities.

Similar legislation imposing sanctions targeted towards North Korea passed in the House last month with a nearly unanimous vote. That is quite an achievement. Today I hope this bill will pass by a similar margin and show that the Senate is united in our resolve against the security threats posed by North Korea.

CLEAN POWER PLAN

Madam President, on another important note, last night the U.S. Supreme Court put the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Power Plan on hold. This landmark decision will prevent the Obama administration from enforcing this rule until all legal challenges are complete.

West Virginia, my State, has lost nearly 10,000 coal mining jobs since 2009. Nearly every week, hundreds of layoffs and more notices devastate West Virginia's coalfields, West Virginia families, and communities. The impact on State and local budgets has been stark. School boards have announced significant cuts to education due to the loss of coal severance tax revenue. This is all across the State. As bad as the current economic situation is, the Clean Power Plan would make things worse for families and communities in my State.

We know the EPA's playbook. Earlier this year, the Supreme Court struck down EPA's mercury rule targeting powerplants since the Agency failed to follow the legal requirements, but because the mercury rule went into effect years before legal challenges were complete, billions of dollars had already been invested and many jobs had already been lost.

My ARENA Act has recognized that the 29 States and hundreds of other organizations challenging the President's power grab deserve meaningful judicial review. My legislation said this rule could not go into effect until the litigation is complete—such common sense. I am very pleased the Supreme Court has agreed with this commonsense position and recognized the immediate impact of this rule.

I also want to extend my appreciation to West Virginia's attorney general, Patrick Morrisey, for his leading role in this case. On behalf of our State, he has headed the legal challenge against this administration, and last night's decision is just the latest legal setback for an out-of-control EPA.

Congress has passed legislation disapproving of the Clean Power Plan. We sent it to the President and he vetoed it. A majority of our States are still challenging this rule, and the judicial branch now seems poised to play its role in protecting both the separation of powers and the principles of federalism from the administration's power grab.

Increasingly, this lameduck President stands alone as he attempts to further his climate agenda. The American people are not behind him. A majority of Congress has come out against his efforts, and now the Supreme Court has raised concerns.

This is an important step toward having the American people—not an unchecked bureaucracy—set our energy agenda, and we must continue to fight to permanently block this rule.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Madam President, I also rise to support the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016. It is good to see on the floor colleagues who have worked on this important legislation from Maryland, New Jersey, our committee chair, and the Senator from Colorado. I appreciate their efforts and believe this can be a great example of bipartisanship and near-unanimous agreement.

We have witnessed recently many provocations by the North Koreans. The ballistic missile test this past weekend violates numerous U.N. Security Council resolutions and it threatens both the United States and especially our allies in the region. This closely follows a nuclear test in January—another deplorable action by North Korea—and missile nuclear weapons program proliferation concerns that have been the subject of a lot of discussion in this body.

I appreciate the drafters and the Foreign Relations Committee for moving swiftly to deliver a response that includes penalties for the missile launch and the nuclear test.

I will also mention that North Korea's detention of American citizens can't be overlooked. This includes the recent detainment in North Korea of Otto Frederick Warmbier, who is a third-year college student at the University of Virginia. As we move forward with our strategy on North Korea, we have to prioritize and ensure the safe return of our citizens who are detained there.

A little bit about how destabilizing North Korea's actions are. This recent test was expected, and it is proof of the North Korean grim determination to develop nuclear weapons, even if it is hampering and hobbling their economy and causing their citizens to suffer. They have been given warnings that they shouldn't do it, but they have also been giving warnings to the global community that they would.

This is a country that is determined to defy a host of U.N. Security Council resolutions that ban it from conducting nuclear and missile tests. The international community has been speaking with clarity about what the line is: Don't do this—but North Korea has chosen to proceed.

Kim Jong Un has once again displayed a willingness to defy the international community—and at such a cost to his people. The economy there is absolutely hobbled because of his desire to be a militaristic leader, but the result is the population of his country is suffering. His strategy to have nuclear, military, and economic development for his people is not going to work because he can't have both, and the legislation demonstrates that these things are impossible by imposing a significant economic cost. The legislation shows that the United States will hold countries and private entities accountable for compliance with rules and law.

Kim Jong Un's backward calculus has left his country impoverished and almost entirely dependent on China for economic trade. Roughly 90 percent of North Korea's foreign trade is with China, which is why China can have significant leverage over North Korea, but the track record of China using its leverage to curb North Korean activity is very disappointing. We need to continue to pressure China to increase sanctions on North Korea and elevate

this issue in bilateral discussions with China. The number of North Korean nuclear weapons could soon approach China's within the next decade, and that is a direct threat to regional security and global security.

Yesterday, in the Armed Services Committee hearing we attended, DNI James Clapper stated that North Korea is expanding its uranium enrichment activities, it has restarted plutonium production, and it could start extracting plutonium from spent fuel within a matter of months.

China can no longer turn a blind eye to this. As a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, China needs to help foster international peace and play the role that an international power on the U.N. Security Council needs to play. They need to play the role in additionally advancing or pushing for more human rights in North Korea because they have the leverage to do so. We don't trade with North Korea. Our leverage system is somewhat limited, but China, with a 90-percent trade share, has that leverage.

The good thing about these sanctions is that they will sanction the activities of Chinese companies and entities that are trading with North Korea, and that secondary sanction effect, I think, has the ability to work and put pressure on them.

We have seen recently how sanctions can work in another context, in the Iran context. The architects of the sanctions policy with Iran are in this room, and they deserve praise because there is no way Iran, a rogue nation that was moving forward to develop nuclear weapons, would have ever entertained a diplomatic discussion to try to put limits on that program had it not been for sanctions that were designed to have a strategic and careful effect. So we need to do the same thing here, and these sanctions do that.

In conclusion, the United States has to undertake a more proactive approach to North Korea to address the nuclear and ballistic missile programs. This legislation is good because it not only puts Congress even more firmly on the record in opposition to North Korea's activity, but it also provides the executive branch a more robust set of policy tools to confront the threat that is posed by Pyongyang.

This is an example of legislation that came out of the committee—bipartisan and unanimous. It represents the best of bipartisan foreign policy cooperation, and I am strongly in support of the bill.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I first thank Senator KAINE for his input in this legislation and so much other legislation that goes through the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He is an extremely valuable member of our committee, a very good thinker, but more importantly he listens to others in the committee and finds a common way that we can make important national foreign policy issues bipartisan. He has done that and did that with the Iran review act in reaching a way that we could bring that together in a bipartisan manner. He was very helpful on the North Korean sanction bill that we have on the floor, so I thank Senator KAINE for his contributions.

I say to Senator CORKER, I know we are getting near the end of this debate. I have been listening to this debate throughout the day, and I think it points out the best traditions of the U.S. Senate. So many Members have come to the floor in serious debate about the national security challenge that North Korea presents—not just, as I said, to the Korean Peninsula, not just to our allies in East Asia but globally—and how U.S. leadership is going to be vitally important and we are going to act.

The United States is going to act. The Senate tonight is going to pass a very strong sanctions bill, a very strong message bill that we do not intend to sit back and let North Korea proliferate their weapons of mass destruction. We also don't plan to sit back and let them commit gross violations of human rights. We will not sit back and allow them to attack our intellectual property through cyber security attacks, and we are going to act as one, united. We are going to act, Democrats and Republicans, House and Senate. We are going to work with the administration. We are going to get this done. Then, yes, we are going to go to the international community. We are going to put pressure on other countries.

We know the Republic of Korea is with us. We know Japan is with us. China needs to be with us, and we are going to go and talk to China, explain and work with them so we can get international pressure to isolate the North Korean regime until they change their course. It is critically important to our security but also to the people of North Korea. I thought this debate has been in the best tradition of the U.S. Senate.

Again, we had the architects, as Senator KAINE pointed out, drafting this bill. Senator CORKER's leadership clearly set the climate in our committee so we could have that type of debate. I am sorry no one here could sit in on some of Senator CORKER and Senator MENENDEZ's meetings as they were negotiating the specific terms of the bill. Each had their views, but they listened to each other. They recognized that by listening to each other they could come out at the end of the day with a stronger bill. As a result of our two colleagues, we were able to reach that common ground and I think very shortly we are going to be able to show the people of in country the best traditions of the U.S. Senate on foreign policy issues.

I am very proud to work with Senator CORKER and my colleagues on this bill.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Madam President, obviously I appreciate the comments of the distinguished ranking member. Our former chairman, Senator MENENDEZ, is here; Senator GARDNER, the two of them. We are way ahead in the Senate in many ways in addressing this issue prior to these last provocations by North Korea. I thank them for that.

Again, as Senator KAINE mentioned, we are doing it in the best fashion of the United States. Where there are differences, we worked together to hammer those out and ended up, as Senator CARDIN just mentioned, with a stronger piece of legislation.

I also commend the House. They sent over a very good bill. They really did. It was strong. Senator GARDNER and Senator MENENDEZ, with all of us working together, were able to broaden it out and to deal with some other issues that were not dealt with in that piece of legislation.

The fact is, things have occurred since that legislation passed that have caused people to want to put in place a much stronger, much bolder footprint as it relates to North Korea.

What is amazing—and I appreciated your comments about Senator KAINE. I don't think we have a more thoughtful or more principled member on our committee, and I don't think there is any way the Iran review act would have occurred without him taking the steps that he did to break the logjam at that time. Let's face it, with some important constituents it mattered, and it allowed us to move ahead with it—obviously, Senator MENENDEZ on the front end and Senator CARDIN as the new ranking member.

What is amazing in many ways is that North Korea has gotten this far along. I mean, it has been through multiple administrations, differing parties. Over the last 20 years, they have just continued to move along. While I think our Nation did a very good job in focusing on the problems that Iran was creating, and Senator MENENDEZ, who is sitting beside me, certainly led in putting sanctions in place with Senator KIRK and others. We moved swiftly to arrest that. Hopefully, while we had disagreements over the content of the actual agreement—and that is represented by differences in votes on the agreement itself—it did bring them to the table. What is amazing is that again they have progressed so far along, way beyond where Iran is.

What is also amazing to me is that China—I am going to be having those conversations this weekend with our counterparts in Munich regarding this very issue. What is amazing to me is you have right on their border this country which is definitely, you have to say, a rogue country that is creating provocations in the region.

We have all visited the DMZ and have seen that we have 28,500 troops who are there to keep peace. They have been

there since 1953. So we are right there in the region. We have allies. Again, it is amazing that it has gone this far; that China has not been willing to take the steps; that, as Senator KAINE mentioned, their 90 percent trade partner could easily cause this to go in a different direction. But even more importantly, here we are taking action that I hope will lead to other members of the international community joining us in sanctions. But China—the very entity that could do something about this—is blocking the U.N. Security Council's action toward this being done on a multilateral basis on the front end.

But this is what happens. In the past, the Senate has taken unilateral action. We know we are much better off with multilateral sanctions. A lot of times it starts this way. It started this way with Iran, and over time we were able to build worldwide support—or mostly worldwide support—toward isolating them and causing them to come to the table.

Again, this country is much further along. Hopefully we will have the same success. But we have to realize, because of the 20 years of efforts that they have underway and especially the bold steps they have taken since 2003, as Senator GARDNER so aptly outlined in an earlier discussion, we are going to have to do far more than this. We need to put this in place, but we also have to remain diligent and keep moving ahead. It may take additional actions down the road. It is certainly going to take tremendous oversight and involvement by the administration, and the administration to follow, and the administration after them. This is a great step, though, for the Senate. It is a great step for our country.

Again, I thank our House colleagues. My guess is that we will send this bill back over this evening at about 5:45, some changes may be made, and it will go to the President. We will have spoken with one voice in the best way the Senate speaks, and in a strong way. We will be doing something that furthers the safety and security of our own citizens, which is what we are here about.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, as we are winding down this debate that has been extraordinary not only because of its unanimity, which I think is incredibly important when we are facing a challenge in the national security interests of the United States, but also because of the tone it set and the seriousness of the issue with which Members on both sides have taken to it—that is incredibly important. I know my colleagues—the distinguished chairman and the distinguished ranking member—have spoken to this, but it is important to note that when the Senate on a bipartisan basis perceives a real threat to the potential national security of the United States and of significant allies, it can come together and send not just a powerful message but a powerful strategy to try to deal with that challenge. So I salute all of my colleagues for having engaged in this debate, and I thank the leadership of the committee, as well as Senator GARDNER, for working with me.

When I introduced this legislation last year, I felt that the time for strategic patience—which had been a hallmark of our policy—had run its course. We had hoped that patience would have had a unique regime in North Korea moving in a different direction. But it came to a point where multiple tests of nuclear explosions, each increasing in the size of its effectiveness; the attempts to miniaturize those efforts; the missile launches they were going through; the terrible labor camps and other human rights violations inside of North Korea and what is happening to the North Korean people—that strategic patience in and of itself was not getting us to the goal. If anything, while we were being patient, the North Koreans continued to move in a direction for which we needed what I think is a strategic resolve. And that is what we have come to here today—a bipartisan effort to have a strategic resolve to not only focus on North Korea but also the secondary sanctions to say: Those who want to deal with North Korea and to help North Korea achieve its goals in violation of international norms will have a consequence.

Right now we have all been focused on North Korea as a government, as an entity, but this legislation now broadens that to say to those who want to help the North Koreans provide the material wherewithal for their nuclear missile and other programs that there is a consequence to you. I believe that is an appropriate use of sanctions. So I want to close on this question of sanctions.

For 24 years between the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the last 10 in the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, I have viewed U.S. foreign policy in that peaceful diplomacy has an arsenal. That arsenal is in part how one can direct international opinion to a country that is violating international norms, to the extent that country can really be affected by international opinion. North Korea is an example of a country that is difficult to affect by international opinion. There is the use of aid and the use of trade as inducements to a country to act in a certain way and join the international community and follow the norms and international will and then the denial of aid or trade and other sanctions as a way to get them to move away from the direction in which they are violating international norms.

Outside of that universe—international opinion, use of aid, use of trade, denial of aid, denial of trade, and sanctions, particularly that we have begun to perfect in the financial sector—which can be a very powerful tool. It shouldn't be used bluntly but nonetheless is an important tool in an arsenal of peaceful diplomacy in the world.

Looking aside from the military universe of what is available to us, which should be our last resort, when we are talking about peaceful diplomacy, there are moments in which sanctions are the last use of our peaceful diplomacy and a way to get countries to move in the direction we want. This moment, which I think is about strategic resolve, does exactly that. It uses sanctions not just against the regime in North Korea but against those who would give it the wherewithal to follow its illicit pursuits. I think that is what is incredibly powerful about this legislation and the appropriate use of our arsenal of peaceful diplomacy in the hopes that we can deter the North Koreans from where they are and move in a different direction and in the hope that we can get other countries in the world—and it will have to be more than hope; it will have to be a strategic resolve to get those other countries to join us, as we did in the case of Iran. We did not start with the world wanting to come together with us because of their economic interests and other strategic interests. Through American leadership, we ultimately drove the moment in which we had a multilateral international effort that brought the Iranians to the negotiating table.

It is my hope that what happens here in the Senate today begins a process that can proselytize others in the world to join us so that the nuclear nightmare that is potentially North Korea never ever materializes.

With that, I hope we have an overwhelming unanimous vote on this legislation. I again thank the leadership for working with us.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, as I listen to my colleagues, I think we know how proud we are to serve with people who have such deep knowledge and strategic views on how we as a nation can better defend ourselves and lead the world.

To Senator MENENDEZ's comments about America's strength, yes, I think everyone understands that we have the greatest arsenal in the world. We do. But America also understands the power of diplomacy, and diplomacy has to be backed up with incentives and disincentives.

Incentives, yes. The American taxpayer is generous with development assistance and our assistance in helping countries develop into stronger democracies in which they can be stronger economies and have a better life for their people and, by the way, be better consumers of U.S. products. That is what America does—it offers incentives—but we also lead the world in saying: If you do not follow the internationally acceptable norms, there will be consequences, and those consequences mean that we will not let you do commerce to strengthen your

ability to harm your neighbors and to harm global security.

That is what Senator MENENDEZ was talking about. The sanctions we are imposing here are aimed directly at North Korea's ability to compile weapons of mass destruction, to harm their own people, and to harm others through the use of cyber. That is what these sanctions are aimed at. They are aimed at preventing them from being able to do that.

It also shows U.S. leadership because our allies look to the United States first. It is an international financial system, and if the United States is not prepared to move forward, we cannot expect the rest of our allies to move ahead. So it is a clear signal that we are prepared to take these actions. We are taking these actions. We are going to take them by ourselves if we have to, but it will be much more effective if we can get the international community to support us.

Senator MENENDEZ is absolutely correct. I remember when we did this against the apartheid of South Africa. We were able to get actions taken by other countries after we acted. The Senator is absolutely correct on Iran. We acted on Iran; we then got other countries to act. If the United States had not shown the leadership, they would not have acted. That is now true with North Korea. Our actions will help us get other countries to act so that we can hopefully accomplish our goal of a peaceful North Korea without the use of our military might.

Let me explain what is at stake here. We all understand the tests that are going on with the so-called satellite tests to be able to develop a missile that can deliver a weapon well beyond the Republic of Korea that could directly attack U.S. interests and certainly our allies' interests. That is what they are trying to do with these tests, is to develop weapons of mass destruction that could cause unspeakable damage. That is what we are trying to prevent. And it is not just the direct actions by the North Koreans; they have already shown their willingness to work with other rogue states in developing weapons of mass destruction. If we allow them to accumulate these weapons, they could then transfer them to other rogue countries and they could be used against our interests. We also know that North Korea is willing to make arrangements with terrorist organizations, and these weapons could end up in the hands of terrorists and be used against our interests.

That is what is at stake. There is a lot at stake, and that is on the weapons program. We already saw North Korea act in regard to Sony on cyber. We know this is a growing field. If we don't take action now, the circumstances are only going to get more damaging to U.S. interests.

The one area that I really congratulate Senator GARDNER and Senator MENENDEZ for bringing to this bill is the human rights issues, the gross violations of human rights. We talked about this. There is no country in the world that treats its citizens worse than North Korea does. They are literally starving their population. They are starving their population. They torture their population. They imprison anyone who dares say anything against the government. They do summary executions if they don't like you. We know that. It has been documented over and over again.

This legislation speaks to American values. Our strength is in our arsenal and our strength is in our universal values; that we won't allow that to happen; that, yes, we have an interest in how the people of North Korea are treated; that these are international norms that have been violated by North Korea.

I just wanted to follow up with Senator MENENDEZ because I thought he articulated so well about America's strength and how we act. It is not just because we have the best military in the world; it is because we have the will to stand up for values that are important for not only our national security but for global security.

When the United States leads, other countries join us, and we get results. Hopefully, we are going to be able to change North Korea's conduct through these measures. That is in the best interest of the United States, it is in the best interest of our allies, and it is in the best interest of North Korea. That is what this legislation speaks to.

I share Senator MENENDEZ's hope that we will see a very strong vote in a few minutes, and I know that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle have expressed their views on this. I urge everyone to support this effort and to show America's resolve in the united policy in this regard.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, I want to thank all of my colleagues for their thoughtful input during this debate. We have had great discussions from numerous Members who have come to the floor throughout the day to discuss North Korea and the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act.

I want to thank Senator CORKER for his leadership on the committee, the product of which is a very good bipartisan sanctions action. I hope and agree with Senator MENENDEZ, our colleague from New Jersey, that this will indeed receive unanimous support.

I wish to thank Senator MENENDEZ through the Chair for his efforts to make this a success, and thanks to the ranking member of the committee and ranking member of the Asia subcommittee, as well, for their work. We set out a year ago to work on this problem and address this challenge.

The purpose of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act is very simple. The purpose of the bill is to peacefully disarm North Korea through mandatory sanctions that would deprive the regime of the means to build its nuclear and ballistic missile programs, to deprive the regime of its means to carry out malicious cyber activities, and to deprive the regime of the means to continue its gross abuse of the human rights of its own people. That is the purpose of this bill. Obviously, there is more work to do.

The discussions today talk about the work we have to do with our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, in the other Chamber, and the work we have to do around the globe to make sure that the United Nations Security Council recognizes this challenge and that China understands our basis of cooperation depends on actions against something we both agree on, and that is that we shouldn't have a nuclear North Korea.

Let's build that relationship of cooperation with China. Let's build that relationship of trilateral alliance among South Korea, Japan, and the United States. Those are the things we can begin to accomplish with this legislation.

I had a conversation with Admiral Gortney not too long ago about North Korea. He is the head of NORTHCOM, headquartered in Colorado Springs, CO. It was a conversation about North Korea and what he sees. Through his comments, you can tell he is concerned, and he believes the situation in the Korean Peninsula is at its most unstable point since the armistice. Over six decades, we today are seeing the most unstable point on the Korean Peninsula because of a rogue regime that tortures its own people, kills its own leaders, and deprives its citizens of human dignity.

Strategic patience has failed. One expert said we have moved from strategic patience to benign neglect. That is not leadership. So today we start a new policy based on strength and not patience. This legislation would mandate—not simply authorize but mandate—the imposition of sanctions against all persons who materially contribute to North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile development; import luxury goods into North Korea; enable its censorship and human rights abuses; engage in money laundering and manufacture of counterfeit goods and narcotic trafficking; engage in activities undermining cyber security; have sold, supplied or transferred to or from North Korea precious metals or raw metals, including aluminum, steel, and coal for the benefit of North Korea's regime and its illicit activities; that is, $1.8 billion in raw metals, $245 million in other goods that are sanctioned under this act, including those entities that decide they would import from North Korea if that money they would generate from the sale of that import goes to the development of proliferation activities.

The cyber sanctions and strategy that we require are unique to the Senate bill. They will be the first mandatory sanctions in history passed against cyber criminals. This bill also codifies Executive orders 13687 and 13694 regarding cyber security, as they apply to North Korea, which were enacted last year in the wake of the Sony Pictures hack and other cyber incidents. It is also a unique feature of our Senate bill today.

The mandatory sanctions on metals and minerals are unique to the legislation. Expert estimates, as we just said, put North Korea's rare metal minerals and steel exports at around $2 billion, so these sanctions could have a significant impact in deterring the regime and its enablers. The sanctions in this bill are secondary, as we have discussed, which means they would be applied to individuals and entities, not just in the United States but around the world, who would assist the Government of North Korea and the designated entities that engage in the activities prohibited by this legislation. It mandates a strategy and sanctions against North Korea's human rights abuses.

You can see what it does on the chart. You can see the opportunity we have before us and the American people and our obligation to make sure we are doing everything we can to stand up for the people of North Korea and stand up to the totalitarian regime of North Korea.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation tonight, this bipartisan product of countless hours of debate and discussions and negotiations, and to come away with a good product that we can be proud of, to work with the House Members so that this is on the President's desk. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I yield my time.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill 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. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all time be yielded back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the committee-reported amendment is agreed to.

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

The bill was read the third time.

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

The yeas and nays have been ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN).

Mr. REID. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 96, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 20 Leg.]

YEAS—96

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

NOT VOTING—4

Durbin	Sanders
Graham	Sullivan

The bill (H.R. 757), as amended, was passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I also ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business and also to be allotted time beyond 10 minutes.

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

CHILD CARE ACT AND LEAD POISONING

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise this evening to talk about childcare, in particular one piece of legislation which I have introduced today, S. 2539, but also to talk more broadly about the critical need in our country for more options, more opportunities for families—especially low-income families—to be able to afford high-quality childcare. The bill that was introduced today is the Child Care Access to Resources for Early Learning Act. Of course, the acronym or shorthand for the bill is the Child CARE Act, standing for the words in the bill that focus on resources and in particular resources for early learning.

It is this Senator's belief, and I think the evidence is abundantly clear over time whenever this issue is studied, that in terms of the positive impact of early care and learning of a child, the evidence tells us over and over again that if kids learn more now, they will literally earn more later. That connection between learning and earning is compelling, and I think it is an essential part of the debate. Early education and care for a young child has an impact on all of our lives when it comes to the economy.

We know now from the evidence that high-quality early learning contributes to a reduction in need for special education. It also helps to lower juvenile justice rates. It also helps to improve health outcomes over time. It also increases high school graduation and college matriculation rates.

For some children from low-income households, a lot of these studies have also shown that by the age of 3, they will have heard 30 million fewer words than their more affluent peers. Even before they enter kindergarten, this so-called word gap means they are already far behind. The income level of the household can often determine how many words that child has heard in his or her lifetime. Of course, the reason it is such a big number is because the words get repeated, but even when you factor in the repeating of words over and over again, just imagine how far behind they are if they are behind by 30 million words. If it were 5 million words, that would be a substantial gap, but, of course, it is much worse than that.

I believe and I think the evidence shows that in the decades to come, the strength of our economy and the fiscal stability of our Nation will depend on the viability and vitality of our future workforce. I think that is evident from the research. But, again, that connection between early learning and the earning potential of that individual is abundant.

Unfortunately, for many families, the need is still substantially great. Just last fall, Pennsylvania alone had a waiting list of 7,000 families who qualified for childcare vouchers but did not receive them. In other words, in one State there were 7,000 families who were eligible for these vouchers and did not receive them. That story, unfortunately, is playing out across the country. According to data from the Department of Health and Human Services, less than 1 in 10 children nationwide under the age of 4 received childcare assistance. In Pennsylvania it is about 15 percent. Just think about that—nationwide, 1 in 10 is eligible for this kind of help and is not receiving it.

Child Care Aware—one of the many groups who helped with the legislation I just mentioned, the Child CARE Act—tells us that particularly in urban and rural communities, there is a severe shortage of high-quality or licensed childcare facilities.

In Pennsylvania, where we have a significant State investment in childcare, only 3.5 percent of childcare slots for children birth to age 4 years old are in the highest quality programs.

For many families who can even find care, the cost is very burdensome. For most families, childcare is often the second most costly expense, behind only housing. Just imagine that—the second highest expense in the life of a family for far too many families is childcare, second only to housing. In 2014, in more than half of the United States, a year of childcare costs more than a year of college tuition at a public college. That is another stunning comparison.

We hear it all the time from real people—not just numbers or studies, we hear it from real people. Last week when we were discussing the bill, the Child CARE Act, we heard from a Washington, DC, Metropolitan Police officer who also happens to be a parent. Her name is Zunnobia, and she told us how much there is a struggle for hard-working, even middle-class families who just want the best for their children, how difficult that struggle is to find quality, affordable childcare for early care and learning. This police officer also told me and told those in the room how all too often in her work as a police officer, she sees teenagers or young people who did not have the benefit of high-quality care and early learning.

This is another example from Pennsylvania. This is what Deanna, a parent, tells us, and I am quoting just in part:

> Each month, with two children in daycare, our payment exceeded our mortgage payment.

So it is not the second highest cost but the highest cost in her household.

Deanna continues:

> Some months we paid for daycare with our home equity line of credit. It took us 2 years to pay off the debt we acquired. Parents with young children are really struggling. It is a no-win situation.

That is what Deanna, a parent from Pennsylvania, tells us.

Christina, another Pennsylvanian, a parent, told us that the cost of ''daycare is bringing us straight to foreclosure because we cannot afford our mortgage, groceries, diapers, and gas for our one car.''

So this is the real world and this is the real life of a struggling family but especially struggling—even in a recovery—with the cost of childcare.

Let me talk for a moment about the component parts of the act. The Child CARE Act is legislation that will ensure that families with infants and toddlers who are living at or below 200 percent of the Federal poverty level, which we know is approximately $40,000 for a family of three—it will help those families who need childcare have access to that high-quality care. The act will further the purposes of the child care and development block grant by raising quality standards and by providing resources necessary to make those higher quality standards a reality and available to families across the Nation. Over a 10-year period, we estimate that the legislation could help over 1 million additional children under the age of 4 gain access to high-quality childcare.

Part of achieving higher quality care is ensuring that childcare providers are receiving an appropriate level of support and that childcare workers are compensated fairly for their expertise. Unfortunately, across the Nation, the average childcare worker often makes below poverty wages. According to the 2013 National Survey of Early Care and Education, the median wage for center-based childcare staff was $9.30 an hour, about $19,000 a year. Just imagine that. The people who we believe are the best qualified and the most dedicated to taking care of our children, who will give them that early care and the learning that goes with it, the people whom we entrust with our most treasured asset, our children, in too many places in this country, those same workers are making just $19,000 a year. This means that childcare workers on average make less than parking lot attendants, less than manicurists, and less than massage therapists. So if we really care about our children, I think we would pay them more than some of the occupations I just mentioned. Caring for and nurturing infants and toddlers requires specialized knowledge and competencies that are not easily developed and should not be taken for granted.

I believe and I think most Members of Congress, either in the Senate or in the House, believe that our children deserve quality. They deserve quality care and learning, but they especially deserve the quality that comes with someone who is paid an adequate wage and has a level of expertise and competency to provide that child with the kind of early care and learning she has a right to expect.

Childcare funding is critically important not only to families in Pennsylvania and across the Nation, but, of course, it is critical if we are going to meet that demand that our workforce must meet. The children who learn more now will earn more later.

We also know that this legislation is an opportunity to finally, at long last, make that historic commitment to these same families. We know the return on investment, if that is all someone wants to focus on, is return on investment. I know some people like numbers sometimes better than testimonials from parents. But if your only concern is return on investment, this is a good deal. Return on investment in terms of high-quality early care and learning is as high as $17 for $1. That is a pretty good deal anywhere in the country. We want to emphasize the return on investment, but I also believe at the same time that we have to focus on the life of that child and that child's prospects for future employment to contribute to our economy.

We have to make this issue a priority. If we really care about economic growth, GDP growth, competing in a world economy, and having a skilled workforce, all those high aspirations, all those goals we talk about a lot, it starts with early care and learning. A child cannot earn what she should be able to earn if she doesn't have the opportunity for early care and learning—high-quality early care and learning.

We can spend up to $40,000 a year on incarceration and thousands on drug treatment and/or special education or we can spend a small fraction of that now on early care and learning and give children both a healthy and a smart start in life.

I urge my colleagues, when it comes before them, to support the Child CARE Act that has been introduced today.

Mr. President, let me conclude with some brief comments about another related issue for our kids—lead poisoning.

What has happened in Flint, MI, is both horrific and inexcusable. No one should accept any excuse for what happened there. I commend Senator STABENOW and Senator PETERS for shining a light on what occurred in their home State.

But, unfortunately, this is an issue that involves not just the State of Michigan, not just the city of Flint, this is a nationwide problem, especially on the eastern seaboard. Unfortunately, many communities around the country have numbers that are even worse, even higher than the Flint numbers.

By one example, Pennsylvania—one of the largest States in the Union—18 cities in Pennsylvania are reporting higher levels of lead exposure among children than Flint. Let me say that again—higher levels than Flint. In Flint, 3.2 percent of children exceeded the danger threshold for lead exposure, tested levels of 5 or more micrograms

per deciliter of blood. So 5 or more micrograms is the danger level, and Flint was at 3.2. Where were some cities in Pennsylvania that, as I said, have higher numbers? Instead of being at 5 or 3.2, this is what we see in Pennsylvania: Allentown, 23; Altoona, 20.5; my hometown of Scranton, 20 percent; Philadelphia and Pittsburgh—our largest cities, the two largest cities and the most urban parts of our State—were at 10 and 8 respectively, which is lower than the other Pennsylvania cities but still higher than Flint. In Pennsylvania, the primary source for childhood lead poisoning is not water but, rather, deteriorating infrastructure and exposure to the remnants of lead-based paint, paint dust, and chips. That is a problem in our State, but there are other States, especially on the eastern seaboard, that have a similar problem.

We must ensure that children who have been exposed to high levels of lead receive all—and I mean that literally—all of the followup services they need to reach their full potential. Whether that is remedial, medical, or educational, we need to be there for those children.

I supported funding for the Centers for Disease Control's Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, which supports State and local public health departments working to identify cases of childhood lead exposure. But that is just but one step. We have a lot more to do on this issue.

I will conclude by saying that we should take action on childcare to make sure that it is affordable and that it is of a high quality so that especially poor children can learn more now and earn more later. It is very difficult to learn, grow, and succeed if you have the disadvantage of not only not having childcare and early learning but the additional burden of high levels of lead. These are challenges that we face as a country, and these are challenges that both Houses and both parties must confront.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

TRADE FACILITATION AND TRADE ENFORCEMENT BILL

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, tomorrow the Senate will be bringing up the Customs bill that I intend to support moving to. I believe it has a number of good provisions, and I hope to be able to support its final passage.

But first, I want to bring attention to the weakened currency provisions that the conference report included. This is not the language that initially passed the Senate, but instead is much weaker.

The Senate, several times, has affirmed the need to provide the Treasury Department and the Department of Commerce tools to prevent currency manipulation.

In 2011, the Senate passed such a bill to provide the Commerce Department with enforcement mechanisms by a vote of 63–35.

Second, in 2013, 60 Senators signed a letter to the U.S. Trade Representative, calling for the inclusion of enforceable currency provisions in Trans-Pacific Partnership.

Finally, in May of 2015, the Senate passed by a 78-to-20 vote this Customs enforcement bill, which, for the first time, included new tools that are necessary to defend American manufacturers from foreign currency manipulations—the language to confront currency cheating that the Treasury Department acknowledges is occurring, but they have refused to take action to confront it.

That original bill would have required, where this kind of currency manipulation occurs, action be taken to fix currency manipulation. Unfortunately, that language was removed from the conference report.

I think it is time—and I think a bipartisan majority of this Senate believes it is time—for us to pass enforceable currency protection measures and make sure they make it to the President's desk.

In June of 2015, a New York Times poll showed that 63 percent of Americans believe that trade restrictions are necessary, and only 16 percent of Americans believe that the Trans-Pacific Partnership would actually increase American jobs. I am absolutely convinced the American people are correct on that, based on a study of previous trade agreements and the analysis of studies by Tufts University and other groups.

A May 2015 poll conducted by Ipsos, a leading polling and communications firm, found that 73 percent of the U.S. public believes Congress should oppose any ''international trade agreement that does not specifically prohibit currency manipulation.'' That is a strong polling number.

A second Ipsos poll, conducted last year, found that 79 percent of respondents said that it was important for the trade deal to include enforceable currency protections.

In August, the Chinese Government devalued its currency 4 percent, creating a regional currency war in that area involving Australia, Malaysia, and South Korea. All those fell against the United States dollar, making their imports to the United States less expensive and our exports to their countries more expensive. It happens just that way.

Former Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker, one of the great heroes of the economic rebound of the 1980s, has said that years of trade negotiations can be wiped out in minutes by currency manipulation. I don't think there is any doubt about that.

These depreciations throughout Asia further disadvantage American workers because they force our workers to compete against international competitors who receive discounts, in effect, on their exported goods in the form of artificially depressed currencies. These devaluations have a real impact.

I have talked at length to steel manufacturers in my State. They have all told me that steel manufacturing is being hammered by this kind of currency manipulation, dumping, and other unfair, improper trade policies. But they specifically mentioned currency. Foreign market manipulations have virtually eliminated profit margins that were already slim in the steel industry.

I had a conversation a few hours ago with a major paper company which said that currency manipulations have hurt their exports. They are still making the exports, but it has eliminated their profit. It is very problematic for them. They have to have profit, but they are trying to maintain their production, keep Americans working, and keep the plants operating, even though their profit margin has been hurt substantially by currency manipulation.

In June of 2015, eBay reported that international currency fluctuations eliminated 8 percent of its sales. Instead of 6 percent sales growth, the company reported a 2 percent decline. Our foreign competitors are exporting their unemployment to the United States. That is the way it is done: You reduce your currency, and you export your products to the United States at a lower price. Our foreign competitors keep their people working and undermine the ability of American manufacturers to keep their employees working. Sometimes American plants are totally closed.

A December 1 Wall Street Journal article highlighted the fact that the Chinese yuan had increased against most other major currencies but fallen 3 percent against the dollar. They let it decline against the dollar, thereby maintaining their trade advantage with the United States—their trade surplus, our trade deficit with China. Our trade deficit with China increased during January and increased substantially during the fourth quarter of last year. Our exports are down, our imports are up, and our trade deficit is up.

A big part of that is improper manipulation of currency by our so-called trading partners. It is time we said no to this. We have the leverage and the capability of doing so. They need us more than we need them.

When Governor Romney ran for President 8 years ago, he was in a debate and explained it very succinctly: If you don't stand up—in this case, to China—they will run over you. Critics say that if we stand up to China, it will create a trade war. But we are in a trade war; we are just not fighting. Finally, he said: And, anyway, they have a lot more to lose than we do in such an event.

We have no obligation—as a matter of fact, we must stop being a patsy for those who take advantage of us. They need our markets. They desperately need to be able to sell huge amounts of

products in our markets. If they will not comply with the rules of trade, we have a right to say no and to limit access to our markets. They say that would hurt American consumers—perhaps some—but in the long run, we cannot allow American manufacturing to be decimated by the sustained manipulation of trading partners. We have to have a manufacturing base in this country. The American people know this, and they are worried about that.

Even a Walmart executive has said: If nobody is working in America, who is going to buy cheap products from abroad? He even started a program to try to buy more from America.

Even the Department of Treasury in its October 2015 exchange rate report said, ''Our judgment is that the [Yuan] remains below its appropriate medium-term valuation.'' In other words, it is depressed. China devalued the Yuan. They gained market advantage over the United States and other countries.

On the face of all of this, the White House has refused to adopt any enforceable measures. The Treasury Department repeatedly acknowledges we have a problem, but they have refused to take any action to confront it. This is the kind of weakness we cannot accept. The time has come in America where we cannot afford to lose a single American job to unfair trading partners. We have to end this. We have to defend our people who are hurting.

While the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement that has now been signed by the President—off last week in New Zealand, 7,000 miles around the world. The President never even talked about it. Why didn't he talk about it? Why didn't they highlight it? Why did they want to sign it 7,000 miles away? The reason is, the American people don't want it. He didn't really want anybody to know he had signed it, and they hope they can slip it through Congress at some point. But I don't believe it is going to happen. I think too many things are being raised and discussed that show we have to be careful about these trade agreements. In particular, this is one that should not pass. The White House claims that the TPP includes a side measure addressing currency manipulation, but any study reveals that it does not have any real enforcement mechanisms.

The Wall Street Journal on November 5 wrote this: ''Mexico, Canada and other countries signaled they were open to the [currency] deal when they realized it [would not] include binding currency rules that could lead to trade sanctions through the TPP.''

Get that? They were objecting to this currency rule. They like to manipulate their currency, and they don't want to be subject to sanctions if they manipulate it. When they found out the truth—and the truth is that the currency manipulation language attached to TPP means nothing—then they said it was OK. So objected to addressing currency manipulation in the TPP until they found out this proposed fix meant nothing.

On November 6, the Japanese Finance Minister, Mr. Taro Aso, said that ''there [will not] be any change'' in Japan's currency policy. In other words, by signing on to the TPP, after studying the agreement, Japan realized they are not going to have to change their policy. There is no teeth to the President's side-agreement.

We were expecting that this currency language would be placed on the Customs bill that we would vote on tomorrow. It was passed in the Senate, and it went on the Customs bill. But when it went to the conference committee, President Obama said: No, we are not having this currency language in it. The conference committee eventually capitulated, and struck the enforceable currency provisions in their report. So we have no real enforceable mechanism now to ensure that American workers and American manufacturing are able to maintain a level playing field with our trading partners in this regard.

The statement by Japan's Finance Minister caused Ford Motor Company to immediately object to and oppose the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement. They did it the day it was released. In their press release, Ford said they could not support such a deal in which currency rules fell ''outside of [the] TPP, and . . . [failed] to include dispute settlement mechanisms to ensure global rules prohibiting currency manipulation are enforced.'' They could not support it.

Ford and all these companies are placed under terrific pressure to sign on to these deals. A lot of them that signed on and said they will support it don't like it, but they were basically put in a room and asked: What do you need to do? We will agree to some things if you will agree to support the deal. Many felt it was going to pass anyway, and they got a few little trinkets—a few little gifts out of the TPP that they liked out of the 5,000 pages that it consists of, and they have agreed to either be silent or support the deal. But many of these companies like Ford are very uneasy about it.

So where are we today? I was very pleased that one of the strong supporters of trade in Congress—the new Speaker of the House, PAUL RYAN—announced yesterday that there was not support in the House to pass the TPP now, and, in fact, he has concerns about it. He has been an advocate of these trade agreements. I have been worried about that. But I was very pleased that at least now, in the temporary situation, he has indicated that he has doubts about the agreement, it is not going to have the votes in the House.

Our leadership has indicated they don't intend to bring it up immediately, either. I think that is a good decision. I believe we as a nation need to be studying how this works and studying whether these agreements are actually helping us. Or are they accelerating the decline in American manufacturing?

The Bush nor the Obama White House has taken strong actions to deal with currency manipulations. This administration and its own Treasury Department continues to reassure us that they are doing everything they can to protect American manufacturing from unfair currency manipulation. However, they repeatedly rejected Congress's efforts to give the White House the tools they need to help enforce our laws. One of the best ways to do this is to give the White House the ability to implement countervailing duties, but they have opposed those efforts and steadfastly seen to it that they are not made law.

Last year, in the spring, we had a month-long debate about the importance of these measures. I think a lot of our Members learned a good bit in the course of that. The Senate passed a TPP negotiating objective calling for enforceable measures in the President's trade agreement. What did the President do? He threatened to veto the Customs bill if it included the kind of currency language that I have just been describing.

In fact, the White House even issued a Statement of Administration Policy—a SAP—on this question stating that ''the Administration opposes the way the [Customs] bill uses the countervailing duty process to address currency undervaluation.'' With that objection, the conferees took out the language, so the bill we will vote on tomorrow does not have the language in it that passed in the U.S. Senate with 78 votes in favor.

Last year, I wrote the President and asked him a few simple questions. I believe these are simple questions that the American people are entitled to have answered by the leader of our country who is proposing and pushing the TPP.

One, I asked him to state whether the TPP would increase or decrease our trade deficit. Shouldn't we know that? Our trade deficit is surging. Some try to contend that trade deficits don't matter. They do matter. They do matter if your factory is closed. Trade deficits reduce GDP. Some studies say that about one-half percent of growth in GDP has been reduced as a result of the trade deficit. It does impact America.

I further asked the President, two, whether the TPP would increase or decrease the number of manufacturing jobs in the United States.

Third, I asked him how the TPP would affect the average hourly wages for the American middle class. Shouldn't he tell us that? Shouldn't we be told whether wages are going to go up or down? Shouldn't we be told whether the trade deficit would increase? Shouldn't we be told whether manufacturing jobs are going to increase or decrease?

What have they said? This is so clever. I think the media deserves criticism for not talking about it more. All they have ever said was that the TPP would increase jobs in the exporting industries. They don't say how many jobs

are being lost when American factories are closed. In fact, the Administration used to make specific job claims, but stopped doing so once the Washington Post gave their claim that the TPP would create 600,000 jobs four Pinocchios.

Let's go back to 2011, the U.S.—South Korean Free Trade Agreement. I voted for it. South Koreans are good people. They are allies of ours. We do business with them. I signed on to that agreement. When the President signed it, he stated to the American people it would increase our exports by $10 billion a year.

We have had a chance to look at that. How has that promise come out? Have we increased our exports? Well, we did increase our exports. It was eight-tenths of $1 billion last year. I think we will be a little over $1 billion this year—not 10, 1. What about Korean exports to the United States? How did that come out? They increased annually $12 billion a year. What about our trade deficit from 2010 through 2015? The trade deficit with South Korea increased 260 percent.

Are these trade agreements effective? Are they helping America? Are they fulfilling the promises being made for them? I don't think so. The President has repeatedly rejected bipartisan efforts to put protections in for American workers. He clearly did not follow Congress's negotiating objectives. He has ignored an issue which the Senate overwhelmingly approved, and he failed to negotiate enforceable currency protections for American workers.

American manufacturers cannot wait longer. It is time to give them the tools they need, a fair ability to compete, and a level playing field. The Customs bill that is before us is a step in the right direction. It ensures the Commerce Department and Customs and Border Protection share information more efficiently. It gives the Customs and Border Protection new tools to identify and stop illegal trading practices. It provides early notification of trade surges, which helps ensure stable prices of goods here at home, but it is important to note the Customs bill is not a perfect solution. There is still work to be done.

As I noted, Paul Volcker pointed out, all of these agreements can be eliminated overnight through currency manipulation. We can pass this Customs legislation and send it to the President, but we must realize that the protections created in this legislation, the new tools that are provided to CBP, can be made irrelevant by our competitors that manipulate exchange rates to benefit their exports.

We have that problem now in China, Japan, South Korea, and other countries. I am not going to be satisfied until the President signs legislation granting the Commerce Department real powers to protect American workers and American manufacturing from these devastating market manipulations.

Our government does not offer such subsidies to American manufacturers. There are other subsidies, too, that foreign countries offer that we don't offer. These subsidies and currency manipulations are forbidden by international trading standards, but they go on anyway, and nothing is done about it. We must not allow other countries to take advantage of us any longer.

I will note some of the quotes that we heard about this subject, but no action of significance has been taken.

On September 3, Treasury Secretary Jack Lew in an interview on CNBC said, ''[China has] to understand, and I make this point to them quite clearly, that there's an economic and political reality to things like exchange rates.''

He is talking about currency exchange rates. There is a political reality there. In other words, Mr. Lew, who should be doing something effective besides just talking, acknowledges that currency rates have real impact on Americans.

He goes on to say:

> They need to understand that they signal their intentions by the actions they take and the way they announce them. And they have to be very clear that they're continuing to move in a positive direction. And we're going to hold them accountable.

We haven't been holding them accountable.

Mr. Lew continues: ''I think that we have been very clear for a very long time with China, how they manage their exchange rate is a matter of great concern to us and that they need to be willing to let market forces drive the value up, not just drive it down.''

That is true, but they are not doing it, and China is going to continue to manipulate their exports until some action is taken to stop them.

He said in his interview:

> I think it is something we will discuss at the G–20, is any temptation to slip into what might look like a competitive devaluation. It's both unfair and it ultimately leads to a worse global economy.

I think there is some truth to that. He is acknowledging that there is a problem. What he is saying is our response to devaluation—it is unfortunate if we are put in a position where we devalue, where Korea devalues, where Vietnam devalues, where other countries in the world devalue. That is a currency war and that is not helpful. What needs to happen is we need to push back against countries that are improperly devaluing and stop that and try to create a currency system worldwide that serves our Nation in an effective way. It is part of the whole economic future of America.

Every business journalist is talking about this. They have different views about what ought to be done, if anything, but everybody talks about the impact.

This is T. Rowe Price. They did their fall 2015 Economic Outlook Report.

> To be sure, the U.S. economy remains the world's largest and most innovative. But this summer's dramatic plunge in China's stock market and the unexpected devaluation of its currency quickly reverberated around the globe—triggering market volatility, dimming growth prospects for certain industries and the countries, and exacerbating pressure on emerging markets.

I don't think anybody would dispute that. That is common business knowledge. T. Rowe Price's Outlook Report says:

> The devaluation, along with the government's unsuccessful intervention in its plunging stock market, also undermined confidence in China's leadership and, most important, in its ability to manage the transition of its economy from one led by investment and exports to one more driven by domestic services and consumption.

This is where we are. We need to get this ship on the right path, and we need to not adopt the TPP. We need to use the leverage we have as the greatest market in the world that all these countries want access to. We have the leverage. They have more to fear from a trade war than we do. We must put an end to it because we owe it to this country. The day we can give away more and more jobs and assume that this has no negative impact on the American economy is over. Wages are down in this country. The percentage of Americans of working age actually working today is the lowest we have had in nearly 40 years. We have had a tremendous drop in the percentage of males from 24 to 55, high working years, who are actually working in jobs today. It is a troublesome trend. We need to reverse that.

We need to put people to work and get them off welfare. We need to put them in good job training programs to help them take jobs that already exist in the country. We can't afford to bring in hundreds of thousands and millions of people from abroad to take jobs. Our people should be trained and be taken. That is so basic as to be without dispute, it seems to me.

I think the Customs bill that we consider tomorrow is worthy of our support. In the long run, I do believe that if we don't confront the trading issues that are facing America, we will regret it, and we will continue to see adverse economic consequences for the citizens we represent.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TRADE FACILITATION AND TRADE ENFORCEMENT BILL

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, 2015 was an extremely productive year for our Nation's trade agenda as, on multiple occasions, both parties were able to come together to take several steps to advance effective trade policies that

will put our Nation on a more prosperous course.

Hopefully, we will take another step here in the Senate before we leave for the recess.

Before the Senate breaks for recess, we are likely to vote on the conference report for H.R. 644, the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015, legislation that originally passed in this Chamber back in May of last year. As chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, I was one of the original authors of this legislation, and I was honored to serve as the chair of the conference committee. I believe our report represents a strong bipartisan, bicameral agreement that will effectively address a number of trade policy priorities. In fact, it has already passed the House with a strong, supermajority vote. I am hoping to see a similar vote here in the Senate.

I would like to take a few minutes to talk about some of the specifics of this legislation, which is generally referred to simply as ''the Customs bill.'' If enacted, this compromise version of the Customs bill would address three main policy goals.

The first goal is to facilitate and streamline the flow of legitimate trade into and out of the United States. To accomplish this goal, the bill, among other things, reduces paperwork and bureaucratic burdens on U.S. traders and improves consultation between trade policymakers at the Customs and Border Protection, or CBP, agency and Congress, as well as private actors within the trade community. It also modernizes the way CBP operates by authorizing the continued development and implementation of the Automated Commercial Environment, or ACE. And it sets procedures and establishes deadlines to ensure that all import requirements are fulfilled through a single window process. These changes will facilitate trade by reducing unnecessary burdens and delays created by an overly bureaucratic system. This will improve our Nation's competitiveness, create jobs here at home, and provide numerous benefits for our trusted trading partners.

The second major goal of the Customs bill is to improve enforcement of our trade laws. Toward that end, the bill establishes a new process at CBP—with strict deadlines and judicial review—for dealing with evasion of our antidumping and countervailing duties laws. The bill also ensures that all distributions required under the Continued Dumping and Subsidy Act are made correctly.

I am particularly pleased that the bill improves protections for intellectual property rights by creating additional monitoring tools to detect violations at the border and expanding requirements for USTR's existing Special 301 Report on our trading partners' IP enforcement efforts to include trade secrets. It also establishes a chief innovation and intellectual property negotiator at USTR to better ensure that our trade agreements reflect our Nation's interests in protecting intellectual property rights.

Providing proper enforcement and protection for intellectual property rights—both domestically and internationally—has long been a priority for me in large part because it is so important to Utahns. In Utah around 19 percent of the total workforce is directly employed in IP-intensive jobs, according to a recent report by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Global Intellectual Property Center. That same study also noted that Utah's IP industry employs, either directly or indirectly, over 590,000 Utahns—or more than half of Utah's workforce. More importantly, the IP industry makes up nearly 80 percent of current exports from my home State. So, for obvious reasons, protecting IP was one of my main focuses in drafting the Customs bill, passing it here in the Senate, and putting together the conference report.

I am very pleased that my colleagues on the conference committee shared my desire to improve upon our current efforts, and I think our inventors and innovators here at home—the people who drive so much of our economic growth and prosperity—will benefit greatly from this legislation.

The report addresses other enforcement priorities as well, including provisions to give clear direction and robust tools for identifying and addressing currency manipulation from our trading partners, an issue that I know is of particular interest to a number of our Members here in the Senate, as well as to many of our domestic businesses and industries. The result of all these enforcement provisions will be greater protections for American traders and consumers and a greater assurance that foreign competitors will not have unfair advantages in the global marketplace.

The third major goal of the Customs conference report is to strengthen the trade promotion authority statute that we enacted last year, reflecting various priorities and concerns from members of both parties. The conference report strengthens TPA by enhancing Congress's oversight role in crafting trade policy, specifically with regard to administration nominees and at negotiating rounds for future trade agreements. It also strongly reaffirms that trade agreements should not include and TPA procedures should not be used with respect to, provisions dealing with immigration policy or greenhouse gas emissions. The bill also establishes a new negotiating objective to address barriers American fishermen face in exporting U.S. fish, seafood, and shellfish.

In addition, the conference report improves provisions relating to trafficking in persons in order to strengthen Congressional oversight and ensure that appropriate steps are being taken to put an end to human trafficking.

I think most of us would agree that we passed a good TPA bill last year. I certainly think that we did. The conference report on the Customs bill would simply ensure that the statute better reflects the bipartisan will and role of Congress in our trade negotiations.

Those have been the three main goals of the Customs bill. With this conference report, I think we have reached good outcomes on all three. But that is not all. Other important issues are also addressed by the conference report.

For example, the bill will combat politically motivated boycotts, divestments, and sanctions against Israel, bolstering our already strong economic ties with one of our most important strategic allies. The conference report also provides additional trade preferences for Nepal in order to promote economic recovery in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake last year. With this legislation, we will also take significant steps to promote small business exports and improve tariff classifications relating to footwear and outerwear.

Finally, I want to acknowledge that a number of my colleagues—as well as businesses and job creators around the country—had hoped that the conference report on the Customs bill would include a reauthorization of the Miscellaneous Tariff Bills or MTBs. I shared my colleagues' desire to pass MTBs with this vehicle. As you will recall, a revised MTB process was, after all, passed by the Senate in the original version of the Customs bill.

There are a handful of procedural concerns that complicate this issue—particularly over in the House—that made it difficult to adequately address MTBs in this conference report. However, the conference report does include a strong sense-of-Congress statement reaffirming our shared commitment to advancing MTB legislation in a process that provides robust consultation and is consistent with both House and Senate rules.

And, on top of that, I just want to reaffirm my own commitment, as the chairman of the Senate committee with jurisdiction over this issue, to find a process that both the House and the Senate can agree on and get MTBs over the finish line. Our businesses and manufacturers that benefit from MTBs have waited too long for Congress to act on this matter, and I am going to do whatever I can to forge a path forward.

Let me just say that I am very pleased with the substance of this conference report. It has been a long road to get us here, but in my view, it has been worth it.

I will have many people to thank in the coming days as we debate—and hopefully pass—the conference report here in the Senate. For now, I specifically want to thank the vice chair of the conference committee, Chairman KEVIN BRADY, for his work on both the committee itself and on the substance of the report. I also want to thank the ranking member of the Finance Committee, Senator WYDEN, for his efforts

to ensure that our final product was truly bipartisan.

This is a good bill. It is not perfect, by any means. But once again, it provides what I think are strong outcomes on many key policy priorities.

Both the House and the Senate came into the conference with their own set of demands, which required some compromise. However, throughout our negotiations, I worked extremely hard to preserve the Finance Committee's contributions to the Customs bill and to advance the Senate's priorities on this legislation. And in that regard, I think we can all be pleased with the overall outcome, even if some compromises had to be made.

I know that some of our members have specific objections to some of the individual compromises we had to make in order to get the deal done. I certainly don't want to minimize anyone's concerns. Instead, I will just say that this comes with the territory of passing legislation that tries to reconcile differences.

As a whole, I believe this legislation provides a path on the Customs bill that members of both parties can get behind. I am hoping we can get past tomorrow's cloture vote and final passage and send the bill to the President's desk in short order.

I urge all of my colleagues to work with us to make sure that happens.

TRIBUTE TO JUDGE TOM JENSEN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the long career in public service of a good friend of mine and a friend to the Commonwealth of Kentucky, circuit court Judge Tom Jensen. After a lifetime of service in both elected office and on the bench, Judge Jensen has announced his retirement from the bench of the 27th Judicial Circuit Court, effective this February 16. Kentucky is going to miss his wisdom, his judgment, and the benefit of his many years of experience.

Judge Jensen has served for 3-plus years on the bench and, prior to that, had a lengthy career in the Kentucky General Assembly. He served in the Kentucky House of Representatives in the 1980s and 1990s. During his tenure there, he was elected as minority floor leader, the highest Republican position in the House of Representatives.

In 1996, Tom chose to not seek reelection to the house and instead was elected chairman of the Republican Party of Kentucky. During his leadership, the Kentucky GOP made some significant gains, adding an additional Republican to the U.S. House of Representatives delegation and sending another Republican to the U.S. Senate. Republicans also gained control of the Kentucky State Senate for the first time in history under his watch.

Judge Jensen was next elected to the Kentucky State Senate in 2005, representing the 21st District, which included Estill, Laurel, Powell, Jackson, and Menifee Counties. As a senator, he chaired the senate judiciary committee and the senate budget review subcommittee on justice and judiciary. He also served as the vice chairman of the senate natural resources and energy committee.

Judge Jensen has been honored many times in the Commonwealth for his achievements. He won recognition as Senator of the Year 2011 by the Kentucky Narcotics Officer Association. He received the highest award from the Kentucky Department of Corrections. He received the 2011 Public Advocate Award for advancing justice through criminal justice reforms. His alma mater, the University of the Cumberlands, also presented him an award for his leadership.

After 18 years in the legislature, Judge Jensen has dispensed his wisdom from the bench for the last 3-plus years, where he presides over many cases involving drugs and drug offenses. He has won acclaim for his wisdom and judicial temperament, but even though he has more than 6 years left in his current term, he has chosen to retire and re-enter private law practice. Tom has practiced law in London since 1978, is licensed to practice in all courts of the Commonwealth, and has been admitted to practice before the sixth circuit of Appeals and the U.S. Supreme Court.

It seems advocacy is Judge Jensen's first love, and after a long and successful career, he wants to return to the role of advocacy in the courtroom. While he will certainly be missed on the bench, I know he will be an outstanding attorney and advocate for his clients, who will be very lucky to benefit from his experience.

I know my colleagues join me in extending congratulations and best wishes to Judge Jensen and to his family: his wife, Nannette Curry Jensen; their two daughters, Natalie Jensen and Laura Jensen Hays; his son-in-law, Henry Hays; and grandchildren, Elle and Spencer.

As Judge Jensen begins this new chapter in his career, I want to thank him for his career in public service and contributions to the Commonwealth of Kentucky. We will miss him on the bench or in the general assembly halls, but look forward to still seeing him in the courtroom.

A local area newspaper in Kentucky published an article extoling Judge Jensen's life of service. I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Times-Tribune, Feb. 7, 2016]

TRI-COUNTY PROFILES: JUDGE, LEGISLATOR RETURNS TO PRIVATE PRACTICE AFTER DECADES OF SERVICE

(By Christina Bentley, Feature Writer)

''Life's too short not to do things you enjoy,'' said Circuit Court Judge Tom Jensen, who recently announced his retirement from the bench of the 27th Judicial Circuit Court, effective Feb. 16.

For Jensen, the thing he will be enjoying for the foreseeable future will be his London private law practice, although he said he has enjoyed every phase of his career, from his 18¼ years of service in the Kentucky State Legislature to his three-plus years on the bench. But his heart right now is in returning to private practice.

''I made a commitment that I would go back to my law office . . . When I left, I said, look, I'm just going to go stay three years, maybe four years, and then come back and practice law and finish up that way,'' he said. ''I may take off a couple of weeks, but I am going back. My staff stayed in place, and I always promised them I'd come back, so I'm going to live up to my promise. And it's time. I've thought about not going back. I've got six-and-a-half more years or so in this term, and I considered it. At my age, maybe that's the smart thing to do. It's not overwhelming work to me. A lot of people have asked me why I'm going back to practice law, and the thing about it is I enjoyed that. I enjoyed that more than anything that I've ever done, I think.''

Jensen said that while he has also enjoyed serving on the bench, he just doesn't get the same sort of satisfaction from it as he does from the process of problem solving with clients.

''It just turned out that I would rather advocate for somebody than be the mediator or make the decision,'' he said. ''I think I miss the give and take, the camaraderie you develop by talking to a client, meeting with people, trying to solve a problem, not deciding the issue or the problem, but trying to solve it. I don't want to sound corny, but I think I'm a people person, and I don't think that's the role of a judge. I don't think I'll ever run for anything again, and I think I'd like to finish up practicing law.''

Jensen's passion for advocacy is also evident when he discusses the years that he spent working in the Kentucky State Legislature, a political career that resulted in his recognition as Kentucky State Senator of the Year for 2011.

''I enjoyed (the legislature),'' Jensen said, ''trying to make a difference. I think it was seeing if you could make things better. It sounds crazy, but it wasn't the pay. Actually, it probably cost me money, practicing law, being in the legislature, being gone those periods of time. But it was a good feeling if you got something accomplished. It was a good feeling that you thought you could make things better. Sometimes we were right, sometimes we weren't. I think, you know, Kentucky's my home, and I wanted to make it as good as I possibly could. Of course, I wasn't a dictator, and I wasn't governor or anything like that, but I did, as Floor Leader in the House, have some impact on some things. We were able to put in some legislation that I think has made a difference in the state. It moved at a snail's pace; sometimes you'd get frustrated. Sometimes you would argue that there was a better of doing it and you couldn't get your way about it, but that's democracy, and the one thing that I saw in the legislature: for the most part, people were up there for the right reasons. They were up there to make Kentucky better.''

Jensen is proud of much of what he accomplished in the legislature, but he said his signature accomplishment was House Bill 463, designed to cut down on prison overcrowding in the state.

''In about 2009 and 2010, we started looking at it,'' he said. ''We were actually using private prisons to house state prisoners, and it was costing the state a considerable amount of money. It was to the point that we were either going to have to build a new prison or we had to do something. So that's when we

came up with (House Bill) 463 to put a lot of people on probation, more than we had in the past, mainly drug offenses, and it has done what we said it would do . . . Now some people might say we're being too easy on them. The thing about drug addiction, the way I see it, in the courtroom, your criminal days are just filled up with drug cases. Most of them are pleading out, a lot of probation, some diversions. And then about 50 percent of them end up going to prison or jail anyway because they can't comply with the terms. But still, if you look at it that way, it's 50 percent, which is not a good rate, but actually there are 50 percent that aren't going back, which is a good rate, and it has saved us a considerable amount of money.''

Jensen said that while he won't be running for office again, he enjoyed the political process and may involve himself in it in other ways, advocating for causes he believes in, primarily those that help his adopted hometown.

''This will be the last political position that I have,'' he said. ''I'm not saying I won't help out somebody politically or maybe get involved in somebody's campaign, but I don't think I'll ever run for anything again. I think I'm done running. But I always liked politics . . . I intend to go back and practice law, but I might even lobby some. I've still got some real good friends in the legislature, so I might do that and lobby for some projects, mainly things that I think would help Laurel County.''

For example, Jensen cites the ongoing efforts of Cumberland River Comprehensive Care to build a juvenile drug rehab in Laurel County as a project he would like to have more involvement in.

''One of the things that I even worked on as judge was to try to help Cumberland River Comp Care get the old juvenile detention facility,'' he said. ''I did help by going to Frankfort to talk to the governor and some others . . . What they want to do is have a juvenile rehab center in there, and I can tell you, looking at my court system, these people that are adults on drugs in my court, they didn't start when they became 18. They started at 12, 13. It's actually alarming when you talk to some of them, the age they began this stuff. So I felt like that was a really good endeavor to get into. I'd like to even help them maybe get some more money to fix up more of that building . . . it's going to take considerable money to get it up and operating, and Comp Care has made the commitment to do it, but I thought I'd try to maybe help them, see if I could get them a little more money to help the renovation along a little quicker. That's one of the projects I've developed for myself in retirement.''

Jensen is not a Laurel County native, but he has spent his entire career here, after following a basketball scholarship from his hometown of Cincinnati to Sue Bennett Junior College nearly 50 years ago.

''My high school coach was a guy named Ralph Rush, and he was from Bush, and of course I never heard of Bush, growing up in Cincinnati, but he brought me down here,'' Jensen said. ''My grades were not real good in school. I was not a particularly good student. I went to school mainly to play sports probably . . . But that's what brought me down here, and I just kind of fell in love with it here in London and the surrounding area. I think I like the small town more than I ever did a big city. Even though London's not a particularly small town anymore, I wouldn't live anywhere else. This is it. When I left Sue Bennett, I had a lot of scholarship offers, and I went to Eastern Illinois University. I went up there and just didn't like it, and I quit. And this is 1969, I guess, and my dad was furious with me. Vietnam was going on, and he said, 'Here you are going to school for free. What are you going to do?' And I said, 'Well, I'll just join the Army.' But my dad threw such a fit . . . So I came back down to London and talked to Ernie Wiggins, who was my coach at Sue Bennett . . . and it just so happened that night they were going to play at Cumberland College, and he asked me if I wanted to go down . . . I went to Cumberland and finished up there. I met my wife there. Got married. Came to London—that's where her family's from—and decided to go to law school about two years later.''

Jensen married Nannette Curry and the couple have two daughters, Natalie Jensen and Laura Jensen Hays, who were growing up during Jensen's time in the legislature.

''I enjoyed . . . all those years doing that, looking back on them, other than the time I was away from my family,'' Jensen said. ''You know when you're away from your kids and then they grow up, and if anything goes wrong, you start blaming yourself: should have been there more,' but my wife did a really good job, she covered all the bases. She was a good mother, she was real involved with the kids.''

These days, Jensen says he's looking forward to having time to watch his grandchildren swim—they are both on the swim team at Corbin High School—but he doesn't really have any other hobbies. He said he wants to keep serving Laurel County, just in different ways.

''How many years can you do this? I don't know. I just know that I want to work until I can't work anymore,'' he said.

He would like to continue to combat the drug problem in the area, something he has seen first-hand as a judge.

''The biggest problem I see facing us today is drugs, and if you come and watch a criminal day, it's nearly all drugs, everybody that's convicted. Now, they might have a theft with it, but they were stealing money to buy drugs . . . It's really sad. I see that as a major problem, not only in Kentucky but across the nation,'' Jensen said.

All told, though, Jensen said he is proud of his life's work and feels fortunate to have been able to accomplish what he has for the people of the region.

''I'm glad I left Cincinnati to come down here. It's just been a good life for me here,'' Jensen said. ''I've made a lot of good friends . . . I've been very fortunate. And the people of this community . . . have been really, really good to me. When I was in the Senate, I was representing five counties: Laurel, Jackson, Estill, Powell and Menifee counties. They were always good to me. This (Laurel County) courthouse here, I put the money in the budget for this and the one in Jackson County, too. Those kind of things, when you look back on it, things you were able to accomplish, it kind of makes you feel good about some of it. Some of the things you couldn't accomplish, you know, it's frustrating that you thought you knew the right way to go and couldn't get there, but the things that you have gotten right . . . that makes you feel good. And I know what I accomplished. I don't need my name on a building or anything to know what I did, and I'm pretty proud of the things I did accomplish. It's up to the next generation now to accomplish even more and do things even better.''

NORTH KOREA SANCTIONS AND POLICY ENHANCEMENT BILL

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I was necessarily absent from today's vote, vote No. 20, on the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act due to events in Illinois. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yea'' in support of H.R. 757, to advance sanctions against North Korea, and was glad to see it adopted.

Today marks the ninth anniversary of President Obama's announcement of his intention to run for President. He made the announcement from the steps of the old State capitol, the reconstructed building where Abraham Lincoln delivered his ''House Divided'' speech in my hometown of Springfield, IL. Today, the President and I returned to Illinois to commemorate his historic announcement and his service in the Illinois State Senate. I try to never miss votes, but this was a very special occasion in my home State.

I have been deeply concerned about nuclear weapons programs in countries such as Iran and North Korea. Almost 10 years ago, I joined with then-Senator Gordon Smith in introducing the Iran Counter-Proliferation Act, which became the basis for eventual petroleum sanctions against Iran that helped compel a negotiated nuclear agreement. I also cosponsored and voted for the Iran, North Korea, and Syria Sanctions Consolidation Act, which became law in 2012.

And I was pleased to be one of the three cosponsors of the North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act of 2015 led by Senator MENENDEZ, key parts of which are included in the bill being voted on today.

North Korea has bedeviled administrations, both Republican and Democratic alike, and as such, this legislation is a step in the right direction.

I have some concerns with the final bill in areas where I think more flexibility for the executive branch would have been appropriate, but such is the nature of compromise.

North Korea's recent actions testing nuclear weapons, launching missiles that could carry a nuclear warhead, and apparently restarting its plutonium production are all deeply troubling. North Korea's leadership does this while many of its own people are starving or locked away in political prison camps. This is unconscionable.

One often wonders how such an isolated and repressive regime is able to continue such dangerous antics.

How does it pay for such endeavors and how does it pay off the sycophants and enablers needed to maintain such a police state?

After all, a nuclear-armed, erratic North Korea is not only a threat to the United States and its allies in the region, but to China as well. Such actions clearly are not in China's security interests.

Yet, frustratingly, too often, China seems unwilling to take necessary steps to isolate and pressure the North Korean regime. I understand China doesn't want a collapsed state on its border. I also understand it doesn't want a unified, Western-leaning Korea on its border.

But I ask our Chinese friends, is what we have today really serving Chinese security interests?

The North Korean leadership has thumbed its nose at the Chinese, ignoring entreaties and some measure of protection offered against tighter sanctions or Security Council action. I was recently in New York meeting with our talented Ambassador to the United Nations, Samantha Power, and I was dismayed at the challenge she faces in obtaining greater Chinese help on this matter.

Now, I know the Chinese and some other apologists will argue that North Korea is so isolated that further sanctions would not work and may even backfire. But we know that there have been effective measures against the North, for example, going after luxury goods and overseas accounts linked to the regime and ruling elite.

Yet, despite international sanctions on luxury goods to North Korea, the New York Times recently reported how China loosely defines such goods and continues to allow North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's army's to import equipment from China to build a world-class ski resort.

That is right—a world-class ski resort in a country that can't feed its own people.

In fact, according to the report, Chinese customs data showed that North Korea imported $2.09 billion in luxury goods between 2012 and 2014, including armored cars and luxury yachts.

And, according to United Nations trade statistics, in 2014, China exported $37 million worth of computers, $30 million of tobacco, $24 million of cars, and $9 million of air-conditioning equipment to North Korea.

So I hope this legislation will tighten the measures against luxury goods used to buy loyalty for the regime. And I hope the Chinese realize that ignoring this regime is far riskier than working with the United States and others to rein in North Korea's nuclear weapons program.

Let us also not forget that in 2014, the U.N. General Assembly voted to refer the North Korean regime to the International Criminal Court for well-documented crimes against humanity.

Earlier, a U.N. commission of inquiry report documented massive crimes against humanity in North Korea, including deliberate starvation, forced labor, executions, torture, rape, and infanticide, among other crimes—most of them committed in North Korea's political prison camp systems.

The almost 400-page report concluded that the bulk of the crimes against humanity were committed ''pursuant to policies set at the highest levels of the state'' and were ''without parallel in the contemporary world.''

This criminal regime holds between 80,000–120,000 political prisoners in its system of gulags.

So I am glad this sanctions legislation also includes provisions that address North Korea's terrible human rights record.

Let me close by reaffirming my support for our South Korean and Asian allies that are at the most immediate threat from North Korea—not to mention the more than 25,000 U.S. military personnel stationed in South Korea. As such, without progress on ending North Korea's nuclear weapons program, I support the deployment of necessary missile defense technologies to help protect these allies.

DISAPPEARANCE OF 43 STUDENTS IN MEXICO

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, it has been well over a year since 43 students from Ayotzinapa Rural Teachers' College were forcibly disappeared in the state of Guerrero, Mexico. On September 26, 2014, around 100 students from the college traveled to the city of Iguala. They were there to raise money and to obtain buses to attend a commemoration of the infamous massacre of more than 600 students in the capital in 1968.

The now former mayor of Iguala has been accused of ordering the attack on the students that evening. While the motive remains a mystery, what appears to have occurred is that the police used lethal force against the students, and the 43 who are missing were handed over to the criminal organization Guerreros Unidos. Six people were killed that day, and the fate of the 43 disappeared students remains unknown.

After it became clear, thanks to the courageous and dogged work of foreign journalists that a horrific crime had been covered up by Guerrero officials and the police, the Mexican Government established the Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to provide independent analysis and technical assistance to the government.

The experts' September 2015 report, released on the eve of the 1-year anniversary of this tragedy, exposed significant deficiencies in the government's handling of the investigation and provided an opportunity for the government to restore the integrity of its own inquiry. The government's decision to extend the experts' mandate in the fall was a welcome signal of political will and a desire to build credibility.

But as the end of the experts' mandate nears, President Pena Nieto is running out of time to demonstrate that that political will has a lasting impact. The manner in which this investigation is conducted has grave implications not only for the victims of the attacks in Iguala and their families, but for the victims of countless other incidents in which Mexican citizens have vanished during the past decade and remain unaccounted for.

I urge the Mexican Government to fully support the experts' investigation by ensuring maximum cooperation of all Mexican officials, including on issues related to the experts' access to all those potentially involved in this incident and the serious pursuit of all possible leads the experts have identified, including by soliciting assistance from the United States.

I also urge the government to publicly refute the campaign that some have waged to delegitimize the experts as a way to discredit their work. If the experts' work is forced to carry on with only the passive acquiescence of the government—or worse, subtle attempts to hinder its work—rather than its active support, the progress that has been made may be lost and with it the truth and the Mexican Government's remaining credibility on this issue.

The Mexican people, like people everywhere who care about human rights, deserve to know what happened to these students. As I mentioned, we also know there are thousands of other cases in Mexico of disappearances and many reports by the National Human Rights Commission and reputable human rights organizations of incidents of torture and extrajudicial killings. The only way to effectively address the kind of lawlessness that has become far too prevalent in Mexico is to conduct credible, thorough investigations and appropriately punish those responsible, so the message is clear that no one is above the law.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO FRED SEARS

• Mr. COONS. Mr. President, today, on behalf of Delaware's congressional delegation of U.S. Senator TOM CARPER and U.S. Representative JOHN CARNEY, I wish to recognize a close friend from Delaware, Fred Sears—a community leader and a passionate advocate for all in our community; a man whose name is synonymous with business leadership and public service in my home State of Delaware, and a man I am proud to call my friend.

Fred is known statewide for his generosity, his enthusiasm, and his business acumen. For decades, his impact has been felt by elected officials, nonprofit and community leaders, and countless Delawareans of all backgrounds and careers. He is a true leader, an authentic champion of the community, and the embodiment of what service means in Delaware.

Fred Sears is a Delawarean through and through, born just blocks away from his boyhood home at what was then called Wilmington Hospital, he grew up across the river from Brandywine Zoo. This Delaware native attended Mt. Pleasant Elementary, Alfred I. DuPont Junior High, and Wilmington Friends School for high school. Fred went on to earn a business degree from the University of Delaware and had a great deal of fun, including a truly memorable spring break trip to the Bahamas with JOE BIDEN, his classmate and friend.

After graduating from UD in 1964, Fred began a nearly 40-year career in banking. Fresh out of college, Fred was

scheduled to interview for a job with the Bank of Delaware, but accidentally walked into Delaware Trust instead. Fortunately, Delaware Trust was also hiring, and after starting as a management trainee, he rose to become the institution's first vice president of business development. From there, Fred went on to later work at Wilmington Trust, Beneficial National Bank, and ultimately Commerce Bank, where he was Delaware market president.

While Fred was well and widely known as a leader in our financial services industry, he found many other ways to serve our community as well. Early in his career, Mayor Tom Maloney asked his friend Fred to take a leave of absence from Delaware Trust to serve as the city's director of finance and then later as director of economic development. Fred not only fulfilled those two roles terrifically, but decided afterwards to run for an at-large city council seat in 1976. Fred won and went on to serve two full terms.

Many of us in younger generations of politics after Fred's elected service have called on his wisdom, his insight, and his ability to bring people together, as we had important decisions to make. So Fred served on the transition teams of Wilmington Mayor James Sills, Delaware Governor Ruth Ann Minner, and co-chaired my transition team after I was elected New Castle county executive in 2004.

For many of us, decades of success in finance, in business, in politics might be the hallmark of a complete and successful career, but for Fred, these experiences were just a few of the ways he fulfilled a lifelong passion for service in our State of Neighbors. Just over 13 years ago, while Fred was at Commerce Bank, our mutual friend Jim Gilliam, Jr., called Fred one day and said to him, ''I have a job for you.'' After some convincing, Fred accepted the job, and since then, he has served admirably at the helm of one of the most important organizations in Delaware: the Delaware Community Foundation. The DCF plays an integral role in my home State, helping local nonprofits direct philanthropy to Delaware's most worthy causes and encouraging long-term charitable giving to improve our State.

Since Fred began as CEO in 2002, the DCF has tripled its long-term charitable funds and built its assets to $285 million. Dozens of nonprofits and community funds have flourished under Fred's leadership, and he and his team and their astute financial guidance continues to generate the funding that enables them to serve. Fred didn't join the DCF though just to raise money and just to be important and recognized; rather, he sought to improve the entire philanthropic community and quality of community life in Delaware, and his success in doing so reflects his values and his vision.

Fred is a true leader: honest, insightful, thoughtful; creative, positive and confident. And Fred possesses that rare quality: the ability to inspire others. He has used his passion for service to motivate the next generation of great leaders in our State.

Take, for example, one of Fred's many initiatives called the Next Generation. It is one he is most proud of—and justifiably so. Next Gen takes groups of civic-minded young professionals with limited or no experience in philanthropy and, with just the right amount of guidance and encouragement, helps mold them into nonprofit board leaders. Since 2004, Next Gen's chapters up and down the State have helped direct over $300,000 in grants to community needs all over my home State of Delaware.

My good friend Tony Allen, who also calls Fred a mentor and a friend and a brother, tells a story of how Fred helped establish the African-American Community Empowerment Fund. The fund is today known as the Council on Urban Empowerment, and it promotes philanthropy that supports educational, social, and economic empowerment of African-American Delawareans. As Tony notes, Fred didn't just help establish the fund, he wasn't just one of its first donors; he attended every meeting of the group. In 2010, Tony introduced Fred when Fred Sears was set to receive an award for nonprofit leadership. As Tony put it then, ''While patience is a virtue, impatience is a weapon. And Fred can be appropriately impatient. Fred doesn't demur to what others would call insurmountable tasks and taboo topics of conversation. He takes every opportunity to constructively push the status quo.''

Tony's absolutely right, and given that legacy of leadership, it is no surprise Fred has been honored by countless organizations for his business and community efforts. He has received a Lifetime Achievement in Philanthropy Award from the Association of Fundraising Professionals. He has been given a distinguished service award from the Wilmington Rotary Club. He has been deemed a Superstar in Business by the Delaware State Chamber and was named Citizen of the Year by the Delmarva Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

Those awards and merits are certainly a reflection of Fred's values and his many successes. But those of us who have had the privilege to work closely with Fred and to know him know that his commitment to service shines most brightly in the hundreds of interactions he has with Delawareans every day, whether he is offering ideas and advice or just saying a quick hello.

We know that even though Fred's leaving the Delaware Community Foundation, he will undoubtedly continue to serve the community he loves. In fact, Fred just accepted an appointment from Governor Markell to chair Delaware's Expenditure Review Commission, suggesting Fred has no intention of taking ''retirement'' literally.

In a testament to Fred's thoughtfulness, leadership, and sense of compassion, just a day after the passing of our beloved friend Beau Biden earlier this year, Fred spoke to the Bidens and offered to help the family establish an organization in Beau's name. That idea became the Beau Biden Foundation for the Protection of Children—and 2 days after it was launched, they had already raised over $125,000.

If this is all there was to Fred's story, it would be a remarkable one, but there is even more to Fred as a businessman, a philanthropist, and a person. If you speak to those who have been around him the longest, they will tell you his true passion is his family: his wife, JoAnn; his son, Graham; his daughter-in-law, Kathryn; his son, Jason; his daughter-in-law, Jen; and of course his treasured grandchildren, Kylie, Paxton, and Charlie. I have no doubt that Fred's retirement means he will be spending a lot more time as Pop Pop to his three treasures, becoming even more of a fixture at their frequent school functions and their baseball and soccer games.

Fred's friends and family will also tell you how much he adored his mother, Marjorie, visiting her daily at Stonegates until her passing, and how much he cares for his father-in-law today. They will tell you that Fred loves dancing, snappy suspenders, and vinyl records.

Fred's friend Tom Shopa will tell you about Fred's passion for golf and how, for decades, he has kept track of all of his golf scores, the number of putts he made, the weather that day—recording every single detail just as his father did. Fred's friends and colleagues will tell you they hear Fred say thank you dozens of times every day.

Today I pause for a moment on the floor of this great institution to say thank you to Fred. Thank you for giving your time and talents over decades to more than 40 community nonprofit organizations, for serving on countless boards, from Christiana Care to the Rodel Foundation, from the Housing Partnership, to the United Way. Thank you for your decades of service to Wilmington and Delaware and for a lifelong commitment to family, friends, and community. Fred, as our friend Tony Allen puts it, everyone in Delaware is better off because of your efforts.

On behalf of Senator TOM CARPER and Congressman JOHN CARNEY, I wholeheartedly thank you, Fred Sears, and congratulations on many jobs well done. I eagerly look forward to seeing where your so-called retirement will take you next.●

REMEMBERING ALEX DIEKMANN

● Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, at the beginning of February, Montana lost a true conservationist. Alexander Boris Diekmann, 52 years old, passed away peacefully at his Bozeman home after battling cancer for many years. He is survived by his wife, Lisa, and his two sons, Logan and Liam.

Alex is originally from California, graduated from Yale University, and previously worked as a financial analyst and in a commercial real estate agency before deciding to pursue his love of the outdoors and taking a position with the Trust for Public Land in Bozeman, MT.

In Bozeman, Alex worked as a senior project manager for the Trust for Public Land. He not only worked diligently to increase access to public lands, but also strived to secure Montana's beauty for many years to come. Alex did just that through his 16 years of work to protect the Madison and greater Yellowstone Area, which include the Taylor Fork in the Gallatin Canyon, Three Dollar Bridge, Chestnut Mountain, and Frog Rock and the restoration of O'Dell Creek in the Madison Valley.

A large part of his success came from Alex's remarkable ability to facilitate open dialogue and cooperation amongst different interest groups, such as landowners, government agencies, elected officials, and nonprofits.

Alex was known as a man very passionate about his work and his efforts to preserve open spaces will have a lasting impact for many years to come. His heartfelt love for conservation can be understood by his own words: ''It is unbelievable how proud people are of being involved in this (conservation) and that's something you can't put a price tag on. The rewards are entirely different. It is all about the heartfelt connection we have with the places we help conserve.''

He worked on more than 55 projects and helped to preserve more than 100,000 acres during his time with the Trust for Public Lands. Some of his accomplishments also include conserving 23,000 acres of forested lands surrounding Whitefish, MT.

As a result of Alex's efforts, there is also an abundance of wildlife habitat, water resources, and migratory corridors that are now secured in Montana.

Despite Alex's impressive achievements from his time with the Trust for Public Land, he kept a humble spirit and truly cared about the people he worked with. He considered the concerns of others when making decisions and going about his work. He has been described by some of his colleagues as honest, warm, generous, creative, and extremely dedicated.

Alex Diekmann, you will be greatly missed, but your legacy of conservation lives on. Thank you for doing what you did to keep the beauty of Montana secure for generations to come. Montanans thank you, and I thank you.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting a sundry nomination and treaties which were referred to the appropriate committees.

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

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 10:03 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 3033. An act to require the President's annual budget request to Congress each year to include a line item for the Research in Disabilities Education program of the National Science Foundation and to require the National Science Foundation to conduct research on dyslexia.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

At 12:55 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 bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 677. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for annual cost-of-living adjustments to be made automatically by law each year in the rates of disability compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for survivors of certain service-connected disabled veterans, and for other purposes.

H.R. 890. An act to revise the boundaries of certain John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System units in Florida.

H.R. 2360. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the approval of certain programs of education for purposes of educational assistance provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

H.R. 2915. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to identify mental health care and suicide prevention programs and metrics that are effective in treating women veterans as part of the evaluation of such programs by the Secretary, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3016. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs relating to health care, educational assistance, and vocational rehabilitation, to establish the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3036. An act to designate the National September 11 Memorial located at the World Trade Center site in New York City, New York, as a national memorial, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3106. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the administration of Department medical facility construction projects.

H.R. 3234. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to evaluate the ability of each medical center of the Department to provide quality health care to veterans, to ensure that the Secretary improves such medical centers that are underperforming, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3262. An act to provide for the conveyance of land of the Illiana Health Care System of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Danville, Illinois.

H.R. 3894. An act to amend title 10, United States Code, to require the prompt notification of State Child Protective Services by military and civilian personnel of the Department of Defense required by law to report suspected instances of child abuse and neglect.

H.R. 4056. An act to direct 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.

H.R. 4437. An act to extend the deadline for the submittal of the final report required by the Commission on Care.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 677. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for annual cost-of-living adjustments to be made automatically by law each year in the rates of disability compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for survivors of certain service-connected disabled veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 890. An act to revise the boundaries of certain John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System units in Florida; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

H.R. 2360. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the approval of certain programs of education for purposes of educational assistance provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 2915. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to identify mental health care and suicide prevention programs and metrics that are effective in treating women veterans as part of the evaluation of such programs by the Secretary, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 3016. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs relating to health care, educational assistance, and vocational rehabilitation, to establish the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 3036. An act to designate the National September 11 Memorial located at the World Trade Center site in New York City, New York, as a national memorial, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 3106. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the administration of Department medical facility construction projects; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 3234. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to evaluate the ability of each medical center of the Department to provide quality health care to veterans, to ensure that the Secretary improves such medical centers that are underperforming, and for

other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 3262. An act to provide for the conveyance of land of the Illiana Health Care System of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Danville, Illinois; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 3894. An act to amend title 10, United States Code, to require the prompt notification of State Child Protective Services by military and civilian personnel of the Department of Defense required by law to report suspected instances of child abuse and neglect; to the Committee on Armed Services.

H.R. 4056. An act to direct 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; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 4437. An act to extend the deadline for the submittal of the final report required by the Commission on Care; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–4318. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Poly(oxy-1,2-ethanediyl), a-(3-carboxy-1-oxosulfopropyl)-w-hydroxy, alkyl (C10-C16) ethers, disodium salts; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance'' (FRL No. 9941–15–OCSPP) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4319. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator , Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Importation of Orchids in Growing Media from Taiwan'' ((RIN0579–AE01) (Docket No. APHIS–2014–0041)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 4, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4320. A communication from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of General Counsel of the Department of the Army, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 4, 2016; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4321. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to persons undermining democratic processes or institutions in Zimbabwe that was declared in Executive Order 13288 of March 6, 2003; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4322. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Ukraine that was originally declared in Executive Order 13660 of March 6, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4323. A communication from the Assistant Director for Regulatory Affairs, Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Cuban Assets Control Regulations'' (31 CFR Part 515) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4324. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Venezuela that was originally declared in Executive Order 13692 of March 8, 2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4325. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Energy Conservation Program: Energy Conservation Standards for Pumps'' ((RIN1904–AC54) (Docket No. EERE–2012–BT–STD–0031)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 4, 2016; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–4326. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Disapproval of California Air Plan Revisions, South Coast Air Quality Management District'' (FRL No. 9941–72–Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 28, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4327. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Final Authorization of State-initiated Changes and Incorporation by Reference of Approved State Hazardous Waste Management Program'' (FRL No. 9940–27–Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 28, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4328. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval of Missouri's Air Quality Implementation Plans; Americold Logistics, LLC 24-Hour Particulate Matter (PM10) National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) Consent Judgment'' (FRL No. 9941–68–Region 7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 28, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4329. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of State Implementation Plan Revisions; Rules, General Requirements and Test Methods; Utah'' (FRL No. 9933–49–Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 28, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4330. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Louisiana'' (FRL No. 9941–51–Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 28, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4331. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Air Plan Approval; Minnesota; Inver Hills SO2'' (FRL No. 9941–53–Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 28, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4332. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Air Plan Approval; KY; Emissions Statements for the 2008 8-Hour Ozone NAAQS'' (FRL No. 9941–64–Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 28, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4333. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Additions to List of Section 241.4 Categorical Non-Waste Fuels'' ((RIN2050–AG74) (FRL No. 9929–56–OLEM)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 28, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4334. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revisions to the California State Implementation Plan, Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District; Permit Program'' (FRL No. 9940–19–Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4335. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval of California Air Plan Revisions, Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District'' (FRL No. 9941–11–Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4336. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval of Air Plan Revisions; Arizona; Rescissions and Corrections'' (FRL No. 9942–03–Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4337. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; California; San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District; Employer Based Trip Reduction Programs'' (FRL No. 9941–16–Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4338. A communication from the Deputy Director, Administration for Aging, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP)'' (RIN0985–AA11) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 4, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4339. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Health Insurance Providers Fee; Procedural and Administrative Guidance'' (Notice 2016–14) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4340. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revenue Procedure 2016–10'' (Rev. Proc. 2016–10) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4341. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Permitted Disparity in Employer-Provided Contributions or Benefits'' (Rev. Rul. 2016–05) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4342. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Allocation of Creditable Foreign Taxes'' ((RIN1545–BM57) (TD 9748)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4343. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Medicare National Coverage Determinations for Fiscal Year 2015''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4344. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 15–122); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4345. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the interdiction of aircraft engaged in illicit drug trafficking; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4346. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) and 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 15–050); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4347. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2016–0012—2016–0021); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4348. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition Library Address; Technical Amendments'' (Docket No. FDA–2015–N–0011) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4349. A communication from the Deputy Director, Directorate of Cooperative and State Programs, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Maine State Plan for State and Local Government Employers'' (RIN1218–AB97) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4350. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator of the Office of Diversion Control, Drug Enforcement Agency, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Schedules of Controlled Substances: Extension of Temporary Placement of PB–22, 5F–PB–22, AB–FUBINACA and ADB–PINACA in Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act'' (Docket No. DEA–385E) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–4351. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator of the Office of Diversion Control, Drug Enforcement Agency, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Schedules of Controlled Substances: Temporary Placement of the Synthetic Cannabinoid MAB–CHMINACA into Schedule I'' (Docket No. DEA–421F) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–4352. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator of the Office of Diversion Control, Drug Enforcement Agency, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Schedules of Controlled Substances: Table of Excluded Nonnarcotic Products: Nasal Decongestant Inhaler/Vapor Inhaler'' (Docket No. DEA–409) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–4353. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator of the Office of Diversion Control, Drug Enforcement Agency, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Schedules of Controlled Substances: Table of Excluded Products: Vicks VapoInhaler'' ((RIN1117–AB39) (Docket No. DEA–367)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–4354. A communication from the Chief of the Border Security Regulations Branch, Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Elimination of Nonimmigrant Visa Exemption for Certain Caribbean Residents Coming to the United States as H–2A Agricultural Workers'' ((RIN1651–AB09) (CBP Dec. 16–03)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–4355. A communication from the Secretary of the Commission, Bureau of Competition, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revised Jurisdictional Thresholds for Section 7A of the Clayton Act'' (FR Doc. 2016–01451) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–4356. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–8433)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4357. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–1275)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4358. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–0678)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4359. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–1427)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4360. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–1991)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4361. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–0824)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4362. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–1045)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4363. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–1429)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4364. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–0937)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4365. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–1981)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4366. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–

AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–1422)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4367. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–1984)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4368. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–1990)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4369. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–1281)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4370. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–1990)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4371. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–1987)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4372. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3140)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4373. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–0081)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4374. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0447)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4375. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–1049)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4376. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Dassault Aviation Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–2967)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4377. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Bell Helicopter Textron Canada Limited'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–2068)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4378. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Fokker Services B.V. Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–1982)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4379. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Piper Aircraft, Inc.'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–4213)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4380. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Agusta S.p.A. Helicopters'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–1935)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4381. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Agusta S.p.A. Helicopters'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–8695)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4382. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0577)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4383. A communication from the Management and Program Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH (formerly Eurocopter Deutschland GmbH) Helicopters'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–0669)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4384. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; MD Helicopters, Inc.'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–1998)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4385. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; General Electric Company Turbofan Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–6823)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4386. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (56); Amdt. No. 3676'' (RIN2120–AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4387. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (131); Amdt. No. 3675'' (RIN2120–AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4388. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (49); Amdt. No. 3673'' (RIN2120–AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4389. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (15); Amdt. No. 3674'' (RIN2120–AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4390. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of

Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Take-off Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (124); Amdt. No. 3677'' (RIN2120–AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4391. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Take-off Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (19); Amdt. No. 3678'' (RIN2120–AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4392. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Agusta S.p.A. Helicopters'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–2069)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4393. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class E Airspace for the following New York Towns; Elmira, NY; Ithaca, NY; Poughkeepsie, NY'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–4514)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4394. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class E Airspace; El Paso TX'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2014–1074)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4395. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class E Airspace; Boise, ID'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3674)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4396. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revocation and Establishment of Class E Airspace; Bowman, ND'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–1834)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4397. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class D and Class E Airspace, Revocation of Class E Airspace; Chico, CA'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3899)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4398. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class D Airspace; Denver, CO'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–6753)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4399. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Modification of VOR Federal Airway V–443; North Central United States'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–7611)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4400. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of United States Area Navigation (RNAV) Route Q–35, Western United States'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2013–6001)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4401. A communication from the Director, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; North Atlantic Swordfish Fishery'' (RIN0648–XE295) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4402. A communication from the Director, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Fisheries'' (RIN0648–XE346) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4403. A communication from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Critical Habitat for Endangered North Atlantic Right Whale'' (RIN0648–AY54) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4404. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Final Listing Determinations on Proposal to List the Banggai Cardinalfish and Harrisson's Dogfish Under the Endangered Species Act'' (RIN0648–XE328) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 8, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM–129. A concurrent resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the State of Ohio urging the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to take action to improve prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of Lyme disease; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NUMBER 51

Whereas, Lyme disease is the most common tick-borne illness in the United States, with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimating that 300,000 Americans are diagnosed with the disease each year; and

Whereas, Many cases of Lyme disease are never reported to the CDC, as only approximately 30,000 of the estimated 300,000 cases of Lyme disease are reported to the CDC by state health departments each year; and

Whereas, Lyme disease can cause devastating health consequences if left untreated, such as severe pain, heart palpitations, and chronic neurological damage; and

Whereas, Diagnosis of Lyme disease is difficult because there is no general consensus on the definition of its symptoms and the symptoms are similar to those of other conditions, leading to misdiagnoses. Furthermore, current Lyme disease testing methods often lead to inaccurate results; and

Whereas, There remains much debate in the medical community concerning the proper courses of action for diagnosing and for treating Lyme disease; and

Whereas, Greater knowledge of Lyme disease and its causes will put the general public in a better position to avoid contracting the disease: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That we, the members of the 131st General Assembly of the State of Ohio, in adopting this resolution, urge the CDC to take the following actions:

(1) Update definitions of Lyme disease symptoms by clinical diagnosis;

(2) Reconsider standards and best practices for diagnosing and for treating Lyme disease;

(3) Provide more resources for health care professionals and the general public to learn about Lyme disease to aid in prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of the disease;

(4) Improve the techniques that state and local public health agencies use to report cases of Lyme disease diagnoses so that fewer cases go unreported and the CDC can better monitor the incidence of the disease across the nation;

(5) Provide the means for improved laboratory testing or funding for improved laboratory testing to enhance early detection of Lyme disease in humans; and be it further

Resolved, That the Clerk of the House of Representatives transmit duly authenticated copies of this resolution to the President of the United States, to the United States Secretary of Health and Human Services, to the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, to the Speaker and Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, to the President Pro Tempore and Secretary of the United States Senate, to the members of the Ohio Congressional delegation, and to the news media of Ohio.

POM–130. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Michigan urging the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and the United States Congress to create a pilot program in Michigan instituting a flexible Veterans Choice Card system structured similar to a traditional health care program for all veterans in Michigan; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 7

Whereas, The men and women who serve our country deserve our utmost respect and appreciation. Many of them are injured in the line of duty and come home to face challenging physical disabilities and other

health issues. All veterans are entitled to the best health care we can give them; and

Whereas, According to the U.S. Government Accountability Office, several variables affect a veteran's ability to access VA health care. Veterans may have difficulty travelling to a distant facility for care or be unable to secure an appointment in an acceptable period of time to deal quickly with a medical issue; and

Whereas, To provide a more flexible VA health care system, Congress enacted the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014, allowing for care outside of the traditional VA system. Under the act, the new Choice Program will provide many veterans with VA compensated health care at a non-VA center, providing more timely appointments, less bureaucratic red tape, and easier travel; and

Whereas, As currently structured, the Choice Program limits non-VA health care to veterans residing more than 40 miles from a VA health facility. The law does not differentiate between types of VA health care facilities. Therefore, a veteran living near a small VA clinic but needing specialty cardiology care at a VA facility 100 miles away will not be allowed to access private cardiology care. Also, the program requires that every appointment for care be cleared by a program manager: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate Concurring), That we urge the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and the United States Congress to create a pilot program in Michigan instituting a flexible Veterans Choice Card system structured similar to a traditional health care program for all veterans in Michigan; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the members of the Michigan congressional delegation, and the United States Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

POM–131. A petition by a citizen from the State of Texas urging the United States Congress to propose, for ratification by special conventions held within the individual states, an amendment to the United States Constitution which would establish a procedure by which members of the United States Senate and of the United States House of Representatives may be involuntarily removed from office by means of a recall election; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute and an amendment to the title and with an amended preamble:

S. Res. 99. A resolution calling on the Government of Iran to fulfill its promises of assistance in the case of Robert Levinson, the longest held United States civilian in our Nation's history.

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, without amendment and with a preamble:

S. Res. 330. A resolution congratulating the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet for winning the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize.

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with amendments and with a preamble:

S. Res. 361. A resolution urging robust funding for humanitarian relief for Syria.

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The following executive report of a nomination was submitted:

By Mr. JOHNSON for the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

*Beth F. Cobert, of California, to be Director of the Office of Personnel Management for a term of four years.

*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.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. SULLIVAN):

S. 2527. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the mental health treatment provided by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to veterans who served in classified missions; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. NELSON:

S. 2528. A bill to promote the safe manufacture, use, and transportation of lithium batteries and cells, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself, Ms. CANTWELL, and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 2529. A bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to require that the Buy American purchase requirement for the school lunch program include fish harvested within United States waters, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI:

S. 2530. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the exemption for certain aircraft from the excise taxes on transportation by air; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. KIRK (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 2531. A bill to authorize State and local governments to divest from entities that engage in commerce-related or investment-related boycott, divestment, or sanctions activities targeting Israel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. CARDIN:

S. 2532. A bill to authorize appropriations for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and the Clean Water State Revolving Fund; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:

S. 2533. A bill to provide short-term water supplies to drought-stricken California and provide for long-term investments in drought resiliency throughout the Western United States; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. TOOMEY:

S. 2534. A bill to amend the National Child Protection Act of 1993 to establish a permanent background check system for private security officers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 2535. A bill to provide deadlines for corrosion control treatment steps for lead and copper in drinking water, and other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself and Mr. MORAN):

S. 2536. A bill to require the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to issue a notice of proposed rulemaking regarding the inclusion in aircraft medical kits of medications and equipment to meet the emergency medical needs of children; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. CRUZ:

S. 2537. A bill to amend the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1987 with respect to certain prohibitions regarding the Palestine Liberation Organization under that Act; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself and Mr. SESSIONS):

S. 2538. A bill to provide resources and incentives for the enforcement of immigration laws in the interior of the United States and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. REED, Ms. WARREN, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 2539. A bill to amend the Social Security Act to provide for mandatory funding, to ensure that the families that have infants and toddlers, have a family income of not more than 200 percent of the applicable Federal poverty guideline, and need child care have access to high-quality infant and toddler child care by the end of fiscal year 2026, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. Res. 370. A resolution recognizing that for nearly 40 years, the United States and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) have worked toward stability, prosperity, and peace in Southeast Asia; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mrs. FISCHER, and Mr. SASSE):

S. Con. Res. 30. A concurrent resolution expressing concern over the disappearance of David Sneddon, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 71

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 71, a bill to preserve open competition and Federal Government neutrality towards the labor relations of Federal Government contractors on Federal and federally funded construction projects.

S. 391

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 391, a bill to preserve and protect the free choice of individual employees to form, join, or assist labor organizations, or to refrain from such activities.

S. 613

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) 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. 800

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 800, a bill to improve, coordinate, and enhance rehabilitation research at the National Institutes of Health.

S. 901

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 901, a bill to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a national center for research on the diagnosis and treatment of health conditions of the descendants of veterans exposed to toxic substances during service in the Armed Forces that are related to that exposure, to establish an advisory board on such health conditions, and for other purposes.

S. 1081

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1081, a bill to end the use of body-gripping traps in the National Wildlife Refuge System.

S. 1378

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) and the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) were added as cosponsors of S. 1378, a bill to strengthen employee cost savings suggestions programs within the Federal Government.

S. 1566

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1566, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to require group and individual health insurance coverage and group health plans to provide for coverage of oral anticancer drugs on terms no less favorable than the coverage provided for anticancer medications administered by a health care provider.

S. 1622

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1622, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to devices.

S. 1831

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) 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. 1890

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) were added as cosponsors 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. 1909

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1909, a bill to protect communities from destructive Federal overreach by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

S. 1968

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1968, a bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to require certain companies to disclose information describing any measures the company has taken to identify and address conditions of forced labor, slavery, human trafficking, and the worst forms of child labor within the company's supply chains.

S. 2021

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2021, a bill to prohibit Federal agencies and Federal contractors from requesting that an applicant for employment disclose criminal history record information before the applicant has received a conditional offer, and for other purposes.

S. 2040

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2040, a bill to deter terrorism, provide justice for victims, and for other purposes.

S. 2144

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the names of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S. 2144, a bill to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes.

S. 2166

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2166, a bill to amend part B of title IV of the Social Security Act to ensure that mental health screenings and assessments are provided to children and youth upon entry into foster care.

S. 2178

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2178, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent certain provisions of the Heartland, Habitat, Harvest, and Horticulture Act of 2008 relating to timber, and for other purposes.

S. 2218

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2218, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to treat certain amounts paid for physical activity, fitness, and exercise as amounts paid for medical care.

S. 2235

At the request of Mr. UDALL, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2235, a bill to repeal debt collection amendments made by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015.

S. 2272

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2272, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 regarding proprietary institutions of higher education in order to protect students and taxpayers.

S. 2423

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2423, a bill making appropriations to address the heroin and opioid drug abuse epidemic for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

S. 2437

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the names of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) and the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2437, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the burial of the cremated remains of persons who served as Women's Air Forces Service Pilots in Arlington National Cemetery, and for other purposes.

S. 2444

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2444, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide for the disposition, within 60 days, of an application to exempt a projectile from classification as armor piercing ammunition.

S. 2469

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2469, a bill to repeal the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act.

S. 2474

At the request of Mr. COTTON, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2474, a bill to allow for additional markings, including the words ''Israel'' and ''Product in Israel,'' to be used for country of origin marking requirements for goods made in the geographical areas known as the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

S. 2487

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2487, a bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to identify mental health care and suicide

prevention programs and metrics that are effective in treating women veterans as part of the evaluation of such programs by the Secretary, and for other purposes.

S. 2492

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2492, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide matching payments for retirement savings contributions by certain individuals.

S. 2497

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2497, a bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to provide protections for retail customers, and for other purposes.

S. 2502

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the names of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) and the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) were added as cosponsors of S. 2502, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to ensure that retirement investors receive advice in their best interests, and for other purposes.

S. 2505

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2505, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that retirement investors receive advice in their best interests, and for other purposes.

S. 2512

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) were added as cosponsors of S. 2512, a bill to expand the tropical disease product priority review voucher program to encourage treatments for Zika virus.

S. RES. 346

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 346, a resolution expressing opposition to the European Commission interpretive notice regarding labeling Israeli products and goods manufactured in the West Bank and other areas, as such actions undermine the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

AMENDMENT NO. 3167

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3167 intended to be proposed to S. 2012, an original bill to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3215

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3215 intended to be proposed to S. 2012, an original bill to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:

S. 2533. A bill to provide short-term water supplies to drought-stricken California and provide for long-term investments in drought resiliency throughout the Western United States; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the historic drought that is devastating California and much of the West.

To help address this disaster, today I am introducing the California Long-Term Provisions for Water Supply and Short-Term Provisions for Emergency Drought Relief Act.

Let me begin by saying that the El Niño we're seeing now in California brings with it some good news.

The Sierra Nevada snowpack is the deepest it has been in 5 years, and water content is up.

The California Department of Water Resources reported in early-February that the statewide snowpack stands at 25.4 inches, or 130 percent of the historical average.

But we are faced with three problems.

First, one El Niño—even a strong El Niño—won't be sufficient to pull us out of this drought. Experts say we need at least 3 consecutive years of above-average precipitation.

Second, we lack the infrastructure needed to store much of this water. We need to do more to increase the amount of water we can hold from wet years to dry years.

And while river flows are extremely high from these winter storms, we are not taking advantage of them to the extent we should.

What that means is tens of thousands of acre-feet are flowing out into the Pacific Ocean rather than being collected for later use.

So while California is getting some much-needed rain, it's not likely to be enough to end this historic drought.

Let me be clear; this drought is hurting California.

Mr. President, 69 communities are facing significant water supply and water quality issues, 2,591 wells are critically low or dry affecting some 13,000 residents; California's economy lost $2.7 billion from the drought in 2015.

The agricultural sector lost approximately $1.8 billion from the drought in 2015, exceeding the $41.5 billion loss in 2014.

More than 1 million acres of California farmland were fallowed in 2015, an increase of more than 600,000 acres over 2011.

Since 2014, the drought has led to 35,000 permanent jobs lost in California, 21,000 seasonal and part-time agricultural jobs have also been lost.

Farmworkers cannot find employment and are forced to move in with family members or friends who are also struggling.

Some single mothers are traveling as far as Washington State for work to help support their families.

Land subsidence from pumping too much groundwater has caused large areas of the San Joaquin Valley to sink by as much as two inches per month. As a result, bridges, aqueducts and roads have already begun to crack.

Mr. President, 50 million large trees are dead or likely will die from lack of water, and another 888 million trees experienced loss of canopy cover since 2011.

These are just some of the many examples of the dreadful effect the drought is having on California.

The bill I am introducing today includes a wide range of provisions to address two key needs:

First, long-term solutions. In addition to helping the many communities that are running out of water, we must create a new water infrastructure that is not as dependent on annual levels of rain or snow. That is why the bill includes many programs to promote long-term drought resiliency.

California is now home to 40 million people, but is relying on State and Federal water infrastructure first constructed in the 1960s when California's population was just 16 million.

The Central Valley Project and the State Water Project were completed in the 1970s, and neither have kept pace with the rapid growth in California's population or economy.

Put another way, California's major water infrastructure has remained largely unchanged for the past 40 years while California's population has more than doubled.

To address this, we must come up with long-term solutions to address these water infrastructure gaps.

This must include investments in water storage projects, desalination plants and water recycling projects, as well as programs to assist vulnerable communities, fund research and support ecosystem restoration.

In addition to those long-term solutions, the bill would also provide short-term, temporary solutions which are limited to the duration of the Governor's drought declaration or two years, whichever is longer.

These provisions will help make the water-delivery system more efficient during this current drought, and they will do so without any mandated pumping levels.

Under this bill State and Federal officials will continue to determine appropriate pumping levels, and all short-term operations must comply with existing applicable laws.

Let me repeat: there are no mandated levels of pumping in this bill.

Let me briefly discuss how this bill will help California and the positive impacts it will have west-wide.

Over the past 2 years, my staff and I have gone through an extensive consultation process with both State and Federal agencies.

We have worked through every proposal or suggestion we received from

those agencies and all are incorporated in the bill I am introducing today.

On the Federal side, we worked with the Department of the Interior; Department of Commerce; Bureau of Reclamation; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Fish and Wildlife Service; NOAA Fisheries; and the White House Council on Environmental Quality.

On the State side, we worked with the California Natural Resources Agency; California Department of Water Resources; California Department of Fish and Wildlife; and the Office of the Governor of California.

In addition to integrating proposals from State and Federal agency experts, we have incorporated feedback from a variety of stakeholders including environmental groups; urban and agricultural water districts; wildlife advocates and Democratic and Republican congressional offices.

As part of the consultation process, we received and incorporated more than 40 suggested changes.

I would first like to cover the long-term provisions.

As I said, California is home to around 40 million people, but has the same water infrastructure as the 1960s, when only 16 million people lived in the state.

Given the changing climate, I believe that California will become a desert state if we don't act. Droughts will only become more frequent and more severe.

That's why the long-term provisions of this bill look at new sources of water and new ways to store water.

These long-term provisions authorize a total of $1.3 billion and include desalination, recycling, storage, and loan assistance for drought-stricken communities. And as I said, these investments can produce a new water infrastructure not as dependent on weather.

This bill increases the WaterSMART authorization by $150 million for long-term water conservation, reclamation and recycling.

Some of these WaterSMART funds can then be used for a new Bureau of Reclamation program to help rural and disadvantaged communities that are running out of water. These grants would cover everything from emergency bottled water to long-term solutions like water treatment facilities.

But we also need to look beyond the current emergency and consider ways we can shift these communities from vulnerable water sources like wells to more sustainable and resilient water systems.

That's why this bill prioritizes money from the Environmental Protection Agency's Revolving Loan Fund for water infrastructure projects that would help drought-stricken communities that are at risk of running out of clean water.

This bill also authorizes $200 million for the Reclamation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act, known as RIFIA. This loan-guarantee program will help water districts and municipalities fund long-term solutions to store more water and provide additional clean water.

We also need to invest in desalination and water recycling. These are two of the most promising technologies that may offer long-term solutions.

The bill identifies 137 local recycling and desalination projects that, if constructed, could produce upwards of 1.4 million acre feet in ''new'' water.

This includes 27 desalination projects identified by the State—totaling more than 352,000 acre-feet of water—that the Secretary of the Interior must consider funding if eligible.

The bill also reauthorizes the Desalination Act and authorizes $100 million for feasibility studies and project design as well as desalinization research to improve the energy co-efficient from reverse osmosis and membrane technology. These funds run through 2020.

In addition, the bill identifies 110 water recycling projects that the Secretary of the Interior must consider funding. These projects total more than 1,060,334 acre-feet of water.

The bill authorizes $200 million for the Bureau of Reclamation's Title XVI water recycling program and streamlines the program by eliminating the hurdle of congressional authorization for individual projects.

We also have to encourage public-private partnerships. That's why the bill funds a loan-guarantee program and other financing mechanisms to help make projects a reality.

If all the projects identified in the bill were completed, nearly 1.4 million acre-feet of ''new'' water could be made available.

Given the consensus that droughts will grow more severe, we have to increase the amount of water we can hold from wet years for use in dry years.

In order to help accomplish this, the bill authorizes $600 million for water storage projects in California and other Western States. These funds would be available through 2025.

But the Federal Government can't do it all on its own. California signaled that it's ready by enacting a $7.5 billion water bond. The bill therefore positions the federal government as a partner with California to take advantage of these funds to build new reservoirs and expand existing reservoirs.

Recognizing that the drought has taken a toll on many aspects of life in California, including fish and wildlife, this bill authorizes $55 million for habitat restoration efforts. Measures include protections for the entire life cycle of fish, from increasing spawning habitat to reducing mortality during migration out to the ocean; reducing threats to fish, including smelt and salmon, by removing predators such as striped bass from specific locations where they prey on endangered fish; using real-time monitoring of turbidity and fish to determine pumping rates, rather than specific congressional mandates or targets; funding daily boat monitoring to survey for smelt near the pumps when turbidity levels are high and the smelt are often attracted to the pumps; funding studies to track the smelt's most current locations and make decisions that are key to running pumps in a way that is not harmful to fish, and providing $10 million in water infrastructure for refuges, a vital resource for billions of migratory birds that use the Pacific Flyway.

In addition to the long-term provisions, the bill includes short-term, temporary provisions to allow for more efficient operation of the Federal and State water systems.

As I stated, these emergency operations provisions last only for the length of the Governor's Emergency Declaration or 2 years—whichever is longer.

These short-term provisions will allow the agencies to capture water from winter storms. Already, the snowpack is significantly higher in height and water content than the last few years, and more water is flowing down the Delta.

The bill has eight key provisions that will allow for water to be captured and stored:

Improved data to operate pumps. Enhanced daily monitoring and data collection will help to operate pumps more efficiently, and pump at higher levels when no fish are present and pump at reduced levels when fish are nearby.

The revised bill requires daily boat monitoring to survey for smelt near the pumps when turbidity levels are high, so that pumping reductions are made based on the most up-to-date facts.

The bill also authorizes studies to identify smelts' location in the Delta on a real-time basis.

In addition, the bill authorizes a Delta Smelt Distribution study to identify how many smelt are in different parts of the Delta in drier and wetter years. This is critical to know what level of take of the smelt is a threat to the species.

Winter storms and ''payback.'' The revised bill authorizes agencies to increase pumping during winter storms using their best judgment to determine when and by how much.

Once the storms end, the agencies would no longer be required to ''payback'' water already pumped unless there was an environmental reason, such as harm to fish.

This so-called ''payback'' has led to the loss of tens of thousands of acre-feet of water. Payback currently requires agencies to reduce subsequent water pumping by an equal amount of water as was captured during the storms, which results in the loss of tens of thousands of acre-feet of water that could instead be stored or transferred for use throughout the State.

Agencies must explain pumping levels under the Delta Smelt Biological Opinion.

The bill does not impose any mandated pumping levels, instead leaving

those pumping levels up to the discretion of the water agencies. But the bill does require officials to justify the levels at which they pump.

By requiring written justification for the level of pumping, the bill attempts to maximize the amount of water pumped by requiring officials to consider whether real-time monitoring justifies lowering pumping levels. This water system must be operated based on science, not intuition.

I want to be clear: The revised text does not include any mandate. We removed a provision that would have mandated pumping at −5000 cubic feet per second in the Old and Middle Rivers, unless pumping at these levels would cause additional adverse effects on the Delta smelt.

The 1:1 transfer ratio. The strong El Niño means more water is likely to be available for voluntary transfers from willing sellers with extra water to buyers downstream who need water.

This provision helps facilitate those transfers in April and May by allowing a 1:1 transfer ratio. In past years, agencies have reduced the likelihood of transfers by requiring water users to send more water downstream than could be captured and stored at a 4:1 ratio.

By allowing for a 1:1 ratio—while adhering to environmental law and biological opinions—more water transfers can be accomplished, providing water to users who truly need it.

Extending the time period for water transfers by five months. The bill extends by 5 months the time period when transfers may take place.

The current transfer window of July through September is extended to April through November. Extending the transfer window allows water transfers to be available during the spring planting season.

All transfers must remain consistent with the biological opinions.

Expediting review of transfers and the construction of barriers. Environmental reviews of water transfers and the installation of temporary barriers must be completed within 60 days, unless an environmental impact statement is required.

Agencies must maximize water supplies consistent with applicable laws and biological opinions.

Federal agencies can and should try to both protect species and provide water supplies.

The bill makes very clear that agencies cannot harm the fish in violation of the biological opinions—but within this environmental protection mandate, the agencies should try to increase water supplies—especially during a drought emergency.

This requirement complements the additional requirement that agencies must explain any harm to the fish that requires a reduction in water supplies.

Delta Cross-Channel Gates. The bill requires the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Commerce to ensure that the gates remain open as long as possible.

These gates are critically important for controlling salinity in the Delta. When the gates are closed, water that would otherwise be pumped or stored is instead used to flush salty water out through the Delta.

Keeping the gates open for longer will help to reduce salinity in the interior Delta and avoid releasing water unnecessarily in the Central Valley Project and State Water Project. This helps both Delta farmers and communities as well as those south of Delta.

As I stated before, all of these short-term provisions are temporary and will sunset when the Governor's drought emergency expires or two years from the date of enactment, whichever is later.

We have spent untold hours working on this bill.

We have addressed—to the best of our ability—the concerns raised by a host of constituent groups and individuals including environmentalists, water districts, Federal and State agencies, and the agricultural sector.

The bill reflects many meetings between Democrats and Republicans, water districts, cities, rural communities, farmers, fishermen, and a number of environmental groups.

While this bill will not satisfy every water interest, I believe that these provisions will place California on a long-term path to drought resiliency.

This is a bill that offers real help to California while adhering to the laws and biological opinions that protect fish and wildlife.

The result of our efforts is a bill that stands a real chance of being approved by both parties and signed into law. I look forward to working with my colleagues to make that happen.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 370—RECOGNIZING THAT FOR NEARLY 40 YEARS, THE UNITED STATES AND THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH EAST ASIAN NATIONS (ASEAN) HAVE WORKED TOWARD STABILITY, PROSPERITY, AND PEACE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. McCAIN, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Ms. HIRONO) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 370

Whereas the February 2016 U.S.-ASEAN summit at Sunnylands in Rancho Mirage, California is an opportunity to deepen the United States-ASEAN partnership;

Whereas the United States and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) established dialogue relations on September 10, 1977, with the issuing of the 1977 Joint Communique Of The First ASEAN-U.S. Dialogue, and the United States acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) at the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference Session with the United States in Thailand on July 22, 2009;

Whereas the United States was the first non-ASEAN country to appoint an ambassador to ASEAN on April 29, 2008, and the first dialogue partner to establish a permanent mission to ASEAN in 2010;

Whereas the United States has supported efforts to strengthen the ASEAN Secretariat and expand its role in providing greater coordination between and enhancing the effectiveness of regional institutions;

Whereas the first-ever U.S.-ASEAN Defense Forum was held on April 1, 2014, in Honolulu, Hawaii, further deepening ties on the challenges to security, peace, and prosperity in the region, and on November 21, 2015, the United States and ASEAN elevated their relationship to the ASEAN-U.S. Strategic Partnership in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia at the 3rd U.S.-ASEAN summit;

Whereas the Governments and people of the United States and ASEAN can help realize their common vision of a peaceful, prosperous, rules-based Asia-Pacific region that offers security, opportunity, and dignity to all of its citizens;

Whereas ASEAN is the 7th largest economy in the world, at $2,400,000,000,000, representing the United States' 4th largest export market with total-two way trade in goods and services reaching $254,000,000,000 and accounting for more than 500,000 jobs in the United States, and it represents a diverse group of nations and dynamic economies with an expanding workforce, a growing middle class, and a diverse set of skills, cultures, and resources;

Whereas ASEAN is home to critical global sea lanes located at the center of the world's strongest economic growth area, with $5,300,000,000,000 of global trade and more than half of total shipped tonnage transiting through ASEAN's sea lanes each year;

Whereas the United States has a national interest in freedom of navigation and overflight, open access to Asia's maritime commons, and respect for international law in the South China Sea;

Whereas the South China Sea represents a critical international waterway not just for the region but the entire world;

Whereas the United States does not take sides on the competing territorial disputes, but believes claimants should pursue their territorial claims without resort to coercion, and through collaborative diplomacy, including international arbitration, and in accordance international law and institutions;

Whereas the United States opposes all claims in the maritime domain that impinge on the rights, freedoms, and lawful use of the sea that belongs to all nations and upholds the principles that territorial and maritime claims, including territorial waters or territorial seas, must be derived from land features and otherwise comport with international law;

Whereas the United States supports the Philippines' decision to use arbitration under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), done at Montego Bay December 10, 1982, to peacefully and lawfully address competing territorial claims;

Whereas the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) was signed by all members of ASEAN and the People's Republic of China on November 4, 2002, and the United States supports efforts by ASEAN and the People's Republic of China to develop an effective Code of Conduct (COC), encourages claimants not to undertake new or unilateral attempts to change the status quo since the signing of the 2002 Declaration of Conduct, including reclamation activities or asserting administrative measures or controls in disputed areas in the South China Sea; and supports efforts to fully and effectively implement the Declaration of Conduct in its entirety

and to work toward the expeditious conclusion of an effective Code of Conduct;

Whereas the United States has invested significantly in maritime security capacity building with allies and partners in ASEAN to respond to threats in waters off their coasts and to provide maritime security more broadly across the region;

Whereas the United States, as a longstanding Asia-Pacific power, will maintain and exercise freedom of operations in the international waters and airspace in the Asia-Pacific maritime domains, which are critical to the prosperity, stability, and security of ASEAN and the entire Asia-Pacific region;

Whereas ASEAN is a partner to the United States on key transnational challenges, such as terrorism, violent extremism, climate change, environmental degradation and pollution, energy, infectious diseases, disarmament, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, cybersecurity, trafficking in persons, illicit trafficking of wildlife and timber and illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing;

Whereas the United States, ASEAN, and other Dialogue Partners, through the 2015 East Asia Summit, adopted a statement on transnational cyber issues, emphasizing the importance of regional cooperation to improve the security and stability of cyber networks which sets an important precedent for strengthening practical cooperation, risk reduction, and confidence building in cyberspace;

Whereas the 2015 East Asia Summit in Kuala Lumpur adopted a statement on countering violent extremism, where the United States, ASEAN, and other Dialogue Partner leaders sent a clear signal of the region's determination to tackle challenges posed by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria and other violent extremist groups, and to respond to their efforts to spread their ideology of violence and terrorism;

Whereas 2015 East Asia Summit leaders also adopted a statement on health security in responding to diseases with pandemic potential, which committed the region to improve health surveillance systems in each nation, and emphasized the importance of information sharing to promote early detention and response to potential pandemics;

Whereas all members at the 2015 East Asia Summit adopted a statement on maritime cooperation, including preventing incidents at sea, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, irregular migration, piracy, and to collaborate on protecting the marine environment;

Whereas changes in climatic conditions in the ASEAN region over the past four decades have resulted in major loss and damage throughout the ASEAN region with disproportionate impact on developing countries, with the experiences of Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar and Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines providing stark evidence of the destructive impacts on the region;

Whereas conservation and sustainable management of forests throughout ASEAN play an important role in helping to mitigate changes in the climate, reduce the risks of extreme weather events and other climate-driven disasters, and provide sustainable economic livelihood opportunities for local communities;

Whereas the United States will pursue initiatives that are consistent with broader sustainable development, including the achievement of food security and poverty alleviation throughout the ASEAN region, and build on cooperative efforts outlined at the 2014 ASEAN-U.S. Summit to further tackle this global challenge;

Whereas ASEAN is the third-fastest growing economy in Asia after China and India, expanding by 30 percent since 2007 and exceeding the global growth average for the past 10 years;

Whereas the ASEAN Economic Community aims to create one of the largest single market economies in the world, facilitating the free movement of goods, services, and professionals and a sense of economic community among its member states;

Whereas the United States is the largest investor in Southeast Asia, almost $190,000,000,000 in 2012, creating millions of jobs in the United States and in ASEAN Member States, while investment in the United States from Southeast Asia has increased more than from any other region in the past decade;

Whereas the United States has helped ASEAN create a Single Window customs facilitation system that will help to expedite intra-ASEAN trade and make it easier for United States businesses to operate in the region;

Whereas the U.S.-ASEAN Business Alliance for Competitive SMEs has already trained 3,500 small-medium enterprises, with nearly half of the individuals trained being young women entrepreneurs;

Whereas United States-ASEAN development cooperation has focused on innovation and capacity-building efforts in technology, education, disaster management, food security, human rights, and trade facilitation;

Whereas the Lower Mekong Initiative, established on July 23, 2009, is a multinational effort that helps promote sustainable economic development in mainland Southeast Asia to foster integrated, multi-sectoral subregional cooperation and capacity building;

Whereas the United States is a committed partner with ASEAN on the protection of human rights, which are essential for fostering and maintaining stability, security, and good governance;

Whereas, on November 18, 2012, ASEAN Member States came together and adopted an ASEAN Human Rights Declaration that by its own terms ''affirms all the civil and political rights'' and the ''economic social and cultural rights'' in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

Whereas the United States supports the work and mandate of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), including capacity building for the promotion and protection of human rights and its priority, programs, and activities;

Whereas the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Program has now engaged over 60,000 people between the ages of 18 and 35 across all 10 ASEAN nations to promote innovation among young people while also providing skills to a new generation of people who will create and fill the jobs of the future;

Whereas the irregular movement of persons continues to be one of the main security threats in the South East Asia region;

Whereas addressing migration flows and combatting human smuggling in ASEAN is an important, ongoing challenge requiring increased coordination and shared responsibility;

Whereas, on November 21, 2015, ASEAN signed the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, which represents an important step forward in preventing trafficking, prosecuting the perpetrators, and protecting the survivors; and

Whereas the United States supports ASEAN Member States in anti-corruption efforts through, among other initiatives, the implementation of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) welcomes the leaders of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) to the United States for the special February 2016 U.S.-ASEAN summit meeting at Rancho Mirage, California, and affirms the summit as the first regular U.S.-ASEAN summit;

(2) supports and welcomes the elevation of the United States-ASEAN relationship to a strategic partnership and recommits the United States to ASEAN centrality and to helping to build a strong, stable, politically cohesive, economically integrated, and socially responsible ASEAN community with common rules, norms, procedures, and standards consistent with international law and the principles of a ''rule-based'' Asia-Pacific community;

(3) supports efforts towards increasing two-way trade and investment, promoting trade and investment liberalization and facilitation, encouraging strong, sustainable, and inclusive economic growth and job creation, and deepening connectivity;

(4) urges ASEAN to continue its efforts to foster greater integration and unity, including with non-ASEAN economic, political, and security partners, including Japan, the Republic of Korea, Australia, the European Union, and India, both inside of and outside of Asia;

(5) supports efforts by ASEAN nations to address maritime and territorial disputes in a constructive manner and to pursue claims through peaceful, diplomatic, and legitimate regional and international arbitration mechanisms, consistent with international law;

(6) urges all parties to maritime and territorial disputes in the Asia-Pacific region—

(A) to respect the status quo;

(B) exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would undermine stability or complicate or escalate disputes through the use of coercion, intimidation, or military force;

(C) cease land reclamation activities; and

(D) refrain from inhabiting or garrisoning or otherwise militarizing uninhabited islands, reefs, shoals, and other features;

(7) opposes actions by any country to prevent any other country from exercising its sovereign rights to the resources of the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and continental shelf by making claims to those areas in the South China Sea that have no support in international law;

(8) opposes unilateral declarations of administrative and military districts in contested areas in the South China Sea;

(9) opposes the imposition of new fishing regulations covering disputed areas in the South China Sea, which have raised tensions in the region;

(10) urges parties to refrain from unilateral actions that cause permanent physical change to the marine environment in areas pending final delimitation;

(11) supports efforts by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the People's Republic of China to develop an effective Code of Conduct (COC) and urges ASEAN to implement and work toward the expeditious conclusion of an effective Code of Conduct with regards to the South China Sea;

(12) urges ASEAN to develop a common approach to reaffirm the decision of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague's ruling with respect to the case between the Republic of the Philippines and the People's Republic of China;

(13) supports efforts by United States partners and allies in ASEAN—

(A) to enhance maritime capability;

(B) to retain unhindered access to and use of international waterways in the Asia-Pacific region that are critical to ensuring the security and free flow of commerce;

(C) to improve maritime domain awareness;

(D) to counter piracy;

(E) to disrupt illicit maritime trafficking activities and other forms of maritime trafficking activity; and

(F) to enhance the maritime capabilities of a country or regional organizations to respond to emerging threats to maritime security in the Asia-Pacific region;

(14) reaffirms the enhancement of United States-ASEAN economic engagement, including the elimination of barriers to cross-border commerce, and supports the ASEAN Economic Community's goals, including strong, inclusive, and sustainable growth and cooperation between the United States and ASEAN that focuses on innovation and capacity building efforts in technology, education, disaster management, food security, human rights, and trade facilitation, including for ASEAN's poorest countries;

(15) supports the Lower Mekong Initiative, which has made significant progress in promoting sustainable economic development in mainland Southeast Asia and fostering integrated sub-regional cooperation and capacity building;

(16) supports capacity building for the promotion and protection of human rights and related priority, programs, and activities;

(17) supports the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative program as an example of people-to-people partnership building that provides skills and networks to a new generation of people who will create and fill the jobs of the future;

(18) reaffirms the commitment of the United States to continue joint efforts with ASEAN to halt human smuggling and trafficking of persons and urges ASEAN to make increased efforts to create and strengthen regional mechanisms to provide assistance and support to refugees and migrants;

(19) urges ASEAN nations to engage directly with leaders of civil society, human rights, and environmental groups before, during, and after the February 2016 summit; and

(20) encourages the President to communicate to ASEAN leaders the importance of releasing political prisoners and ending politically motivated prosecutions.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 30—EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER THE DISAPPEARANCE OF DAVID SNEDDON, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mrs. FISCHER, and Mr. SASSE) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. CON. RES. 30

Whereas David Louis Sneddon is a United States citizen who disappeared while touring the Yunnan Province in the People's Republic of China as a university student on August 14, 2004, at the age of 24;

Whereas David had last reported to family members prior to his disappearance that he intended to hike the Tiger Leaping Gorge in the Yunnan Province before returning to the United States and had placed a down payment on student housing for the upcoming academic year, planned business meetings, and scheduled law school entrance examinations in the United States for the fall;

Whereas People's Republic of China officials have reported to the Department of State and the family of David that he most likely died by falling into the Jinsha River while hiking the Tiger Leaping Gorge, although no physical evidence or eyewitness testimony exists to support this conclusion;

Whereas there is evidence indicating that David did not fall into the river when he traveled through the gorge, including eyewitness testimonies from people who saw David alive and spoke to him in person after his hike, as recorded by members of David's family and by embassy officials from the Department of State in the months after his disappearance;

Whereas family members searching for David shortly after he went missing obtained eyewitness accounts that David stayed overnight in several guesthouses during and after his safe hike through the gorge, and these guesthouse locations suggest that David disappeared after passing through the gorge, but the guest registers recording the names and passport numbers of foreign overnight guests could not be accessed;

Whereas Chinese officials have reported that evidence does not exist that David was a victim of violent crime, or a resident in a local hospital, prison, or mental institution at the time of his disappearance, and no attempt has been made to use David's passport since the time of his disappearance, nor has any money been withdrawn from his bank account since that time;

Whereas David Sneddon is the only United States citizen to disappear without explanation in the People's Republic of China since the normalization of relations between the United States and China during the administration of President Richard Nixon;

Whereas investigative reporters and nongovernmental organizations with expertise in the Asia-Pacific region, and in some cases particular expertise in the Asian Underground Railroad and North Korea's documented program to kidnap citizens of foreign nations for espionage purposes, have repeatedly raised the possibility that the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) was involved in David's disappearance; and

Whereas investigative reporters and nongovernmental organizations who have reviewed David's case believe it is possible that the Government of North Korea was involved in David's disappearance because—

(1) the Yunnan Province is regarded by regional experts as an area frequently trafficked by North Korean refugees and their support networks, and the Government of the People's Republic of China allows North Korean agents to operate throughout the region to repatriate refugees, such as prominent North Korean defector Kang Byong-sop and members of his family who were captured near the China-Laos border just weeks prior to David's disappearance;

(2) in 2002, North Korean officials acknowledged that the Government of North Korea has carried out a policy since the 1970's of abducting foreign citizens and holding them captive in North Korea for the purpose of training its intelligence and military personnel in critical language and culture skills to infiltrate foreign nations;

(3) Charles Robert Jenkins, a United States soldier who deserted his unit in South Korea in 1965 and was held captive in North Korea for nearly 40 years, left North Korea in July 2004 (one month before David disappeared in China) and Jenkins reported that he was forced to teach English to North Korean intelligence and military personnel while in captivity;

(4) David Sneddon is fluent in the Korean language and was learning Mandarin, skills that could have been appealing to the Government of North Korea after Charles Jenkins left the country;

(5) tensions between the United States and North Korea were heightened during the summer of 2004 due to recent approval of the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (Public Law 108–333) that increased United States aid to refugees fleeing North Korea, prompting the Government of North Korea to issue a press release warning the United States to ''drop its hostile policy'';

(6) David Sneddon's disappearance fits a known pattern often seen in the abduction of foreigners by the Government of North Korea, including the fact that David disappeared the day before North Korea's Liberation Day patriotic national holiday, and the Government of North Korea has a demonstrated history of provocations near dates it deems historically significant;

(7) a well-reputed Japanese non-profit specializing in North Korean abductions shared with the United States its expert analysis in 2012 about information it stated was received ''from a reliable source'' that a United States university student largely matching David Sneddon's description was taken from China by North Korean agents in August 2004; and

(8) commentary published in the Wall Street Journal in 2013 cited experts looking at the Sneddon case who concluded that ''it is most probable that a U.S. national has been abducted to North Korea,'' and ''there is a strong possibility that North Korea kidnapped the American'': Now, therefore, be it—

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), that Congress—

(1) expresses its ongoing concern about the disappearance of David Louis Sneddon in Yunnan Province, People's Republic of China, in August, 2004;

(2) directs the Department of State and the intelligence community to jointly continue investigations and to consider all plausible explanations for David's disappearance, including the possibility of abduction by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea;

(3) urges the Department of State and the intelligence community to coordinate investigations with the Governments of the People's Republic of China, Japan, and South Korea and solicit information from appropriate regional affairs and law enforcement experts on plausible explanations for David's disappearance;

(4) encourages the Department of State and the intelligence community to work with foreign governments known to have diplomatic influence with the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to better investigate the possibility of the involvement of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in David Sneddon's disappearance and to possibly seek his recovery; and

(5) requests that the Department of State and the intelligence community continue to work with and inform Congress and the family of David Sneddon on efforts to possibly recover David and to resolve his disappearance.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3297. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 757, to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3298. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 757, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3299. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 757, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3300. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 757, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3301. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 757, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3302. Ms. KLOBUCHAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3303. Ms. KLOBUCHAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3241 submitted by Ms. CANTWELL and intended to be proposed to the bill S. 2012, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3304. Mr. DAINES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 757, to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3305. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3297. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 757, to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 91, between lines 19 and 20, insert the following:

(e) WITHHOLDING OF FUNDING.—The President shall temporarily withhold United States' funding from the United Nations if the United Nations Security Council does not make a decision regarding a reported violation of any applicable United Nations Security Council resolution relating to prohibitions on ballistic missile testing or prohibitions on activities aimed at obtaining nuclear weapons within 30 days after receiving information of such a violation.

SA 3298. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 757, to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 71, between lines 6 and 7, insert the following:

(c) STATE SPONSOR OF TERRORISM.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall—

(1) conduct an investigation of the conduct of the Government of North Korea to determine if North Korea should be designated as a state sponsor of terrorism (as defined in section 202(d)); and

(2) submit a report to Congress that describes the evidence used by the Department of State to reach the determination described in paragraph (1).

SA 3299. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 757, to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. RECOGNITION OF JERUSALEM AS THE CAPITAL OF ISRAEL AND RELOCATION OF THE UNITED STATES EMBASSY TO JERUSALEM.

(a) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It should be the policy of the United States to recognize Jerusalem as the undivided capital of the State of Israel, both de jure and de facto.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) Jerusalem must remain an undivided city in which the rights of every ethnic and religious group are protected as they have been by Israel since 1967;

(2) every citizen of Israel should have the right to reside anywhere in the undivided city of Jerusalem;

(3) the President and the Secretary of State should publicly affirm as a matter of United States policy that Jerusalem must remain the undivided capital of the State of Israel;

(4) the President should immediately implement the provisions of the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995 (Public Law 104–45) and begin the process of relocating the United States Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem;

(5) United States officials should refrain from any actions that contradict United States law on this subject; and

(6) any official document of the United States Government which lists countries and their capital cities should identify Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

(c) AMENDMENT OF WAIVER AUTHORITY.—The Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995 (Public Law 104–45) is amended—

(1) by striking section 7; and

(2) by redesignating section 8 as section 7.

(d) RESTRICTION ON FUNDING SUBJECT TO OPENING DETERMINATION.—Not more than 50 percent of the funds appropriated to the Department of State for fiscal year 2016 for ''Acquisition and Maintenance of Buildings Abroad'' may be obligated until the Secretary of State determines and reports to Congress that the United States Embassy in Jerusalem has officially opened.

(e) FISCAL YEARS 2017 AND 2018 FUNDING.—

(1) FISCAL YEAR 2017.—Of the funds authorized to be appropriated for ''Acquisition and Maintenance of Buildings Abroad'' for the Department of State for fiscal year 2017, such sums as may be necessary should be made available until expended only for construction and other costs associated with the establishment of the United States Embassy in Jerusalem.

(2) FISCAL YEAR 2018.—Of the funds authorized to be appropriated for ''Acquisition and Maintenance of Buildings Abroad'' for the Department of State for fiscal year 2018, such sums as may be necessary should be made available until expended only for construction and other costs associated with the establishment of the United States Embassy in Jerusalem.

(f) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''United States Embassy'' means the offices of the United States diplomatic mission and the residence of the United States chief of mission.

SA 3300. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 757, to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title III, add the following:

SEC. 305. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON THE DISAPPEARANCE OF DAVID SNEDDON.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) David Louis Sneddon is a United States citizen who disappeared while touring the Yunnan Province in the People's Republic of China as a university student on August 14, 2004, at the age of 24.

(2) David had last reported to family members prior to his disappearance that he intended to hike the Tiger Leaping Gorge in the Yunnan Province before returning to the United States and had placed a down payment on student housing for the upcoming academic year, planned business meetings, and scheduled law school entrance examinations in the United States for the fall.

(3) People's Republic of China officials have reported to the Department of State and the family of David that he most likely died by falling into the Jinsha River while hiking the Tiger Leaping Gorge, although no physical evidence or eyewitness testimony exists to support this conclusion.

(4) There is evidence indicating that David did not fall into the river when he traveled through the gorge, including eyewitness testimonies from people who saw David alive and spoke to him in person after his hike, as recorded by members of David's family and by embassy officials from the Department of State in the months after his disappearance.

(5) Family members searching for David shortly after he went missing obtained eyewitness accounts that David stayed overnight in several guesthouses during and after his safe hike through the gorge, and these guesthouse locations suggest that David disappeared after passing through the gorge, but the guest registers recording the names and passport numbers of foreign overnight guests could not be accessed.

(6) Chinese officials have reported that evidence does not exist that David was a victim of violent crime, or a resident in a local hospital, prison, or mental institution at the time of his disappearance, and no attempt has been made to use David's passport since the time of his disappearance, nor has any money been withdrawn from his bank account since that time.

(7) David Sneddon is the only United States citizen to disappear without explanation in the People's Republic of China since the normalization of relations between the United States and China during the administration of President Richard Nixon.

(8) Investigative reporters and nongovernmental organizations with expertise in the Asia-Pacific region, and in some cases particular expertise in the Asian Underground Railroad and North Korea's documented program to kidnap citizens of foreign nations for espionage purposes, have repeatedly raised the possibility that the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) was involved in David's disappearance.

(9) Investigative reporters and nongovernmental organizations who have reviewed David's case believe it is possible that the Government of North Korea was involved in David's disappearance because—

(A) the Yunnan Province is regarded by regional experts as an area frequently trafficked by North Korean refugees and their support networks, and the Government of the People's Republic of China allows North Korean agents to operate throughout the region to repatriate refugees, such as prominent North Korean defector Kang Byong-sop and members of his family who were captured near the China-Laos border just weeks prior to David's disappearance;

(B) in 2002, North Korean officials acknowledged that the Government of North Korea has carried out a policy since the 1970's of abducting foreign citizens and holding them captive in North Korea for the purpose of

training its intelligence and military personnel in critical language and culture skills to infiltrate foreign nations;

(C) Charles Robert Jenkins, a United States soldier who deserted his unit in South Korea in 1965 and was held captive in North Korea for nearly 40 years, left North Korea in July 2004 (one month before David disappeared in China) and Jenkins reported that he was forced to teach English to North Korean intelligence and military personnel while in captivity;

(D) David Sneddon is fluent in the Korean language and was learning Mandarin, skills that could have been appealing to the Government of North Korea after Charles Jenkins left the country;

(E) tensions between the United States and North Korea were heightened during the summer of 2004 due to recent approval of the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (Public Law 108–333) that increased United States aid to refugees fleeing North Korea, prompting the Government of North Korea to issue a press release warning the United States to ''drop its hostile policy'';

(F) David Sneddon's disappearance fits a known pattern often seen in the abduction of foreigners by the Government of North Korea, including the fact that David disappeared the day before North Korea's Liberation Day patriotic national holiday, and the Government of North Korea has a demonstrated history of provocations near dates it deems historically significant;

(G) a well-reputed Japanese non-profit specializing in North Korean abductions shared with the United States its expert analysis in 2012 about information it stated was received ''from a reliable source'' that a United States university student largely matching David Sneddon's description was taken from China by North Korean agents in August 2004; and

(H) commentary published in the Wall Street Journal in 2013 cited experts looking at the Sneddon case who concluded that ''it is most probable that a U.S. national has been abducted to North Korea,'' and ''there is a strong possibility that North Korea kidnapped the American''.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—Congress—

(1) expresses its ongoing concern about the disappearance of David Louis Sneddon in Yunnan Province, People's Republic of China, in August, 2004;

(2) directs the Department of State and the intelligence community to jointly continue investigations and to consider all plausible explanations for David's disappearance, including the possibility of abduction by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea;

(3) urges the Department of State and the intelligence community to coordinate investigations with the Governments of the People's Republic of China, Japan, and South Korea and solicit information from appropriate regional affairs and law enforcement experts on plausible explanations for David's disappearance;

(4) encourages the Department of State and the intelligence community to work with foreign governments known to have diplomatic influence with the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to better investigate the possibility of the involvement of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in David Sneddon's disappearance and to possibly seek his recovery; and

(5) requests that the Department of State and the intelligence community continue to work with and inform Congress and the family of David Sneddon on efforts to possibly recover David and to resolve his disappearance.

SA 3301. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 757, to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 92, strike line 15 and all that follows through page 93, line 2.

Beginning on page 100, strike line 24 and all that follows through page 101, line 8.

Beginning on page 112, strike line 9 and all that follows through page 115, line 7.

SA 3302. Ms. KLOBUCHAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 41, between lines 10 and 11, insert the following:

(6) USE OF GRANT FUNDS.—A grant awarded under this section may not be used for the purpose of funding, in whole or in part, the actual construction, renovation, repair, or alteration of a building or work.

SA 3303. Ms. KLOBUCHAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3241 submitted by Ms. CANTWELL and intended to be proposed to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of the amendment, add the following:

SEC. ___. USE OF GRANT FUNDS.

A grant awarded under section 1004 may not be used for the purpose of funding, in whole or in part, the actual construction, renovation, repair, or alteration of a building or work.

SA 3304. Mr. DAINES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 757, to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 73, line 12, insert ''or textile'' after ''smuggling,''.

Beginning on page 73, strike line 21 and all that follows through page 74, line 8, and insert the following:

(8) knowingly, directly or indirectly, sells, supplies, or transfers to or from the Government of North Korea or any person acting for or on behalf of that Government, a significant amount of precious metal, graphite, raw or semi-finished metals or aluminum, steel, coal, software, synthetic filaments, or three-dimensional textiles for use by or in industrial processes directly related to weapons of mass destruction, delivery systems for such weapons, equipment designed to defend against radiological or chemical exposure from those weapons, other proliferation activities, the Korean Workers' Party, armed forces, internal security, or intelligence activities, or the operation and maintenance of political prison camps or forced labor camps, including outside of North Korea;

SA 3305. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2953 proposed by Ms. MURKOWSKI to the bill S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. MODIFICATION OF DEFINITION OF SPORT FISHING EQUIPMENT UNDER THE TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL ACT.

Section 3(2)(B) of the Toxic Substances Control Act (15 U.S.C. 2602(2)(B)) is amended—

(1) in clause (v), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in clause (vi) by striking the period at the end and inserting '', and''; and

(3) by inserting after clause (vi) the following:

''(vii) any sport fishing equipment (as such term is defined in section 4162(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) the sale of which is subject to the tax imposed by section 4161(a) of such Code (determined without regard to any exemptions from such tax provided by section 4162 or 4221 or any other provision of such Code), and sport fishing equipment components.''.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 10, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD–406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled, ''The Importance of Enacting a New Water Resources Development Act.''

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

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 10, 2016, at 10:30 a.m., in room SD–215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled, ''The President's Budget for Fiscal Year 2017.''

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

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 10, 2016, at 2 p.m., in room SD–215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled, ''The President's Budget for Fiscal Year 2017.''

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 10, 2016, at 10 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 10, 2016, at 10:15 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''U.S. Policy in Central Africa: The Imperative of Good Governance.''

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

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 10, 2016, at 10 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 10, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Breaking the Cycle: Mental Health and the Justice System.''

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

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Special Committee on Aging be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 10, 2016, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD–562 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled ''Do You Know What Is In Your Suitcase? How Drug Traffickers Are Deceiving Seniors to Smuggle Contraband.''

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Jeremy Lagelee, a law clerk on the Finance Committee, be granted floor privileges for the duration of the week.

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

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Henry Schliefer, Justin Brown, Justin Hoffman, Michael George, Rebecca Gilbert, and Scott Richards, fellows in my office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of this session in Congress.

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

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for my intern, Aaron Nelson, to be granted privileges of the floor for the remainder of the day.

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

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Gene Gerzhoy, a fellow working in my office, have full privileges during this session of the 114th Congress.

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

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my defense fellow, SGM Travis Votaw, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of this calendar year.

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

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Maj. Matthew Schroeder, a defense fellow in my office, and LCDR Amy McElroy, a Coast Guard fellow in my office, be granted privileges of the floor for the remainder of the 114th Congress.

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

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Sanjay Mukhi, Michael Pascual, and Heather Ichord, congressional fellows in my office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the 114th Congress.

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

REMOVAL OF INJUNCTION OF SECRECY—TREATY DOCUMENT NOS. 114–5, 114–6, 114–7, 114–8, 114–9, AND 114–10

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, as in executive session, I ask unanimous consent that the injunction of secrecy be removed from the following treaties transmitted to the Senate on February 10, 2016, by the President of the United States: U.N. Convention on the Use of Electronic Communications in International Contracts, Treaty Document No. 114–5; Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled, Treaty Document No. 114–6; U.N. Convention on the Assignment of Receivables in International Trade, Treaty Document No. 114–7; Beijing Treaty on Audiovisual Performances, Treaty Document No. 114–8; U.N. Convention on Independent Guarantees and Stand-By Letters of Credit, Treaty Document No. 114–9; and Extradition Treaty with the Dominican Republic, Treaty Document No. 114–10. I further ask that the treaties be considered as having been read the first time; that they be referred, with accompanying papers, to the Committee on Foreign Relations and ordered to be printed; and that the President's messages be printed in the RECORD.

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

The messages of the President are as follows:

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, subject to certain declarations and understandings, I transmit herewith the United Nations Convention on the Use of Electronic Communications in International Contracts (Convention), done at New York on November 23, 2005, and entered into force on March 1, 2013. The report of the Secretary of State, which includes an overview of the Convention, is enclosed for the information of the Senate.

The Convention sets forth modern rules validating and facilitating the use of electronic communications in international business transactions. The Convention will promote legal uniformity and predictability, and thereby lower costs, for U.S. businesses engaged in electronic commerce.

The Convention's provisions are substantively similar to State law enactments in the United States of the 1999 Uniform Electronic Transactions Act (UETA), and to the governing Federal law, the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act, Public Law 106–229 (June 30, 2000). Consistent with the Federal law, all States have enacted laws containing the same basic rules on electronic commerce, whether based on UETA or on functionally equivalent provisions. The Federal statute allows States that enact UETA, or equivalent standards, to be subject to their State law, and not the corresponding provisions of the Federal law.

The United States proposed and actively participated in the negotiation of the Convention at the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law. Accession by the United States can be expected to encourage other countries to become parties to the Convention, and having a greater number of parties to the Convention should facilitate electronic commerce across borders.

The Convention would be implemented through Federal legislation to be proposed separately to the Congress by my Administration.

The Convention has been endorsed by leading associations and organizations in this area, including the American Bar Association and the United States Council on International Business. The United States Government worked closely with the Uniform Law Commission regarding the negotiation and domestic implementation of the Convention.

I recommend, therefore, that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Convention and give its advice and consent to ratification, subject to certain understandings and declarations.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *February 10, 2016.*

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled, done at Marrakesh on June 27, 2013 (Marrakesh Treaty). I also transmit, for the information of the Senate, a report of the Secretary of State with respect to the Marrakesh Treaty that includes a summary of its provisions.

This copyright treaty, concluded under the auspices of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO),

advances the national interest of the United States in promoting the protection and enjoyment of creative works. The Marrakesh Treaty lays a foundation, in a manner consistent with existing international copyright standards, for further opening up a world of knowledge for persons with print disabilities by improving their access to published works.

The United States played a leadership role in the negotiation of the treaty, and its provisions are broadly consistent with the approach and structure of existing U.S. law. Narrow changes in U.S. law will be needed for the United States to implement certain provisions of the treaty. Proposed legislation is being submitted to both houses of the Congress in conjunction with this transmittal.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Marrakesh Treaty, and give its advice and consent to its ratification.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *February 10, 2016*.

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, subject to certain declarations and understandings set forth in the enclosed report, I transmit herewith the United Nations Convention on the Assignment of Receivables in International Trade, done at New York on December 12, 2001, and signed by the United States on December 30, 2003. The report of the Secretary of State, which includes an overview of the proposed Convention, is enclosed for the information of the Senate.

The Convention sets forth modern uniform rules governing the assignment of receivables for use in international financing transactions. In particular, the Convention facilitates the use of cross-border receivables financing by: (a) recognizing the legal effectiveness of a wide variety of modern receivables financing practices; (b) overriding certain contractual obstacles to receivables financing; and (c) providing clear, uniform conflict-of-laws rules to determine which country's domestic law governs priority as between the assignee of a receivable and competing claimants.

As a global leader in receivables financing, the United States actively participated in the negotiation of this Convention at the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law with the support of U.S. business interests. Drawing on laws and best practices prevalent in the United States and other countries where receivables financing flourishes, the Convention would promote the availability of capital and credit at more affordable rates and thus facilitate the development of international commerce. Widespread ratification of the Convention would help U.S. companies, especially small- and medium-sized enterprises, obtain much-needed working capital financing from U.S. banks and other lenders to export goods, and thereby help create more jobs in the United States.

The rules set forth in the Convention do not differ in any significant respect from those contained in existing U.S. law. In particular, in virtually all cases application of the Convention will produce the same results as those under the Uniform Commercial Code Article 9, which all States and the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands have enacted.

I recommend, therefore, that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Convention and give its advice and consent to ratification, subject to certain declarations and undertakings set forth in the enclosed report.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *February 10, 2016*.

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Beijing Treaty on Audiovisual Performances, done at Beijing on June 24, 2012 (Beijing Treaty). I also transmit, for the information of the Senate, a report of the Secretary of State with respect to the Beijing Treaty that includes a summary of its provisions.

This copyright treaty, concluded under the auspices of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), advances the national interest of the United States in promoting the protection and enjoyment of creative works. The Beijing Treaty provides a modern international framework for the rights of performers in motion pictures, television programs, and other audiovisual works, similar to that already in place for producers of such works, for authors, and for performers and producers of sound recordings, pursuant to other WIPO copyright treaties the United States has joined.

The United States played a leadership role in the negotiation of the treaty, and its provisions are broadly consistent with the approach and structure of existing U.S. law. Narrow changes in U.S. law will be needed for the United States to implement certain provisions of the treaty. Proposed legislation is being submitted to both houses of the Congress in conjunction with this transmittal.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Beijing Treaty, and give its advice and consent to its ratification, subject to a declaration pursuant to Article 11 of the Beijing Treaty as described in the accompanying Department of State report.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *February 10, 2016*.

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, subject to certain understandings set forth in the enclosed report, I transmit herewith the United Nations Convention on Independent Guarantees and Stand-By Letters of Credit (Convention), done at New York on December 11, 1995, and signed by the United States on December 11, 1997. The report of the Secretary of State, which includes an overview of the proposed Convention, is enclosed for the information of the Senate.

As a leader in transactional finance, the United States participated in the negotiation of this Convention at the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law with the support of U.S. commercial and financial interests. The Convention establishes common rules on stand-by letters of credit and other independent guarantees, instruments that are essential to international commerce, and thereby reduces the uncertainty and risk that may be associated with cross-border transactions. With two minor exceptions, the Convention's provisions are substantively similar to the uniform State law provisions in the Uniform Commercial Code Article 5 (Letters of Credit), which all States and the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands have enacted.

Ratification by the United States of this Convention can be expected to encourage other countries to become parties to the Convention. While eight countries currently are parties to the Convention, having a greater number of parties to the Convention would promote the stability and efficiency of international commerce.

The Convention has been endorsed by leading banking and business associations in the United States.

The Convention would be implemented through Federal legislation to be separately transmitted by my Administration to the Congress.

I recommend, therefore, that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Convention and give its advice and consent to its ratification, subject to certain understandings set forth in the enclosed report.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *February 10, 2016*.

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Extradition Treaty between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Dominican Republic (the ''Treaty''), signed at Santo Domingo on January 12, 2015. I also transmit, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty would replace the extradition treaty between the United States and the Dominican Republic, signed at Santo Domingo on June 19, 1909. The Treaty follows generally the form and content of other extradition treaties recently concluded by the United States. It would replace an outmoded list of extraditable offenses with a modern ''dual criminality'' approach, which would enable extradition for such offenses as money laundering and other newer offenses not appearing on

the list. The Treaty also contains a modernized ''political offense'' clause and provides that extradition shall not be refused based on the nationality of the person sought. Finally, the Treaty incorporates a series of procedural improvements to streamline and speed the extradition process.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty, and give its advice and consent to ratification.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *February 10, 2016*.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2016

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, February 11; 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 then resume consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 644, with the time until 10:30 a.m. equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:02 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, February 11, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nomination received by the Senate:

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AND TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 50:

To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. KARL L. SCHULTZ

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

9/11 MEMORIAL ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of The National 9/11 Memorial at the World Trade Center Act. This legislation would designate the site of the 9/11 Memorial at the World Trade Center as a national memorial—providing it the national recognition and support it deserves as a lasting symbol of the lives we lost and the resilience with which our nation came together and pledged to emerge stronger in search of a more peaceful world.

Like many New Yorkers, I know and have felt firsthand the lasting impacts of September 11, 2001. Among the almost 3,000 lives we lost that day was that of my cousin, John Moran, a second-generation firefighter and FDNY Battalion Chief. Not a day goes by that I don't think of my cousin and of the thousands of family members and loved ones we lost that day. But I also bear in mind each day the vow we made as a nation to never forget what happened and to protect the spirit of camaraderie that emerged from the attacks.

The 9/11 Memorial serves as a place where we can remember and honor the brave lives we lost, as well as that spirit of unity and overcoming with which we moved forward as a nation. Because of the place the events of September 11, 2001 hold in our collective national history, the federal government should play a role in preserving this space and keeping what it represents at the forefront of our collective memory. By recognizing the 9/11 Memorial at the World Trade Center as a national memorial, federal resources will be available to ensure the maintenance, security and accessibility of this site so that all people will have the opportunity to remember and honor our heroes. It is our duty to ensure that this sacred site and tribute receives the national upkeep and recognition it deserves.

September 11th changed our lives as individuals and as Americans. We must actively seek to remind our nation of the resolution and sacrifice of the survivors, the victims, their families, and of our first responders. And we must also enshrine the courage and strength with which we stood up to hatred. Acting in a bipartisan manner to designate the 9/11 Memorial as a national memorial is an important step in this direction.

STANDING TOGETHER

HON. E. SCOTT RIGELL

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. RIGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to submit a statement on behalf of my constituent, Rabbi Dr. Israel Zoberman. Rabbi Zoberman is the Founding Rabbi of Congregation Beth Chaverim in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Rabbi Zoberman asked me to submit the following remarks:

Our one God of life's precious blessings in a precarious world who created us to be one family, gloriously diverse and gratefully united, so movingly manifest in our beloved Hampton Roads and in this our Standing Together for our sake as well as Heaven's.

I am proudly holding my Jewish people's most sacred possession, the Torah Scroll. This one from Brno, Czech Republic, has acquired an added dimension of the sacred. A survivor of the Shoah, Holocaust, number 526 of the Czech Memorial Scrolls, it lost its original congregation and community in the Kingdom of the Night. Hatred of the ''other'' consumed eleven million innocent lives of Jews and Gentiles. The towering Torah's teachings of loving-kindness, is the very foundation of the three great monotheistic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Joined by the three great Eastern religions they have served as humanity's conscience and civilization's journey forward.

We are taught in the Torah's inerasable lessons begrudged by humanity's enemies, burning the Torah and its people that each human being is equally though uniquely created in the Divine image, that we should love our neighbors as we love ourselves. We are reminded time and again that we, who were rejected and enslaved in Pharaoh's Egypt, ought to embrace the stranger, namely the ''other'' and the refugee, as members of God's family and our own.

The Exodus' soaring saga of liberation uplifted Dr. King—whose celebration we just observed—to remind America to live up to the Pilgrims' vision of fleeing refugees, walking in the shoes of the Biblical Israelites while yearning for a new land free from the persecution of the ''other.'' Freedom of and from religion has allowed America to flourish like no other nation, immeasurably benefitting from the greatest human diversity anywhere. Diversity is divine.

We must remember the Jewish refugees, including so many children, fleeing Nazism, who were denied entry to these promising shores. In 1939, the SS St. Louis ship, with its desperate human cargo from Hamburg, Germany, was tragically turned away. I address you from the midst of the children in Europe's Displaced Persons Camps following World War II and the Holocaust. There I spent my formative early childhood, there my family along with a multitude of uprooted survivors and homeless refugees on the run, gradually learned to believe again in human goodness and renew our trust in God after such heavy genocidal losses.

Today's refugees too are knocking on the door of ''the land of the free and the home of the brave.'' The Syrian ones, the most vulnerable, are heroically escaping their genocidal regime. They too are in displaced persons camps with their children's bodies washed ashore on European beaches. How can we remain silent? Those allowed to enter following a most careful vetting process, will become along with their progeny, patriotic and tax-paying Americans. Steve Jobs' biological father was a Syrian immigrant. Refugees and immigrants keep alive the American dream for us all, ensuring that America may ever be a blessing.

We reassure our dear Muslim neighbors, colleagues, and friends, which we unreservedly appreciate their indispensable contributions without which we would be diminished. Barbaric ISIS targets them too and they fight it with fellow Americans. We all stand together in the ark of survival with a shared future and fate. Indeed, we mutually and joyfully are our sisters and brothers' keepers. We cannot be separated. Let us be mindful of the danger of poisonous demagoguery to our enviable American democracy and inclusive way of life, as well as to our ethical standing. Words and lives do matter. Words and lives are inextricably connected.

Let us reaffirm in this grand gathering the infinite value of each and every one of us. Both our differences and commonalities are precious to our common Creator. They should be the same for us. Finally, let us pledge to never ever abandon our deepest mooring and most sacred proposition that God's divinity and human dignity are indivisible. Shalom, Salaam, Peace.

HONORING CARNEY CAMPION

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Carney Campion, who passed away in San Rafael, California, in December of last year. An executive with the Golden Gate Bridge Highway and Transportation District for over two decades, Mr. Campion was a devoted civil servant, a respected and accessible manager, and an ardent advocate for improving public transit.

A lifelong Californian, Mr. Campion was born in Santa Rosa in 1928, and graduated from UC Berkeley in 1950 with a degree in Personnel and Public Administration. He held management roles with the Redwood Region Conservation Council and the Redwood Empire Association before joining the Golden Gate Bridge District. In 1998, at the age of 70, he retired from his general manager role, a position he held for 15 years. Following his retirement, he remained active throughout Marin County, including with the Marin County Cultural Services Commission and the Marin County Fair.

Mr. Campion was a measured leader navigating an often chaotic environment. During his tenure, he oversaw expansion in ferry, bus and rail services, labor negotiations, a seismic retrofit of the Golden Gate Bridge, and other transportation modernization efforts. He is remembered by staff as a genuine, thoughtful leader dedicated to improving services for residents and visitors across the Bay Area.

Mr. Campion's leadership has impacted countless lives throughout our region, with effects that can still be felt today, more than 15 years after his retirement. It is therefore appropriate that we pay tribute to Mr. Campion today and express our deepest condolences to his surviving wife, Kathryn, six children, 21 grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren.

CONGRATULATING DAN FOUST, SR. FOR HIS LIFETIME DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a constituent of mine, Mr. Dan Foust, Sr. He is receiving the 2015 Lifetime Distinguished Service Award in the Cultural category from the Greater St. Charles County Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Foust has been a lifelong dedicated volunteer in the community. His membership with the St. Charles Lions Club started over twenty-seven years ago. During his time as a member he was instrumental in establishing and completing the McNair Park Braille Trail. In 2001, Mr. Foust, branched off from the St. Charles Lions club and chartered the First Capitol Lions club. From his many years of service during his time as a Lions member, Mr. Foust has received the highest honor a Lions member can—the Melvin Jones Fellowship award.

The German Chapter of the St. Charles Sister Cities has benefited from Mr. Foust's membership for over twenty years. His fundraising efforts have allowed the St. Charles Sister Cities to expand the number of student exchanges from two students to four. This club allows students from Germany and Ireland to experience life in the St. Charles area. Through this program students are able to foster mutual understanding, friendship, and goodwill through cultural, social, business, and educational exchanges.

In 2011, Mr. Foust started his Chairmanship position of the St. Charles Oktoberfest Festival. Under his leadership, this event has grown to over 100,000 attendees annually. This festival brings in funds to various groups in the area: First Capitol Lions Club, St. Peters Lions Club, Lake St. Louis Lions Club, Jonesburg Lions Club, Sister Cities of St. Charles, the St. Charles Jaycees, and many more groups.

Other areas that Mr. Foust has served include: a twenty-five year membership with the St. Charles Parks Foundation, a twenty year membership with the St. Charles Raccoon Conservation Club, and serving in local government for sixteen years. He also served as a former director of the St. Charles County Municipal League.

Mr. Foust enjoys time with his wife of thirty-six years, Carla and his four children—Carrie, Dan Jr., Justin, and Jason. His world is made brighter by his 16 grandchildren and will welcome his first great-grandchild in June of this year.

I ask you to join me in recognizing Mr. Dan Foust, Sr. on this Lifetime Distinguished Service Award in the Cultural category from the Greater St. Charles County Chamber of Commerce.

CONGRATULATING JOSHUA GILMER ON HIS ACCEPTANCE TO THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE'S CRITICAL LANGUAGE SCHOLARSHIP AWARD 2015 SUMMER PROGRAM

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate University of Missouri student Joshua Gilmer on his acceptance to, and completion of, the U.S. Department of State's Critical Language Scholarship award (CLS) 2015 summer program.

Joshua, a graduate of Nixa High School in Nixa, Missouri, was one of just 550 out of about 5,500 applicants to be selected to receive admittance to the CLS program this year. This scholarship is a prestigious award, which offers a fully immersive language experience and cultural exchange to 13 countries around the world. The program is aimed at training the next generation of U.S. Citizens to gain an enriched cultural knowledge of other countries and to be well equipped for careers in diplomacy, international business, and other globalized industries.

Through the program, Joshua completed an Intermediate Russian language course in Vladimir, Russia. His time overseas was spent fostering not only his language skills, but his knowledge of and ability to relate to Russian culture. In the rapidly globalizing world, a cultural understanding of other countries is a key to continued American success in foreign affairs.

Mr. Speaker, Joshua Gilmer is now well-equipped with this new knowledge to broaden the horizons of his peers here in the U.S. I am proud to know that young people like Joshua from Missouri's Seventh Congressional District will one day help guide America's global economic interests, and urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating him on this achievement.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

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 $19,000,235,912,585.65. We've added $8,373,358,863,672.57 to our debt in 7 years. This is over $8 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to state that I was unable to vote on Tuesday, February 9, 2016 due to community events held that evening in our district in Houston and Harris County, Texas.

If I had the opportunity to vote, I would have voted "Yea" on H.R. 3036, legislation to designate the National September 11 Memorial located at the World Trade Center in New York City, New York, as a national memorial.

CONGRATULATING DON BOSCHERT, JR. FOR HIS LIFETIME DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a constituent of mine, Mr. Don Boschert, Jr. He is receiving the 2015 Citizen of the Year Award from the Greater St. Charles County Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Boschert has called St. Charles County home his entire life. Since 1978, he has been an Investment Representative with Edward Jones in St. Charles.

During Mr. Boschert's time with Edward Jones, he has been recognized as a leader and was therefore named Regional Leader of St. Charles and Lincoln Counties from 1998 through 2004, and from 2001 through 2004, he served as a General Partner. Under his leadership, Edward Jones was able to expand from 19 branch offices to 50 branch offices. Mr. Boschert currently serves as a limited Partner for Edward Jones along with working with his son, Greg, in the heart of St. Charles.

The commitment that Mr. Boschert shows to the projects and programs of the chamber continue to make the organization stronger. In 1991, he served as President of the St. Charles Chamber of Commerce and also served as Chairman of the St. Charles County Convention Center and Sports Facilities for 3 years. In addition to those office positions, Don has served as President of the St. Charles Rotary, St. Peters Rotary, and United Services. He has held board positions with Crime Stoppers and the Academy of the Sacred Heart Golf Outing Committee.

His volunteering spirit also positively affects the Boys & Girls Club of St. Charles and the Child Welfare Allocation Panel for the United Way where he has served as a board member. The River City Rascals benefited from his leadership where he was a Limited Partner from 1997–2006.

For 33 years, Don and his wife, Jennie, have enjoyed life together in the St. Charles area.

I ask you to join me in recognizing Mr. Don Boschert, Jr. on this 2015 Citizen of the Year award from the Greater St. Charles County Chamber of Commerce.

CONGRATULATING ZACH MOORE ON HIS SELECTION TO THE HIGH SCHOOL HONORS PERFORMANCE SERIES

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Zach Moore, a senior trombone player at Glendale High School in Springfield, Missouri, on being selected to perform in the High School Honors Performance Series at Carnegie Hall in New York City.

Starting in 2009, The High School Honors Performance Series was established to showcase the most talented high school performers in the country. To be considered for inclusion in this series, Moore underwent a competitive application process which required a written recommendation from an instructor and his submitting an audition tape. The various different ensembles on display at the series are conducted by renowned conductors, who will challenge Zach to perform to the best of his abilities.

Zach has assembled a truly admirable body of work playing the trombone, earning a Bass Trombone slot in the All-State Orchestra this year as well as first chair trombone honors in the All-District Honor Band. He has played with the U.S. Army All-American Marching Band at the halftime show of the U.S. Army All-American Bowl, a testament to his ability to perform at a high level in front of a large audience. Zach has been described as an incredibly hard worker who is both dedicated to his art and exceptionally talented.

Mr. Speaker, Zach Moore deserves our congratulations on his selection to the High School Honors Performance Series. I urge my colleagues to join me in extending congratulations to Zach on his achievements, which make him an example of the outstanding talent Missouri's Seventh Congressional District has to offer.

RECOGNIZING MS. NICOLE STEINER

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Nicole Steiner for being selected as one of Colorado's top two youth volunteers in the 21st Annual National Awards Program by The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards. She was selected for this honor because of her exceptional acts of volunteerism.

Ms. Steiner is a senior at Legend High School in Parker, Colorado. To date, she has raised over $40,000 worth of games, puzzles, and books for a variety of organizations and individuals. In 2014 she founded "A Game for You", which collects games, puzzles, and books that are donated to various organizations. Over 5,500 individuals have received a gift because of her efforts. It is the ingenuity and hard work Ms. Steiner embodies daily that makes America exceptional. She has shown true leadership in her community.

As the recipient of this award, Ms. Steiner will receive a $1,000 stipend, engraved medallions, and a trip to Washington, D.C. On behalf of the 4th Congressional District of Colorado, I extend my best wishes to Ms. Steiner.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Ms. Nicole Steiner for her accomplishments.

IN RECOGNITION OF ST. MARY'S SCHOOL

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to recognize St. Mary's School in Lee, Massachusetts on their 130th anniversary. Since its inception, the hard work of the teachers and students has made St. Mary's School a model of success in the region.

In the mid-1880s, Jane Sedgwick, a member of a wealthy family in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, wanted to open a parochial school in Western Massachusetts after a massive influx of Irish immigrants into the area. After 25 years of work and determination, Pope Leo XIII finally gave Jane his personal blessing to building the school that would be affiliated with St. Mary's Church in Lee. Five years later, the school was built and they welcomed nuns from St. Joseph's of Chambery, France to teach students grades 1 through 8.

For 72 years, the old school located on Academy Street served the parish of St. Mary's until a boom in the population of Lee following World War II. The pastor at St. Mary's Church at the time, Father Jeremiah Murphy, labored tirelessly to get the funds needed to ensure they could build a big enough building for all the students. In 1957, all of Father Murphy's dreams came together and a new school was constructed just up the road from where the old school stood. Since then, the current building has added new wings to the building to accommodate a library and computer labs to better educate their students. Today, St. Mary's School has all the new forms of technology to help a new generation of students get excited about learning.

Mr. Speaker, for the past 130 years, St. Mary's School's curriculum may have changed, but their ideals and their high educational standards have always remained the same. With small class sizes, teachers are able to give important individual attention to ensure every student can excel. The school's motto, "Education with a Plus," speaks volumes to their dedication to math and the sciences, as well as the moral teachings that comes along with a Catholic education. I want to commend all the teachers and staff of St. Mary's School on all the success they have had over the past century in shaping the young minds of Berkshire County. I wish them all the best with their future endeavors.

CONGRATULATING DONNA GASTREICH FOR HER LIFETIME DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a constituent of mine, Ms. Donna Gastreich. She is receiving the 2015 Chamber Champion Award from the Greater St. Charles County Chamber of Commerce.

Ms. Gastreich is a pivotal part of the chamber by the way she passionately serves the community. In the past several years, Ms. Gastreich has worked with various committees: Tech Communications and the Ambassadors. She is also involved with the annual Golf Tournament.

Her commitment to planning Santa's North Pole Dash, the annual 5K run, is evident from her willingness to visit the businesses on Main Street that will be affected by the race. Once Ms. Gastreich has gathered the necessary information, she reports to staff so appropriate modifications can be made for the race day. Ms. Gastreich is a positive voice for the chamber and the programs they provide.

I ask you to join me in recognizing Ms. Donna Gastreich on this 2015 Chamber Champion Award from the Greater St. Charles County Chamber of Commerce.

HONORING STEVE WATSON AS THE 2015 KRAFT HEINZ HERO

HON. J. RANDY FORBES

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Steve Watson of Suffolk, Virginia. For the past five years, Steve—a 31-year employee of the Planter's peanut plant in Suffolk—and his wife Patricia have selflessly led an effort to help ensure nearly 100 local students have the supplies they need for the school year ahead. Annually, Steve and Patricia hold a back-to-school cookout that includes donating backpacks filled with school supplies for children in their neighborhood.

On Thursday, February 11, 2016, Steve will be recognized as the 2015 Kraft Heinz Hero, an award which is given to the Kraft Heinz employee who demonstrates upstanding values and community excellence. Over 40,000 employees worldwide were eligible to be nominated for this award, and I am proud to recognize Steve for receiving this prestigious honor.

Steve Watson is a beloved pillar in the Suffolk community. When he is not manning the Bar-b-que, Steve can be found cooking and serving meals at his church for those in need, assisting the elderly with maintenance and home repairs and donating his time and money to wherever community help is needed.

I salute Steve and Patricia for their efforts to give back to the students and families of Suffolk and commend Steve on receiving this tremendous award.

TRIBUTE TO PETER PELLETT

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Peter Pellett of Atlantic, Iowa for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout. Peter is a member of Boy Scout Troop 366, Omaha, Nebraska and the Soaring Eagle District of the Mid-America Council.

The Eagle Scout designation is the highest advancement rank in scouting. Only about five percent of Boy Scouts earn the Eagle Scout Award. The award is a performance-based achievement with high standards that have been well-maintained over the past century.

To earn the Eagle Scout rank, a Boy Scout is obligated to pass specific tests that are organized by requirements and merit badges, as well as completing an Eagle Project to benefit the community. Peter's Eagle Project was rehabilitating the infield for the Benson Little League Park in Omaha, Nebraska. The work ethic Peter has shown in his Eagle Project and every other project leading up to his Eagle Scout rank speaks volumes of his commitment to serving a cause greater than himself and assisting his community.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by this young man demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication, and perseverance. I am honored to represent Peter in the United States Congress. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating him on obtaining the Eagle Scout ranking, and in wishing him nothing but continued success in his future education and career.

CONGRATULATING MERLE SCHNEIDER FOR HIS LIFETIME DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a constituent of mine, Mr. Merle Schneider. He is receiving the Lifetime Distinguished Service Award in the Humanitarian category from the Greater St. Charles County Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Schneider is well known for his entertaining style of auctioneering and emceeing for charity events in the St. Louis area. His self-taught auctioneering skills have benefited numerous organizations for their trivia nights, dinner auctions, and most recently for events honoring our veterans.

For the past 30 years, during the Christmas season, Mr. Schneider plays the part of Santa and brings joy to many children as he hands out candy canes and teddy bears. Santa Merle also annually appears at events for Toys for Tots, St. Louis Crisis Nursery, and also provides opportunities for photos with children while listening to their Christmas wishes. Numerous organizations have benefited from Mr. Schneider's emcee skills, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, the Duchesne High School Foresight Dinner Auction, Foodbank of St. Louis, Volunteers in Medicine, and Giant Steps for Autism.

I ask you to join me in recognizing Mr. Merle Schneider on this Lifetime Distinguished Service Award in the Humanitarian category from the Greater St. Charles County Chamber of Commerce.

RECOGNIZING MS. RILEY HOLCOMB

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Riley Holcomb for being selected as one of Colorado's Distinguished Finalists in the 21st Annual National Awards Program by The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards. She was selected for this honor due to her exceptional acts of volunteerism.

Ms. Holcomb is a seventh-grade student at Altona Middle School in Longmont, Colorado. She was originally inspired to make a difference when her aunt passed away from kidney cancer. Over the past four years, Ms. Holcomb founded a Relay for Life team which has raised over $18,000 for the American Cancer Society. It is the ingenuity and hard work Ms. Holcomb embodies daily that makes America exceptional. She has shown true leadership in her community.

As the recipient of this award, she will receive an engraved bronze medallion. On behalf of the 4th Congressional District of Colorado, I extend my best wishes to Ms. Holcomb.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Ms. Riley Holcomb for her accomplishments.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE LIFE OF MRS. KAY BEARD

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mrs. Kay Beard for her lifetime of distinguished service to our county and our state. Kay's commitment to our community has enriched the lives of so many and helped guide many of today's leaders in our region towards greater success.

Kay was born in Detroit in 1921 and had a reputation as a proud and feisty Irish American. In 1946, Kay married the late Jerry Beard after he returned from World War II and together, they raised five children. With her strong focus on family and community, Kay became more involved in politics joining Citizens for Educational Freedom and eventually running unsuccessfully for State Representative. Undeterred, Kay kept at it and in 1978 was appointed to the Wayne County Commission where she was then elected to fifteen consecutive terms, until her retirement in 2008. During that time, Kay developed a reputation as an outspoken force to be reckoned with in Wayne County Government. She cared deeply about serving the constituents of her district, and did so with distinction for thirty years.

Kay was a beloved mother of five, grandmother of three, sister, and a loving wife to her late husband Jerry. Kay was deeply involved in a wide array of community initiatives including the United Way Community Services Board, the Blue Cross Senior Advisory Council, the National Council for School-to-Work Opportunities, and was a founding member of Hospices of Michigan, just to name a few. She did this work because it was good for the community and in doing so; she set an example for what it meant to be a committed public servant of the highest order.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today to honor Mrs. Kay Beard for her lifetime of service to our community. I considered her a friend and a role model, and while her service to us will be remembered, her loss will be felt for a long time to come.

CONGRATULATING RANDY SCHILLING FOR HIS LIFETIME DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a constituent of mine, Mr. Randy Schilling. He is receiving the Lifetime Distinguished Service Award in the Civic category from the Greater St. Charles County Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Schilling started his commitment to revitalizing Main Street St. Charles in 1992. As founder of Quilogy, Randy made the decision to set up his business on South Main and also purchase five additional buildings on South Main which he ended up renovating.

The dedication to preserving the historical aspect of Main Street St. Charles continues to this day. Mr. Schilling successfully modifies historic buildings on Historic Main Street for modern business purposes. The projects he has spearheaded have shown the importance of supporting the maintenance of these historic structures.

One of Mr. Schilling's recent projects is his purchase and renovation of the old Post Office located on South Main Street. This 10,000 square foot office space will allow regional startups with affordable workspace for mentors, potential investors, programming, education resources, and a community of local entrepreneurs.

As a native of St. Charles, Mr. Schilling has witnessed where St. Charles began and where it is going. He graduated in 1985 from the University of Missouri with a major in Electrical Engineering. Once he completed his undergraduate degree, he received his MBA in 1989 from the University of Illinois in Springfield, IL.

I ask you to join me in recognizing Mr. Randy Schilling on this Lifetime Distinguished Service Award in the Civic category from the Greater St. Charles County Chamber of Commerce.

RECOGNIZING TAIWAN'S PEACE INITIATIVE ROADMAP

HON. SCOTT DesJARLAIS

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the efforts that our close partner and ally Taiwan has made in support of peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region.

Last year, Taiwan President Ma Ying-jeou proposed the South China Sea Peace Initiative, reiterating their government's longstanding position of shelving disputes and promoting joint resource development in these

contested waters. On January 28, 2016, President Ma further proposed "the South China Sea Peace Initiative Roadmap" during his visit to Taiping Island in the Spratly of the South China Sea. The content of the Peace Initiative Roadmap is stated as below:

"1. "Yes" to cooperation, "no" to confrontation: A cooperation and development mechanism that contributes to peace and prosperity in the South China Sea should first be established, and sovereignty disputes should be set aside for future resolution through peaceful means.

2. "Yes" to sharing, "no" to monopolizing: A cooperation and development mechanism should ensure equal participation and resource sharing among all parties concerned in the region in order to avoid undermining the rights and interests of any party.

3. "Yes" to pragmatism, "no" to intransigence: The initial focus should be on aspects which are beneficial to all parties concerned and on which consensus can be easily achieved; various cooperation items should be pragmatically and gradually promoted so as to avoid missing out on cooperation opportunities as a result of any party insisting on its position.

The viable path consists of shelving disputes, integrated planning, and zonal development. The two essential elaborations are: First, all parties concerned in the region should be included in the consultation mechanism for this initiative so that they can engage in cooperation and negotiations on integrated planning for the South China Sea. Second, the cooperation and consultation mechanism proposed in this initiative should be a provisional arrangement of a practical nature, and should not undermine the position of any party concerned or jeopardize or hamper the reaching of a final agreement on the South China Sea."

The Taiwan government has reaffirmed its commitment to uphold the freedom of navigation and overflight, and has actively worked to promote peace and prosperity throughout the South China Sea region. I urge my colleagues to join me in working with our Taiwanese partners to promote our common interests and find a viable path to maintain peace and stability in the South China Sea.

RECOGNIZING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOUTH LAKE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND THE RETIREMENT OF RAY SAN FRATELLO

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize the 20th anniversary of the South Lake Chamber of Commerce, and the retirement of Ray San Fratello. On December 31, 2015, Mr. San Fratello retired as President of South Lake Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. San Fratello has led the South Lake Chamber of Commerce for the past 12 years after 13 years with the Genesee County Chamber of Commerce in upstate New York. Under his leadership, the South Lake Chamber of Commerce has experienced tremendous growth with the largest membership in Lake County. He has received much recognition for his efforts including the 2013 Florida Association of Chamber Professionals, Chamber Professional of the Year.

During the past century, the South Lake Chamber of Commerce has been through many phases of growth and change to create the longstanding history and tradition of successful business organization. Formed more than 20 years ago, the South Lake Chamber's footprint has expanded to Clermont, Minneola, Groveland, Mascotte, Monteverde, and Four Corners. The original Board of Trade, established in 1895, created a new vision of community and business development for South Lake County. One century later in 1995, the Clermont-Minneola and Groveland-Mascotte Chambers united for the betterment of South Lake. Today, after 20 years, the South Lake Chamber of Commerce continues to foster a spirit of cooperation and progress among the area's business community.

The excellence with which the South Lake Chamber of Commerce and Mr. San Fratello serve South Lake County's business community and enterprises is evident from their history and recognition. I commend them for their many achievements and I am pleased to congratulate them on the celebration of their 20th anniversary. My sincerest wishes and congratulations to Mr. San Fratello and his family on his retirement.

KEEPING AMERICA STRONG IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC

HON. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN

OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing legislation to approve a 15-year extension of the United States' Compact of Free Association with the Republic of Palau.

President Ronald Reagan, recognizing the importance of the Western Pacific to U.S. security interests, first negotiated the Compact with Palau. President Reagan's prescience of the need to maintain strategic denial to the military of other nations in the land, air, and sea of Palau—an area the size of Texas—is apparent now more than ever.

Yet we in Congress have failed to maintain the commitment that President Reagan established with Palau. The 1986 Compact provided for annual economic assistance. In 2010, the U.S. and Palau agreed to an extension of this Compact assistance and agreed that funding should gradually taper off over the succeeding 15 years. In 2012, Chairman Donald Manzullo of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific introduced the necessary legislation to approve the extension. Hearings and markup were held, but no further action ensued.

It is true that Congress has continued to provide financial assistance to Palau per the terms of the extension agreement—but only on an installment basis, year-by-year. No long-term commitment to our ally has been forthcoming. Yet, the Republic of Palau continues to send its citizens to serve in the U.S. Armed Forces. Palau votes with the United States in the United Nations 95 percent of the time. And Palau's keystone geographic position in the defensive "second island chain" in the Western Pacific has not altered.

Our failure to follow through on a negotiated agreement with a key ally not only leaves Palau uncertain about America's commitment. It leaves any nation that receives an assurance from the United States wondering whether America is good for its word.

So, it is time to renew the effort here in Congress to affirm the alliance that President Reagan began. The legislation I am introducing approves the extension of the Compact of Free Association with the Republic of Palau. This legislation will help maintain the American presence that we acquired at great cost in the bloody battles of World War II and will bulwark America's position in the Western Pacific in the years ahead.

COMMEMORATING THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH IN PENSACOLA, FLORIDA

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the historic St. Joseph Catholic Church in Pensacola, Florida.

St. Joseph parish of Pensacola traces its roots back to 1891, as an outgrowth of St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church and to the pastorship of Reverend Robert Fullerton. Although it was founded as the first African-American church in the Diocese of Mobile, St. Joseph Catholic Church cared not only for the religious needs of the Pensacola African-American community, but the church also served individuals from diverse backgrounds who wished to worship at the church. Whether in its original two-story wooden building or its current Gothic Revival style structure adorned with stained-glass windows and completed in 1894, the multi-cultural parish family has been blessed by the Word of God for 125 years.

During that time, the church underwent structural and pastoral changes, operated Maryall Negro Missions and four mission chapels, Our Lady of Fatima Mission School, a grammar school, at one point the only Catholic African-American high school in the state of Florida, St. Joseph orphanage that opened its doors to homeless African-American boys, and Our Lady of Angels Maternity Hospital for African-American women, as well as St. Joseph Cemetery. Today St. Joseph's ministry continues to care for the Pensacola community through the Our Lady of Angels Free Clinic, which serves the homeless and needy individuals throughout the area; the Caring and Sharing Outreach, which provides food and clothing; and the St. Joseph Soup Kitchen, which serves free meals to the homeless.

One constant thread throughout its storied history, however, is the parish's strong faith in God. It is through their strength and that of the local community, guided by the Holy Spirit, that the church has not only stayed together, but has also grown strong through hardship. Whether faced with the Jim Crow laws or the natural disasters like Hurricane Ivan, which devastated the entire Gulf Coast in 2004, nothing could tear apart the bonds of this community. When faced with adversity, the

congregation continually emerged stronger and remains today as a pillar in the Northwest Florida community, full of humility and compassion—the characteristics exhibited by its namesake thousands of years ago.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to honor St. Joseph Catholic Church of Pensacola, its leadership and its congregants for 125 years of faithful service to God. For over a century St. Joseph's has been an integral part of the Pensacola community, my wife Vicki and I thank them for their dedication to the people of Northwest Florida and pray for their continued success. May God grant St. Joseph parish many more years to come and may His blessings continue to shine down on them.

INTRODUCTION OF THE JUSTIN SMITH MORRILL CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL ACT

HON. DAN NEWHOUSE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce my legislation, the Justin Smith Morrill Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2016. This legislation would honor a true American hero by posthumously awarding the Honorable Justin Smith Morrill with the Congressional Gold Medal. Mr. Morrill was elected to six terms in the U.S. House of Representatives and six terms in the United States Senate, making him the longest serving Member of Congress in the 19th Century. During his tenure, he chaired the House Committee on Ways and Means, the Senate Committee on Finance, and the Senate Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds. As Chairman of the Senate Committee on Buildings and Grounds, he served as the principle advocate for financing and constructing the Thomas Jefferson Building of the Library of Congress and planned the location of the U.S. Supreme Court Building. He also raised funds to complete the unfinished Washington Monument and advocated for the Smithsonian Institution throughout his service in Congress.

However, his greatest achievement was authoring the Morrill Act of 1862, which created the land-grant university system. Today, land-grant and other public universities award nearly 1 million degrees annually and perform more than $37 billion in research. Additionally, almost 30 years later, Senator Morrill authored the Morrill Act of 1890, which created historically black land-grant universities.

Justin Smith Morrill is a man who has provided generations and millions of Americans—especially those from working class families—with access to higher education throughout the nation. His achievements have inspired American history, values, and culture and will be recognized and honored by generations to come. For these reasons, and many others, I urge all members to join me in supporting this commonsense legislation, which will honor this great American hero with the Congressional Gold Medal.

TRIBUTE TO NICK PELLETT

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Nick Pellett of Atlantic, Iowa for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout. Nick is a member of Boy Scout Troop 366, Omaha, Nebraska and the Soaring Eagle District of the Mid-America Council.

The Eagle Scout designation is the highest advancement rank in scouting. Only about five percent of Boy Scouts earn the Eagle Scout Award. The award is a performance-based achievement with high standards that have been well-maintained over the past century.

To earn the Eagle Scout rank, a Boy Scout is obligated to pass specific tests that are organized by requirements and merit badges, as well as completing an Eagle Project to benefit the community. Nick's Eagle Project was coordinating the painting of dugouts, backstop, restroom facility, and the snack shack for the Benson Little League Park in Omaha, Nebraska. The work ethic Nick has shown in his Eagle Project and every other project leading up to his Eagle Scout rank speaks volumes of his commitment to serving a cause greater than himself and assisting his community.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by this young man demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication, and perseverance. I am honored to represent Nick in the United States Congress. I ask that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating him on obtaining the Eagle Scout ranking, and I wish him nothing but continued success in his future education and career.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MR. JAMES SPEDDING

HON. CHRIS COLLINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. COLLINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a constituent of New York's 27th Congressional District, Mr. James Spedding. Mr. Spedding honorably served his country, his family, and his community until his recent passing on January 22, 2016.

Jim was born in Lockport, NY on April 2, 1929, to parents John Carl and Blanch. After graduating from Lockport High School in 1947, Jim was eager to serve his country; and, in 1948 he enlisted in the United States Air Force. Jim proudly served his country until 1969, when he retired from the Air Force as a Chief Master Sergeant. During his service, Jim traveled to Texas, Mississippi, Korea, New York and California—but Jim's travels did not hold him back from pursuing higher education. During his 21 years of service, Jim earned degrees from Foothill College and the University of Nebraska, and graduate degrees from Chapman University and the University of Southern California. After returning home to his friends, family, and his beautiful wife, Helen, Jim worked for Harrison Radiator Division, GMC until officially retiring in 1989. After spending 41 years serving his country and his family, Jim spent the next 26 years serving his community. Working closely with the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Base, the AARP Income Tax Program, the NYS Office for the Aging, the Dale Association, and the Sisters Hospital, Jim demonstrated how important it is for members of our community to live their life committed to helping those in need.

As I reflect on the impact Jim Spedding had on those around him, I am proud to say he was able to leave his three wonderful children, three grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, and all of his nieces and nephews with a proud example of how to live.

THANK YOU PETER

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, having been in the United States Marine Corps my whole life, I learned a valuable lesson; always surround yourself with loyal people. For me, I'm lucky to have the best staff on Capitol Hill—all of them have become part of my family.

It's nostalgic that I come to the floor today to personally thank Peter Rescigno who will be leaving my office at the end of this week. Peter has been with me since I was elected as the Representative for California's Eighth Congressional District three years ago and has become a fixture of Longworth 1222. As he prepares to leave for New York, I can't thank him enough for the counsel and dedication he has provided to me and the constituents of California's Eighth Congressional District.

A joke I always share with people is when I hired Peter, I also needed to hire a translator. You know, being from New York, he speaks so fast and you can never understand a single word he says. Don't let that fool you, Peter is one of the most talented people I've ever met—his dedication and loyalty stops at nothing. He always has a smile on and deals with anything and everything you throw his way. Trust me; I've thrown some unexpected things his way—he's never let me down.

For this Marine, who's seen change all too frequently, this goodbye is one of the hardest.

Peter, as you prepare to leave for New York, I want you to know that thanks for this Congressman will never be enough. I'll always be grateful for your help and most importantly your friendship. I'm excited to hear about the great things you'll accomplish.

Make me proud, you always know where to find me.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RICHARD L. HANNA

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. HANNA. Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call No. 64 on H.R. 3036, I am not recorded because I was absent for personal reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted Aye.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, on February 9, 2016 I was absent for recorded vote Number 64.

I would like to reflect how I would have voted if I were here: on Roll Call Number 64 I would have proudly voted yes, expressing my support for the National 9/11 Memorial at the World Trade Center Act.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, February 11, 2016 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

FEBRUARY 23

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine U.S. Pacific Command and U.S. Forces Korea in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD–G50

10 a.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of the Interior.

SD–366

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of State.

SD–419

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces

To hold hearings to examine the Department of Energy atomic energy defense activities and programs in review of the defense authorization request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR–232A

FEBRUARY 25

1:30 p.m.

Committee on Indian Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the Tribal Law and Order Act 5 years later, focusing on the next steps to improve justice systems in Indian communities.

SH–216

MARCH 2

10 a.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Federal Communications Commission.

SR–253

MARCH 3

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment

To hold hearings to examine regulatory reforms to improve equity market structure.

SD–538

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Energy.

SD–366

MARCH 8

10 a.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Forest Service.

SD–366

MARCH 9

2 p.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the enforcement of the antitrust laws.

SD–226

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

Senate passed H.R. 757, North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act, as amended.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S759–S832

Measures Introduced: Thirteen bills and two resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 2527–2539, S. Res. 370, and S. Con. Res. 30. **Page S821**

Measures Reported:

S. Res. 99, calling on the Government of Iran to fulfill its promises of assistance in the case of Robert Levinson, the longest held United States civilian in our Nation's history, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute and with an amended preamble.

S. Res. 330, congratulating the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet for winning the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize.

S. Res. 361, urging robust funding for humanitarian relief for Syria, with amendments. **Page S821**

Measures Passed:

North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act: By a unanimous vote of 96 yeas (Vote No. 20), Senate passed H.R. 757, to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, after agreeing to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. **Pages S761–S806**

Conference Reports:

Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that at approximately 9:30 a.m., on Thursday, February 11, 2016, Senate resume consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 644, to reauthorize trade facilitation and trade enforcement functions and activities, with the time until the vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the conference report to accompany the bill, equally divided between the two Leaders, or their designees. **Page S832**

Removal of Injunction of Secrecy: The injunction of secrecy was removed from the following treaties:

U.N. Convention on the Use of Electronic Communications in International Contracts (Treaty Doc. No. 114–5);

Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled (Treaty Doc. No. 114–6);

U.N. Convention on the Assignment of Receivables in International Trade (Treaty Doc. No. 114–7);

Beijing Treaty on Audiovisual Performances (Treaty Doc. No. 114–8);

U.N. Convention on Independent Guarantees and Stand-By Letters of Credit (Treaty Doc. No. 114–9); and

Extradition Treaty with the Dominican Republic (Treaty Doc. No. 114–10).

The treaties were transmitted to the Senate today, considered as having been read for the first time, and referred, with accompanying papers, to the Committee on Foreign Relations and ordered to be printed. **Pages S830–32**

Nomination Received: Senate received the following nomination:

1 Coast Guard nomination in the rank of admiral. **Page S832**

Messages from the House: **Page S816**

Measures Referred: **Pages S816–17**

Executive Communications: **Pages S817–20**

Petitions and Memorials: **Pages S820–21**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Page S821**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S821–23**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S823–27**

Additional Statements: **Pages S814–16**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S827–29**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: Pages S829–30

Privileges of the Floor: Page S830

Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—20) Page S806

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 7:02 p.m., until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, February 11, 2016. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S832.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

APPROPRIATIONS: AIR FORCE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Department of Defense concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Air Force, after receiving testimony from Deborah Lee James, Secretary, and General Mark A. Welsh III, Chief of Staff, both of the Air Force, Department of Defense.

WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Committee concluded an oversight hearing to examine the importance of enacting a new Water Resources Development Act, after receiving testimony from Robert W. Portiss, Tulsa Port of Catoosa, Catoosa, Oklahoma; John Swearingen, Marathon Petroleum Corporation, Findlay, Ohio; Rob Roberson, Nucor Corporation, Charlotte, North Carolina; Norma Jean Mattei, American Society of Civil Engineers, Washington, D.C.; and Kyle Makarios, North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters, St. Paul, Minnesota.

BUDGET

Committee on Finance: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017, after receiving testimony from Jacob J. Lew, Secretary of the Treasury.

BUDGET

Committee on Finance: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017, after receiving testimony from John A. Koskinen, Commissioner, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. Res. 99, calling on the Government of Iran to fulfill its promises of assistance in the case of Robert Levinson, the longest held United States civilian in our Nation's history, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. Res. 361, urging robust funding for humanitarian relief for Syria, with amendments; and

S. Res. 330, congratulating the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet for winning the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize.

U.S. POLICY IN CENTRAL AFRICA

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee concluded a hearing to examine United States policy in Central Africa, focusing on the imperative of good governance, after receiving testimony from Linda Thomas-Greenfield, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of African Affairs, and Thomas Perriello, Special Envoy for the Great Lakes of Africa, both of the Department of State; Roger Meece, former Ambassador and former United Nations Special Representative to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Seattle, Washington; and Sarah Margon, Human Rights Watch, Washington, D.C.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 2517, to require a report on United States strategy to combat terrorist use of social media, with an amendment;

H.R. 1656, to provide for additional resources for the Secret Service, and to improve protections for restricted areas, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 2509, to improve the Government-wide management of Federal property, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 2522, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to build partnerships to prevent violence by extremists, with an amendment;

S. 1526, to amend title 10 and title 41, United States Code, to improve the manner in which Federal contracts for construction and design services are awarded, to prohibit the use of reverse auctions for design and construction services procurements, to amend title 31 and 41, United States Code, to improve the payment protections available to construction contractors, subcontractors, and suppliers for work performed, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 236, to amend the Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 to create an expedited procedure to enact recommendations of the Government Accountability Office for consolidation and elimination to reduce duplication, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 1411, to amend the Act of August 25, 1958, commonly known as the "Former Presidents Act of 1958", with respect to the monetary allowance payable to a former President, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 795, to enhance whistleblower protection for contractor and grantee employees, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 2450, to amend title 5, United States Code, to address administrative leave for Federal employees, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 2418, to authorize the Secretary of Homeland Security to establish university labs for student-developed technology-based solutions for countering online recruitment of violent extremists, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 2340, to require the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to issue a directive on the management of software licenses, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

H.R. 3361, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish the Insider Threat Program, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. Res. 104, to express the sense of the Senate regarding the success of Operation Streamline and the importance of prosecuting first time illegal border crossers;

An original resolution directing the Senate Legal Counsel to bring civil action to enforce a subpoena of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations; and

The nomination of Beth F. Cobert, of California, to be Director of the Office of Personnel Management.

MENTAL HEALTH AND THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee concluded a hearing to examine mental health and the justice system, including S. 2002, to strengthen our mental health system and improve public safety, after receiving testimony from William M. Ward, Minnesota Public Defender, Minneapolis; W. David Guice, North Carolina Department of Public Safety Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice, Raleigh; Susan Pamerleau, Bexar County Sheriff, San Antonio, Texas; Fred C. Osher, The Council of State Governments Justice Center, Johns Island, South Carolina; and Pete Earley, Fairfax, Virginia.

NEW SCAMS TARGETING SENIORS

Special Committee on Aging: Committee concluded a hearing to examine a new scam by global drug traffickers perpetrated against our nation's seniors, after receiving testimony from Alan Scott Brown, Acting Assistant Director for Investigative Programs, Homeland Security Investigations, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security; Jill Steinberg, Senior Counsel to the Deputy Attorney General, Department of Justice; Andy Martin, Henderson, Nevada; and Daniel Seibert, Green Valley, Arizona.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 18 public bills, H.R. 4514–4531 and 1 resolution, H. Con. Res. 114 were introduced. **Pages H708–09**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H710–11**

Report Filed: A report was filed today as follows:

H. Res. 611, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2017) to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to improve and clarify certain disclosure requirements for restaurants and similar retail food establishments, and to amend the authority to bring proceedings under section 403A, and providing for proceedings during the period from February 15, 2016, through February 22, 2016 (H. Rept. 114–421). **Page H708**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Jody B. Hice (GA) to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H653**

Recess: The House recessed at 10:58 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H659**

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measure:

Safe Drinking Water Act Improved Compliance Awareness Act: H.R. 4470, amended, to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act with respect to the requirements related to lead in drinking water, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 416 yeas to 2 nays, Roll No. 67. **Pages H662–68, H676–77**

Scientific Research in the National Interest Act: The House passed H.R. 3293, to provide for greater accountability in Federal funding for scientific research, to promote the progress of science in the

United States that serves that national interest, by a recorded vote of 236 ayes to 178 noes, Roll No. 70. **Pages H677–90, H690–93**

Rejected the Edwards motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with amendments, by a recorded vote of 177 ayes to 241 noes, Roll No. 69. **Pages H691–92**

Agreed to:

Jackson Lee amendment (No. 3 printed in part B of H. Rept. 114–420) that establishes a new objective of the research which would ensure that the research conducted is consistent with established and widely accepted scientific methods applicable to the field of study of exploration; **Pages H685–86**

Jackson Lee amendment (No. 4 printed in part B of H. Rept. 114–420) that establishes a new objective of the research that would ensure that the research conducted is consistent with the definition of basic research as it applies to the purpose and field of study; **Pages H686–88**

DelBene amendment (No. 5 printed in part B of H. Rept. 114–420) that clarifies that language in the bill allowing research to be funded for the development of an American STEM workforce also includes computer science and information technology sectors; and **Pages H688–89**

DelBene amendment (No. 6 printed in part B of H. Rept. 114–420) that clarifies that the bill does not impact grant funding that has already been awarded by the National Science Foundation. **Pages H689–90**

Rejected:

Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX) amendment (No. 2 printed in part B of H. Rept. 114–420) that sought to replace subsection 2(b), ''Determination'', to ensure that such determination is consistent with the mission of the agency and with the existing merit-review criteria (by a recorded vote of 181 ayes to 235 noes, Roll No. 68). **Pages H684–85, H690–91**

H. Res. 609, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 3442) and (H.R. 3293) was agreed to by a recorded vote of 236 ayes to 178 noes, Roll No. 66, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 237 yeas to 180 nays, Roll No. 65. **Pages H668–76**

Recess: The House recessed at 4:13 p.m. and reconvened at 4:45 p.m. **Page H690**

Authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center: The House agreed to discharge from committee and agree to H. Con. Res. 111, authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for a ceremony as part of the commemoration of the days of remembrance of victims of the Holocaust. **Page H693**

United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act: The House agreed to take from the Speaker's table and concur in the Senate amendment to H.R. 907, to improve defense cooperation between the United States and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. **Pages H693–94**

Judicial Redress Act: The House agreed to take from the Speaker's table and concur in the Senate amendment to H.R. 1428, to extend Privacy Act remedies to citizens of certified states. **Page H694**

Senate Messages: Message from the Senate and message received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appears on page H662.

Senate Referral: S. 2109 was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. **Page H707**

Quorum Calls—Votes: Two yea-and-nay votes and four recorded votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H675–76, H676, H677, H690–91, H692, and H693. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

Committee Meetings

REVIEW OF THE 2016 AGENDA FOR THE COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION

Committee on Agriculture: Full Committee held a hearing to review the 2016 Agenda for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. Testimony was heard from Timothy Massad, Chairman, Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

APPROPRIATIONS—NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development held a budget hearing on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Testimony was heard from Stephen Burns, Chairman, Nuclear Regulatory Commission; Kristine Svinicki, Commissioner, Nuclear Regulatory Commission; William Ostendorff, Commissioner, Nuclear Regulatory Commission; and Jeff Baran, Commissioner, Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

APPROPRIATIONS—COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies held a budget hearing on the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. Testimony was heard from Timothy Massad, Chairman, Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

UNDERSTANDING AND DETERRING RUSSIA: U.S. POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

Committee on Armed Services: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Understanding and Deterring Russia: U.S. Policies and Strategies''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF THE ARMY

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces held a hearing entitled ''Recommendations from the National Commission on the Future of the Army''. Testimony was heard from General Carter Ham, USA (Retired), Chairman, National Commission on the Future of the Army; and Robert F. Hale, Commissioner, National Commission on the Future of the Army.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE COUNTERING WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION POLICY AND PROGRAMS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities held a hearing entitled ''Department of Defense (DoD) Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction (CWMD) Policy and Programs for Fiscal Year 2017''. Testimony was heard from Arthur T. Hopkins, performing the Duties of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical, and Biological Defense Programs; Kenneth A. Myers, Director, Defense Threat Reduction Agency and U.S. Strategic Command Center for Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction (SC–MD); and Wendin D. Smith, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction.

NEXT STEPS FOR K–12 EDUCATION: IMPLEMENTING THE PROMISE TO RESTORE STATE AND LOCAL CONTROL

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education held a hearing entitled ''Next Steps for K–12 Education: Implementing the Promise to Restore State and Local Control''. Testimony was heard from Joy Hofmeister, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Oklahoma State Department of Education, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Paul 'Vic' Wilson, Superintendent, Hartselle City Schools, Hartselle, Alabama; and public witnesses.

EXAMINING MEDICAID AND CHIP'S FEDERAL MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Health held a hearing entitled ''Examining Medicaid and CHIP's Federal Medical Assistance''. Testimony was heard from John Hagg, Director of Medicaid Audits, Office of Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services; Alison Mitchell, Health Care Financing Analyst, Congressional Research Service; Anne Schwartz, Executive Director, Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission; and Carolyn Yocom, Director, Health Care, Government Accountability Office.

INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVES ON THE CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade held a hearing entitled ''Industry Perspectives on the Consumer Product Safety Commission''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Communications and Technology began a markup on H.R. 2666, the ''No Rate Regulation of Broadband Internet Access Act''; H.R. 1301, the ''Amateur Radio Parity Act of 2015''; and the ''Small Business Broadband Deployment Act''.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Energy and Power began a markup on H.R. 3021, the ''AIR Survey Act of 2015''; H.R. 3797, the ''Satisfying Energy Needs and Saving the Environment (SENSE) Act''; the ''Blocking Regulatory Interference from Closing Kilns (BRICK) Act''; H.R. 4444, the ''EPS Improvement Act''; H.R. 2984, the ''Fair RATES Act''; H.R. 4427, to amend section 203 of the Federal Power Act; H.R. 4238, to amend the Department of Energy Organization Act and the Local Public Works Capital Development and Investment Act of 1976 to modernize terms relating to minorities; H.R. 2080, to reinstate and extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving Clark Canyon Dam; H.R. 2081, to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving the Gibson Dam; H.R. 3447, to extend the

deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project; H.R. 4416, to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project; and H.R. 4434, to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project.

MONETARY POLICY AND THE STATE OF THE ECONOMY

Committee on Financial Services: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Monetary Policy and the State of the Economy''. Testimony was heard from Janet Yellen, Chair, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

FROM IRAQ AND SYRIA TO LIBYA AND BEYOND: THE EVOLVING ISIL THREAT

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''From Iraq and Syria to Libya and Beyond: The Evolving ISIL Threat''. Testimony was heard from Brett McGurk, Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL, Department of State.

THE GLOBAL ZIKA EPIDEMIC

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations; and Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, held a joint hearing entitled ''The Global Zika Epidemic''. Testimony was heard from Tom Frieden, M.D., Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Health and Human Services; Anthony S. Fauci, M.D., Director, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, National Institutes of Health, Department of Health and Human Services; and Ariel Pablos-Mendez, M.D., Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Global Health, U.S. Agency for International Development.

AFTER SAN BERNARDINO: THE FUTURE OF ISIS-INSPIRED ATTACKS

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade held a hearing entitled ''After San Bernardino: The Future of ISIS-inspired Attacks''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

NATIONAL SECURITY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT: BREAKING THE NEW VISA WAIVER LAW TO APPEASE IRAN

Committee on Homeland Security: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''National Security and Law Enforcement: Breaking the New Visa Waiver Law to Appease Iran''. Testimony was heard from R. Gil Kerlikowske, Commissioner, Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security; and Hillary Batjer Johnson, Deputy Coordinator, Homeland Security, Screening, and Designations, Bureau of Counterterrorism, Department of State.

THE COSTLY IMPACTS OF PREDATION AND CONFLICTING FEDERAL STATUTES ON NATIVE AND ENDANGERED FISH SPECIES

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Water, Power and Oceans held a hearing entitled ''The Costly Impacts of Predation and Conflicting Federal Statutes on Native and Endangered Fish Species''. Testimony was heard from Will Stelle, Regional Administrator, West Coast Region, National Marine Fisheries Service; and public witnesses.

THE PRESIDENT'S WAIVER OF RESTRICTIONS ON THE VISA WAIVER PROGRAM

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on National Security; and Subcommittee on Government Operations, held a joint hearing entitled ''The President's Waiver of Restrictions on the Visa Waiver Program''. Testimony was heard from R. Gil Kerlikowske, Commissioner, Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security; Hilary Batjer Johnson, Deputy Coordinator for Homeland Security, Screening, and Designations, Bureau of Counterterrorism, Department of State; and public witnesses.

COMMON SENSE NUTRITION DISCLOSURE ACT OF 2015

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H.R. 2017, the ''Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act of 2015''. The committee granted, by voice vote, a structured rule for H.R. 2017. The rule provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule makes in order as original text for the purpose of amendment the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Energy and Commerce now printed in the bill and provides that it shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute. The rule makes in order only those further amendments printed in the Rules Committee report. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent

and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question. The rule waives all points of order against the amendments printed in the report. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. In section 2, the rule provides that on any legislative day during the period from February 15, 2016, through February 22, 2016: the Journal of the proceedings of the previous day shall be considered as approved; and the Chair may at any time declare the House adjourned to meet at a date and time to be announced by the Chair in declaring the adjournment. In section 3, the rule provides that the Speaker may appoint Members to perform the duties of the Chair for the duration of the period addressed by section 2. Finally, in section 4, the rule provides that the Committee on the Judiciary may, at any time before 5 p.m. on Tuesday, February 16, 2016, file a report to accompany H.R. 3624. Testimony was heard from Representatives McMorris Rodgers and Pallone.

MIDNIGHT REGULATIONS: EXAMINING EXECUTIVE BRANCH OVERREACH

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Midnight Regulations: Examining Executive Branch Overreach''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

EXPORT CONTROL REFORM: CHALLENGES FOR SMALL BUSINESS? PART I

Committee on Small Business: Subcommittee on Agriculture, Energy and Trade held a hearing entitled ''Export Control Reform: Challenges for Small Business? (Part I)''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

OVERSIGHT OF THE OFFICE OF ADVOCACY AND THE OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL OMBUDSMAN AT THE SBA

Committee on Small Business: Subcommittee on Investigations, Oversight and Regulations held a hearing entitled ''Oversight of the Office of Advocacy and the Office of the National Ombudsman at the SBA''. Testimony was heard from Darryl L. DePriest, Chief Counsel for Advocacy, Small Business Administration; and Rear Admiral Earl L. Gay, USN (Retired), Small Business and Agriculture Regulatory Enforcement Ombudsman, Small Business Administration.

REVIEW OF ATC REFORM PROPOSALS

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Review of ATC Reform Proposals''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS BUDGET REQUEST FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2017''. Testimony was heard from Robert A. McDonald, Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs.

A REVIEW OF VA'S LOAN GUARANTY AND SPECIALLY ADAPTIVE HOUSING GRANT PROGRAMS

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity held a hearing entitled ''A Review of VA's Loan Guaranty and Specially Adaptive Housing Grant Programs (SAH)''. Testimony was heard from Mike Frueh, Director, Loan Guaranty Service, Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs; and public witnesses.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES' FISCAL YEAR 2017 BUDGET REQUEST

Committee on Ways and Means: Full Committee held a hearing on the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Request. Testimony was heard from Sylvia Burwell, Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

NEW PUBLIC LAWS

(For last listing of Public Laws, see DAILY DIGEST, *p. D79)*

H.R. 515, to protect children and others from sexual abuse and exploitation, including sex trafficking and sex tourism, by providing advance notice of intended travel by registered sex offenders outside the United States to the government of the country of destination, requesting foreign governments to notify the United States when a known sex offender is seeking to enter the United States. Signed on February 8, 2016. (Public Law 114–119)

H.R. 4188, to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal years 2016 and 2017. Signed on February 8, 2016. (Public Law 114–120)

S. 2152, to establish a comprehensive United States Government policy to encourage the efforts of countries in sub-Saharan Africa to develop an appropriate mix of power solutions, including renewable energy, for more broadly distributed electricity access in order to support poverty reduction, promote development outcomes, and drive economic growth. Signed on February 8, 2016. (Public Law 114–121)

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2016

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine emerging health threats and the Zika supplemental request, 10 a.m., SD–138.

Committee on Armed Services: to hold hearings to examine the National Commission on the Future of the United States Army in review of the Defense Authorization Request for Fiscal Year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program, 10 a.m., SD–G50.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: to hold hearings to examine the semiannual Monetary Policy Report to the Congress, 10 a.m., SD–538.

Committee on Finance: to hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017, 10 a.m., SD–215.

Committee on Foreign Relations: to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Karen Brevard Stewart, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Robert Annan Riley III, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Federated States of Micronesia, and Matthew John Matthews, of Oregon, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as United States Senior Official for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum, all of the Department of State, Swati A. Dandekar, of Iowa, to be United States Director of the Asian Development Bank, and Marcela Escobari, of Massachusetts, to be an Assistant Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, 10:15 a.m., SD–419.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management, to hold hearings to examine agency discretion in setting and enforcing regulatory fines and penalties, 9:30 a.m., 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. 483, to improve enforcement efforts related to prescription drug diversion and abuse, S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use, and the nominations of Elizabeth J. Drake, of Maryland, Jennifer Choe Groves, of Virginia, and Gary Stephen Katzmann, of Massachusetts, each to be a Judge of the United States Court of International Trade, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Agriculture, Full Committee, hearing to consider the impacts of the Environmental Protection Agency's actions on the rural economy, 10 a.m., 1300 Longworth.

Subcommittee on Livestock and Foreign Agriculture, hearing entitled "Foot and Mouth Disease: Are We Prepared?", 2 p.m., 1300 Longworth.

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, budget hearing on the Internal Revenue Service, 10 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, oversight hearing entitled "U.S. Engagement in Central America", 10 a.m., B–308 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on Office of the Secretary, Department of Agriculture, 10:30 a.m., 2362–A Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, budget hearing on Bureau of Reclamation, 1:30 p.m., 2362–B Rayburn.

Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, hearing entitled "Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Request for Atomic Energy Defense Activities", 2 p.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces, hearing entitled "Carrier Air Wing and the Future of Naval Aviation", 3:30 p.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, markup on H.R. 2666, the "No Rate Regulation of Broadband Internet Access Act"; H.R. 1301, the "Amateur Radio Parity Act of 2015"; and the "Small Business Broadband Deployment Act" (continued), 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Energy and Power, markup on H.R. 3021, the "AIR Survey Act of 2015"; H.R. 3797, the "Satisfying Energy Needs and Saving the Environment (SENSE) Act"; the "Blocking Regulatory Interference from Closing Kilns (BRICK) Act"; H.R. 4444, the "EPS Improvement Act"; H.R. 2984, the "Fair RATES Act"; H.R. 4427, to amend section 203 of the Federal Power Act; H.R. 4238, to amend the Department of Energy Organization Act and the Local Public Works Capital Development and Investment Act of 1976 to modernize terms relating to minorities; H.R. 2080, to reinstate and extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving Clark Canyon Dam; H.R. 2081, to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving the Gibson Dam; H.R. 3447, to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project; H.R. 4416, to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project; and H.R. 4434, to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project (continued), 11 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance, hearing entitled "The Future of Housing in America: Examining the Health of the Federal Housing Administration", 9:30 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit, hearing entitled ''Short-Term, Small Dollar Lending: The CFPB's Assault on Access to Credit and Trampling of State and Tribal Sovereignty'', 1 p.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Iran Nuclear Deal Oversight: Implementation and Its Consequences'', 10 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa, markup on H. Res. 148, calling on the government of Iran to fulfill their promises of assistance in this case of Robert Levinson, the longest held United States civilian in our Nation's history; hearing entitled ''Jordan: A Key U.S. Partner'', 1:45 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, hearing entitled ''The Future of U.S.-Taiwan Relations'', 2 p.m., 2200 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence, hearing entitled ''The Future of Iranian Terror and Its Threat to the US Homeland'', 10 a.m., 311 Cannon.

Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, hearing entitled ''Improving the Department of Homeland Security's Biological Detection and Surveillance Programs'', 2 p.m., 311 Cannon.

Committee on the Judiciary, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 759, the ''Recidivism Risk Reduction Act''; and H.R. 2947, the ''Financial Institution Bankruptcy Act of 2015'', 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Is the Investor Visa Program an Underperforming Asset?'', 2 p.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property, and the Internet, hearing entitled ''Resolving Issues with Confiscated Property in Cuba, Havana Club Rum and Other Property'', 5 p.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Federal Lands, hearing on H.R. 87, the ''Shiloh National Military Park Boundary Adjustment and Parker's Crossroads Battlefield Designation Act''; H.R. 295, to reauthorize the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Historic Preservation program; H.R. 1621, to modify the boundary of Petersburg National Battlefield in the Commonwealth of Virginia, and for other purposes; and H.R. 2817, the ''National Historic Preservation Amendments Act of 2015'', 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''IRS: Reviewing Its Legal Obligations, Document Preservation, and Data Security'', 1 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 4489, the ''FAA Leadership In Groundbreaking High-Tech Research and Development Act'', 1 p.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Export Control Reform: Challenges for Small Business? (Part II)'', 10 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Full Committee, markup on Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Views and Estimates of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure; H.R. 4441, the ''Aviation Innovation, Reform, and Reauthorization Act''; and other matters cleared for consideration, 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Health, hearing entitled ''Choice Consolidation: Improving VA Community Care Billing and Reimbursement'', 10 a.m., 334 Cannon.

Committee on Ways and Means, Full Committee, hearing on President Obama's budget proposals for fiscal year 2017, 10 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

Joint Meetings

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: to hold hearings to examine an update on the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, focusing on religious freedom, anti-Semitism, and rule of law, 1 p.m., HVC–210.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

9:30 a.m., Thursday, February 11

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Program for Thursday: Senate will resume consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 644, Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act, and vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the conference report to accompany the bill, at approximately 10:30 a.m.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Thursday, February 11

House Chamber

Program for Thursday: Consideration of H.R. 3442—Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act (Subject to a Rule).

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