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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. LOUDERMILK).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 11, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable BARRY LOUDERMILK 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.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF DOUG RICHARDSON

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

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a gentleman who has dedicated his life to serving our Nation, a true American hero from the State of Florida, Mr. Doug Richardson. Mr. Richardson is retiring from the United States Special Operations Command after 50 years of government service.

Mr. Richardson currently serves as a defense intelligence senior leader and as the program executive officer for Surveillance, Reconnaissance, and Exploitation at USSOCOM. A West Point graduate, Mr. Richardson distinguished himself throughout his military career, retiring as a colonel from Active Duty in the United States Army in 1993 and then continuing his service to USSOCOM as a civilian.

Perhaps the best example of Doug's integrity and courage is recorded in his Silver Star Medal citation, which was awarded to Doug for his heroism in combat during the Vietnam war. On June 18, 1969, while serving as an adviser with the 4th Cavalry Regiment of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam, then-Captain Richardson accompanied a small armored infantry team moving to break through a very determined enemy force to rescue the crewmen of a downed United States Army helicopter. As the unit approached the village, it came under intense rocket-propelled grenade and automatic weapons fire from very well-concealed positions. The area was also known to be heavily mined and set with traps.

As the attempts of the Vietnamese to reach the helicopter were continually repulsed by enemy counterattacks, Captain Richardson dismounted his track, rallied a small force of Vietnamese soldiers, and then led them to the helicopter through enemy fire, exhorting his comrades to vigorously engage the enemy. Disregarding his personal safety and armed with only a pistol, Captain Richardson led his men through the mined area and into an assault on the enemy positions.

Following his example, the soldiers, though at a tactical disadvantage, pressed the attack vigorously and ultimately broke the resistance and secured the helicopter. Despite a hail of small-arms fire and hand grenades directed at his position, Doug continued his search for the survivors until he had found the remains of all U.S. crewmembers and then remained to extract the bodies of his fallen comrades from the wreckage. As a result of Captain Richardson's valiant display of battlefield courage, the Vietnamese force was able to hold the area from a tenacious enemy and return the fallen soldiers to allied control.

Mr. Speaker, USSOCOM will miss Doug Richardson's leadership. As a Nation, let us recognize his valiant service. I ask that this body join me in honoring and congratulating Mr. Doug Richardson on a most honorable and truly heroic career.

FREE PUERTO RICO

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

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, I come with a humble message from the Puerto Rican people to the House of Representatives: Free Puerto Rico.

Free Puerto Rico so that she can solve the problem of her crushing debt without being handcuffed by Congress. Free Puerto Rico so that her hospitals can stay open for sick moms and dads and her schools stay open for children. Nobody should fear that their house will burn down because the firemen have not been paid.

So far the response to Puerto Rico's debt crisis from Washington—the only place that Puerto Rico is forced to rely on—has been very little, and greedy bondholders and hedge fund managers only care about Puerto Rico as a wager, a way to make money whether Puerto Rico sinks or swims.

Right now, Puerto Rico needs serious, sustained attention from Washington to find a path forward such that Puerto Rico is neither absolved of her obligations nor mortally wounded by them. Mr. Speaker, here is what it comes down to: when the U.S. Supreme Court said that Puerto Rico belongs to but is not a part of the United States, the responsibility to care for her and her people came along with that judgment.

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Congress must act responsibly for the fact that we expect Puerto Rico to pay its obligation, but we force her to play by a particular set of rules. Puerto Rico cannot declare bankruptcy because Congress passed a law saying that she could not. Puerto Rico is under the choke hold of the Jones Act, a law passed right here in this room, without any consultation with the Puerto Rican people, that says, by law, Puerto Rico cannot shop around for the best deal on shipping. No. They must buy the most expensive, which means double the import costs and an estimated $500 million extra on Puerto Rico's food bill alone.

When it comes to producing for themselves, a large chunk of the best agricultural land—the land that sustains and feeds a nation—is taken away from them for U.S. military bases. Thirteen percent of the land is gone.

Puerto Rico is a tropical island, but a lot of its fruit and vegetables and almost all of its food is imported. We must allow Puerto Rico to create an agricultural economy, allowing Puerto Ricans to feed themselves. The economy produces goods the people do not consume, and the people consume goods that they do not produce.

Even when the U.S. is caught red-handed stealing water from Puerto Rico's freshwater supply—not paying a dime for it—what happens? The U.S. Government is not held responsible or made to pay. When the military bombs and pollutes Vieques and Culebra, does the U.S. Government feel any obligation to restore it? Not really.

So, Mr. Speaker, when Congress talks about Puerto Rico's debt, I say we look at the totality of the debt—the part owed to Puerto Rico, not just the part Puerto Rico owes to Wall Street. Every soldier she has sent to war, every time the U.S. has stepped in to override her courts and her government, these debts add up but are not accounted for.

Now, what is the solution that everyone in Washington is lining up behind? A Federal control board. Imagine that. An island that cannot determine its own destiny. It has to play an economic game with a stacked deck and all the rules rigged against her. What is the solution in Washington? Take away what little autonomy they have left.

If Congress were smart, we would find a way to get out of the way. Free Puerto Rico's people to unleash their inherent, hardworking character, spirit, and dedication. Free Puerto Ricans to work and toil and build and create. Free Puerto Rico so that she can build a sustainable economy that keeps her people at home in the land of their birth and their heritage.

We cannot get sidetracked by seeing Puerto Rico's economic health exclusively through the lens of food stamps, Medicaid, government programs, and further dependency on Washington. We must make the conversation about jobs for Puerto Ricans, jobs that build the economy, the tax base, and the self-sufficiency of the island.

Mr. Speaker, Puerto Rico's problems were a long time in the making, but I have utter confidence in Puerto Ricans' ability to solve them if we in the Congress begin to listen to them, work with them, and recognize them as equal partners.

We must free Puerto Rico so that the Puerto Rican people can free themselves.

KURDISH PESHMERGA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the important efforts made by the Kurds and the Peshmerga in the fight against ISIS.

Secretary of Defense Ash Carter said last December: ''The Kurdish Peshmerga have been exactly what we have been looking for in this whole fight in Iraq and Syria, namely a capable and motivated force that we can enable.''

As you know, Mr. Speaker, we need to do more to combat ISIS on the ground and also to help our allies who are willing to join us in this effort. ISIS is a brutal evil, and it is one of the greatest threats to both our national security and to the security of our allies in the region.

We continue to read reports of ISIS raping women, beheading captives, and brutally torturing their prisoners; and ISIS' alleged use of chemical weapons against the Kurds in Iraq and Syria reaffirms the danger posed by this terrorist group. During the conflict against ISIS, the Kurds tell me that at least 1,600 Peshmerga forces have died and thousands more have been wounded, and we see some of these pictures here on this graphic.

We are thankful to all of the members of the Peshmerga who are fighting to eradicate the evil of ISIS, including several all-women units who are proud to fight for their people's freedom. These are the hardships that they all endure.

Unfortunately, the Peshmerga still don't have the proper weapons, the proper equipment—most of which is over 30 years old—and they are still running low on ammunition. In fact, the Peshmerga are using captured ISIS tanks to roll through minefields, while ISIS is using American equipment that they have picked up after overturning Mosul.

I am proud to be an original cosponsor of the legislation introduced by the chairman and ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, which would authorize the direct provision of weapons to the Peshmerga, a bill which our committee passed unanimously in December.

The Peshmerga have already proven to be one of the most capable forces on the battlefield, and making sure that they are strong, making sure that they are well-equipped is crucial to defeating the ISIS threat that confronts us all. The Peshmerga are continuing to fight despite not being paid for months, with uncertain logistical backup, and with inadequate weapons and equipment—three strikes against them.

The Peshmerga need our help, and we must get them what they need in order to have them continue to be successful. The Peshmerga provides safe havens for Muslims, Christians, Yazidis, and people of any religious minority who have been oppressed. According to the Kurds, about 300,000 Syrian refugees and 1.5 million internally displaced persons are in the Kurdistan region, where there is a growing humanitarian crisis.

I will turn to the other poster that I have, Mr. Speaker, their fighting forces.

The burden of war and the responsibility of caring for 1.8 million additional people have pushed the Kurdistan region's economy to the brink of collapse. My friend, Igor Pasternak, recently briefed me on his visit to the Black Tiger Peshmerga base south of Mosul on the ISIS front line, and he introduced me to the Kurdistan Regional Government's representative to the U.S., Bayan Sami Abdul Rahman.

Ms. Rahman's parents were sentenced to death by Saddam Hussein because they refused to bow down to his tyranny, and instead they fought for Kurdish liberation and for human rights. Her parents lived to see Saddam's downfall, and her father continued his leadership role in the Kurdish region's struggle before being tragically assassinated by Islamic extremists in 2004.

In the Iraq city of Erbil, Sami Abdul Rahman Park honors Ms. Rahman's father and, more importantly, recognizes the immense oppression suffered by the Kurdish people.

I am pleased that KRG Representative Rahman is in the gallery today.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to announce that I will soon be introducing a resolution to honor the brave men and women of the Peshmerga and their families who are fighting bravely against the brutal evil of ISIS and to stand with the Kurdish people as they continue to endure great hardships during this war.

God bless each and every one of them.

□ 1015

VICTIMS OF GUN VIOLENCE

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

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, since 1970, more Americans have been killed from domestic gun violence than all the Americans killed in every war going back to the American Revolution.

If all the victims of gun violence since 1970 were put on a wall like the Vietnam Memorial, it would contain

1.5 million names and stretch 2½ miles, 25 times the length of the Vietnam Memorial.

I have had enough of Congress' failure to lead. So each month that we are in session, I am going to speak the name of every person killed in a mass shooting in this country. I will also create my own memorial wall in the hallway outside my office.

Here are the stories of some of the victims of the 18 mass shootings in January of this year. There have been so many people last month affected by mass shootings that I don't have the time to list those who were injured, just those who were murdered.

David Washington, age 24, Eneida Branch, age 31, and Angelica Guadalupe Castro, age 23, who were shot and killed in a house on January 6 in Lakeland, Florida.

Antoine Bell, age 17, was shot and killed while helping a woman with car trouble on January 7 in Memphis, Tennessee.

Raymon Blount, age 29, was shot and killed while standing on the street on January 8 in Chicago, Illinois.

Ira Brown, age 20, was shot and killed on January 11 during a home robbery in Wilmington, Delaware.

Joshua Steven Morrison, age 18, was killed near a house party January 17 in Gloucester County, Virginia.

Randy Peterson, age 64, was a bank president shot and killed during a robbery on January 21 in Eufaula, Oklahoma.

Kevin McGrath, Sr., age 47, and Shanna McGrath, age 42, were killed at their family home on January 23 in Crestview, Florida. Elbert L. Merrick, age 22, was killed outside the home on the road.

Jason and Jacob McLemore, a father and son, age 44 and 17, were killed at the gun store they owned in a dispute over a $25 service fee. This was on January 23 in Pearl River County, Mississippi.

Cyjia Nicole Bell, age 16, Shujaa Jasiri Silver, age 19, were killed outside a liquor store on January 23 in Los Angeles, California.

An unidentified man was killed at a Mexican restaurant on January 25 in Perris, California.

James Quoc Tran, age 33, and Jeannine L. Zapata, age 45, were killed at a homeless encampment on January 26 in Seattle, Washington.

The Dooley family, including mother Lori, father Todd, son Landon, daughter Brooke, and grandmother Doris, were killed at their family home on January 27 in Chesapeake, Virginia. The shooter, their son, Cameron Dooley, committed suicide after murdering the family.

Andre Gray, age 42, and Tina Gray, age 42, were killed at their family home on January 29 in Caroline County, Virginia.

Sean Marquez, age 19, Jose Aguirre-Martinez, age 19, and Yovani Flores, age 16, were killed at a house party on January 30 in Glendale, Arizona. Sean Marquez died in his sister's arms.

Victor Mendoza, age 46, was shot and killed at a motorcycle show in Denver, Colorado, on January 30.

May the dead rest in peace and the wounded recover completely. It is time. It is time for Congress to end this bloodshed.

APRIL BROOKS' STORY

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

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, the war on coal touches nearly every family in southern West Virginia. President Obama and his EPA regulations don't just close mines. They put families out of work.

Coal miners call it job scare. Every time miners go underground, they don't know, when they come up, if they will receive a WARN notice telling them that they are going to be laid off. Families worry about making ends meet or moving to find work someplace else.

Businesses that depend on coal are suffering, too. CSX recently announced it is closing its Huntington division and moving its jobs to another State, in part because of the decline in coal shipments. Norfolk Southern in Bluefield is also moving jobs out of Bluefield, West Virginia.

Shops and restaurants are closing their doors, as families leave town and have less disposable income. Walmart in McDowell County has recently shut its doors, and the residents in the area have to drive to another State just to get groceries. The uncertainty can be paralyzing.

This is reality for so many of my constituents like April Brooks of Princeton in Mercer County. April writes me:

''My husband has worked in the mining industry for the last eleven years, and my dad was a coal miner for over thirty years.

''Like every family that depends on coal for a living, we live day to day worrying about what will happen tomorrow. You can't plan for the future because of the uncertainty.

''I went back to work several years ago so that we would have supplemental income in case of layoffs. We love our State, but how does one stay here and survive if the jobs aren't there?''

Mr. Speaker, President Obama's job-killing overregulations are having real consequences for real West Virginians. We need to pass policies that create jobs and ensure a future for all West Virginians, all West Virginia families, so they can stay and work and live in our great State.

CLEAN POWER PLAN

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

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in support of EPA's Clean Power Plan.

I am concerned that the Supreme Court ruling on the Clean Power Plan will significantly and unnecessarily delay the full implementation of this important action.

The longer we wait, the more expensive it will be to reduce greenhouse gas pollution and the less chance that we have to keep this world's warming below a safe threshold.

This week's Supreme Court decision only highlights Congress' inaction on the issue of climate change as well as the immediate and pressing need for action.

A damaged climate has a negative impact upon our Nation and on my southern California community. Changing weather patterns, more frequent droughts, worsening air quality, and sea level rise all cost us money and threaten the well-being of our families and our neighbors.

We all want the world to be safe, to be a healthy place to raise our families and to grow our economy. Now America has the opportunity to lead the world in making our environment safe and healthy, both now and into the future.

We can do this by increasing our use of local, renewable energy sources, investing in research and development to bring about the next generation of clean and efficient energy systems, and assisting communities both here and abroad in adapting to the inevitable changes that are caused by the damages that have already been done to the climate.

Reducing emissions from our power sector is a foundational action in this endeavor. This is an achievable endeavor.

America's innovation has given us spaceflight, the Internet, cures to disease once thought to be incurable. Our innovation and our leadership is paving the way for a cleaner, safer world, and many States have already determined how they can meet their goals and reduce carbon pollution.

Cities and electric utilities in my district have taken the extraordinary steps in increasing efficiency and sustainable practices to reduce their carbon footprint.

My State of California is on track to exceed its carbon pollution reduction goals under the Clean Power Plan. California implemented the first statewide carbon trading system and has set ambitious targets for increasing renewable energy, increased efficiency, and decreased petroleum usage.

America's leadership like this will save us money and create jobs, but if we delay, the costs will be higher to us and especially to our children and grandchildren.

We are not doing this alone. Because greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide spread around the world, no country is immune to the damaged climate. No country can fix this problem alone.

Representatives of over 200 nations recently gathered in Paris and agreed on an international agreement to lower greenhouse gas emissions and develop strategies to adapt to changing climate.

This contribution from the world's biggest polluters, including China and India, represents 90 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions.

These international contributions demonstrate how seriously the world is taking its moral responsibility to care for our common home, our families, and our neighbors.

This roadmap for the world reduces climate-damaging greenhouse gas emissions, increases investments in clean energy development and deployment, and assists the most vulnerable communities in adapting to climate change.

But the United States has to do its part. This pause on the Clean Power Plan slows down the progress we have been making and puts U.S. leadership on climate in question.

I am deeply troubled by the Supreme Court's decision, but I am optimistic that the Clean Power Plan will ultimately be upheld.

By acting to reduce carbon pollution, we will create more opportunity today and a better future tomorrow for all of us.

IN RECOGNITION OF ADMIRAL ROBERT SHUMAKER ON THE 51ST ANNIVERSARY OF HIS IMPRISONMENT DURING THE VIETNAM WAR

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

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, today, February 11, a day that for at least me, and I know many other families around our country, is a very dark day.

February 11, 1965, flying off of the USS *Coral Sea*, a young lieutenant commander, Robert Harper Shumaker, was prepared to do a bombing run over North Vietnam.

Taking antiaircraft fire, he was shot down over North Vietnam. He ejected from his F–8 Crusader 35 feet above the ground, broke his back upon impact, and was immediately captured.

Over the next 8 years, 8 years and a day, he spent time in the Hoa Lo Prison, a prison that we now know as the Hanoi Hilton, one that he was able to name the Hanoi Hilton.

He was considered to be the great communicator because, while he was in captivity, he and a few others devised a tap code system, a tap code system with five rows and five columns that enabled American POWs to communicate with one another to be able to let them know that they were thinking of each other, to be able to make sure that they were exercising the most important muscle in captivity, that is, their brains.

Over the course of those 8 years, Lieutenant Commander Shumaker was considered to be one of the top greatest threats to camp security.

He and 10 other POWs, commonly known as the Alcatraz 11, were taken out of the Hoa Lo Prison, brought over to a prison now known as Alcatraz, and put in solitary confinement.

These 11 heroes included James Stockdale; George Coker; Jeremiah Denton, who was a Senator from the great State of Alabama; Harry Jenkins; George McKnight; James Mulligan; Howard Rutledge; Ron Storz; Nels Tanner; and, Mr. Speaker, our colleague SAM JOHNSON of Texas, who was elected to this body in 1991 and has served with distinction ever since.

□ 1030

Many of the stories that we look back on came from these heroes about the efforts they made to resist their captors. They were tortured day in and day out for information. Yet, day in and day out, they battled back.

For me, it is very important that we never forget. Fifty-one years after February 11, 1965, I am honored to be able to rise in this body to remember Robert Harper Shumaker for his valiant efforts and heroism. He is near and dear to my heart, Mr. Speaker. He is my uncle. When my wife and I had our first child, we decided we would name her after him, in the hopes that she would have a little bit of the courage, a little bit of the intelligence, and the stick-to-itiveness that Admiral Shumaker has.

The good news, Mr. Speaker, is that February 12, 1973, 591 POWs started their return home. Bob Shumaker, the Alcatraz 11, and many others were on that C–141 that flew out of Hanoi. I am proud to say that they returned home with honor, which was absolutely critical not only for them, but for all of the POWs. It is imperative that we in the United States Congress never forget their sacrifice and heroism.

For me, from now, until as long as I am able to serve in this body, on February 11, I will rise and recognize the heroism of our POWs and say: You will never be forgotten. We will always remember the sacrifice and the heroism that you all have given to our Nation.

WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, from the moment I arrived in Congress, I have been working to rebuild and renew America. Our great country, sadly, is falling apart as it falls behind the rest of the world. The American Society of Civil Engineers rates our infrastructure as failing.

I have worked to develop a plan, a vision for infrastructure for this century because people have forgotten our history and are woefully uninformed about the nature of the challenge we face and the opportunities to do it right.

This doesn't need to be a partisan fight in Congress. Indeed, infrastructure used to be much more central to our mission in Congress, dating back to the postal roads mandated by the Constitution to President Eisenhower's interstate freeway system.

I welcome the administration's proposal for an oil fee to invest in green infrastructure. I truly believe that President Obama is committed to investing in infrastructure. He understands its value, and he has worked to include some infrastructure investment in the Recovery Act. I think we all know that it actually should have been much larger than it was; but, nonetheless, was very helpful.

The President has proposed things Congress after Congress that would fund a grander vision. Unfortunately, in the context of this Congress, they were not realistic. They had no chance of passing, probably regardless of who has control, given the nature of those proposals.

Nonetheless, I welcome the administration's proposal for a $10 per barrel fee on oil to finance green infrastructure because of the timing at this point of incredibly low gas prices, flirting with $1 a gallon, high oil production, a swollen inventory. Thirty dollars per barrel has become the benchmark.

Unfortunately, the new proposal was launched, as near as I can tell, without consultation with people in either party or the organizations that deal with infrastructure. It was not met with organized support on behalf of the vast array of individuals and organizations who are deeply committed to rebuilding and renewing America. It simply begs the question: Why not just raise the gas tax?

The proposal I have introduced to raise the gas tax was widely supported by business, labor, professions, local government, environmentalists; indeed, it was supported by the widest collection of interest groups supporting any major initiative before Congress. When you get the truckers and AAA both saying, ''Raise taxes on motorists and truck drivers,'' that is a signal.

The proposal does not have the gaps associated with an oil fee that would impose challenges on consumers of oil, like school buses or home heating, and it does provoke the petroleum industry, which has accepted reasonable gas taxes, but would oppose an oil fee.

This is, however, an opportunity for us to revisit the need for investment in infrastructure, now that the administration has signaled its comfort with raising taxes on people who make under $250,000 a year. The oil fee would be the equivalent of 20 to 25 cents a gallon—far more than the model proposal I had to phase in a 15-cent per gallon increase over 3 years.

Maybe we can reengage the conversation about raising the gas tax. After 24 years, we might follow the lead of President Reagan, who led an effort to raise the gas tax in 1983. After we raise the gas tax, we should index it and

then abolish it and replace it with a more sustainable mechanism for funding transportation in the future.

I appreciate the administration starting this conversation related to infrastructure finance. Maybe we can have a broader effort to work cooperatively on an issue that is gaining traction at the State level around the country. Over a dozen States have raised their gas tax, including a number of red Republican States.

This will be something that meets the needs of America now—and in the future—and I hope it is time for us to refocus on it.

PROPOSED CRUDE OIL FEE

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

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, at this time of year, we are starting to work on budgets in Washington, D.C.

The President recently proposed his eighth budget. If we want to give credit to the President, he is consistent. He believes that we are just one tax increase, one regulation, one more government program away from prosperity in America. But the reality is, Americans in my district are struggling. They are struggling to be able to maintain the jobs they have. Far too many Americans are struggling to be able to find a job.

One area where we have had an opportunity to be able to provide good-paying jobs has been in responsible energy development in this country. Today, I would like to be able to speak to some of the deeply flawed logic by the Obama administration in trying to eliminate the use of fossil fuels in America.

Mr. Speaker, over the last year and a half, despite the administration's best attempts to stifle production, one of the few areas of the economy that has provided some financial relief to the poor and middle class has been the low price of energy. The cause of this has been the result of American productivity and American ingenuity driving down the costs, making it more affordable for people.

It is a surprise to no one then that, with his latest budget proposal, the President is trying in earnest to take the little savings Americans have welcomed into their wallets and now feed it back to Big Government.

Effectively, what the President is stating is that government—Washington—needs those resources more than the American people do.

Two days ago, the President presented a budget that included a $10 per barrel tax on crude oil. His budget stated that if tax would result in $319 billion in revenues that would be used to fund transportation infrastructure, ''reduce America's reliance on oil,'' and ensure ''electric cars and other alternatives to oil-based vehicles have the technology and charging infrastructure they need.''

I believe we need to be clear. I firmly back the notion that we need to have an all-of-the-above strategy. That is highlighted in the bill I have introduced in this Congress, Planning for American Energy Act, which literally calls for all of the above. It explicitly states as such.

Those resources and technologies are only part of what should be a multi-pronged strategy. If true energy independence is our goal, we cannot simply price ourselves out of using traditional energy resources and transportation fuels. Yet, that is unmistakably exactly what the President is proposing.

So, while cheap energy is one of the few things keeping the economy out of a nose dive into a further deep recession, the President proposes a tax cut on crude oil—whether produced domestically or abroad—that will cut directly into already low revenues, and will undoubtedly be passed on to consumers in the form of higher prices at the pump.

An additional $10 per barrel will be a significant sum, even with a healthy commodity price, but on the day that the President submitted his proposal, the spot price for a barrel of oil was just under $30. Given that our oil and gas energy sector is already struggling mightily with this downswing in price, what exactly does the President hope to accomplish by wresting away a third of that sum? The economic impacts of this policy on an industry that is already struggling would be extremely harmful.

Now, I assume that when we envision who the industry is, the picture comes to mind of large, multinational corporations. Make no mistake: they, too, will feel the impacts. But the brunt of an ill-conceived policy, such as what the President has put forward, will fall squarely on the shoulders of small- and medium-sized companies that make up the backbone of our domestic oil and gas industry.

It will also fall squarely on the many contractors who work in those companies. They are geologists, engineers, construction companies, well servicing companies, and the hospitality industry. They are the many hardworking Americans working to provide for their families and working to provide the rest of us with an invaluable resource that we too often take for granted.

The President wishes to move us away from oil as a transportation fuel, so he pursues a purely ideological strategy to force it, never mind who is trampled in the process.

The President wishes, instead, to pursue electric vehicle sales, which, in 2015, accounted for less than 1 percent of the total car sales in the country. Yet, he takes measures to halt coal leasing and bludgeon coal-fired power plants into nonexistence. Coal, of course, is the single largest source of electricity in the United States.

These two incoherent policy pursuits are a perfect demonstration of the complete lack of vision this administration has when it comes to achieving actual energy independence.

Let's stand up for the American consumer and American jobs and reject the President's budget proposals.

RECOGNIZING ABIT MASSEY

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Abit Massey.

Last week, Mr. Massey was awarded one of the highest honors that anyone can receive from the University of Georgia. On January 27, Mr. Massey was awarded the University of Georgia President's Medal for extraordinary contributions to students in academic programs, the advancement of research, and for inspiring community leaders to enhance Georgians' quality of life.

Mr. Massey graduated from the University of Georgia in 1949, and received his Juris Doctorate from Emory University. For almost 50 years, he was executive director of the Georgia Poultry Federation, known to many as the dean of the poultry industry. Before joining the Georgia Poultry Federation, he was head of the Georgia Department of Commerce, where he created the first Welcome Center in Georgia. He has received numerous awards for his service to the State of Georgia.

But Mr. Massey would argue that his greatest accomplishment would be his family. Mr. Massey, along with his wife, Kayanne, who was a former Miss Georgia, have more than 18 family members who attended the University of Georgia, and the Massey family was named the University of Georgia Alumni Association Family of the Year in 2014.

I commend Mr. Massey for his commitment to Georgia, and I congratulate him for receiving this distinguished award.

RECOGNIZING MS. FRANKIE QUIMBY AND THE ASSOCIATION FOR CULTURAL EQUITY

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Frankie Quimby and the Association for Cultural Equity.

Ms. Quimby, the oldest of 13 children, was born and raised on the Georgia Sea Islands and descended from slaves of the Hopeton and Altama Plantations in Glynn County. She, along with her family, make up the Georgia Sea Island Singers, who have continued to preserve the rich traditions of African American culture, customs, and the songs of the Gullah language. In fact, the Quimby family is one of only a few families who can trace their ancestry back to a specific spot in Africa on the Niger River.

□ 1045

In fact, the Quimby family is one of only a few families who can trace their ancestry back to a specific spot in Africa on the Niger River.

Along with the Association for Cultural Equity, whose mission is to facilitate cultural equity through preservation, publication, and repatriation of music, dance, and spoken word, the Quimby family has been able to continue to preserve the rich heritage of their African American culture throughout the Georgia Sea Islands because people living in the area have been able to retain pure versions of games and songs brought over from Africa centuries ago.

I commend Ms. Frankie Quimby, the Quimby family, and the Association for Cultural Equity for preserving this rich history of Georgia's heritage.

STEPHEN ELMO WEEKS

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life of Stephen Elmo Weeks, who passed away on January 17, 2016.

Born on December 6, 1919, Elmo, as his friends called him, graduated from Savannah High School in 1940. Upon graduation, Elmo attended the Georgia Institute of Technology before heading off to war in 1942, where he was stationed at a German POW camp in Opelika, Alabama.

Upon his return to Savannah, he joined the family business, Fox & Weeks funeral home, and soon became actively involved as a founding board member for the Savannah Christian Preparatory School.

Mr. Weeks was actively engaged with numerous organizations in the Savannah area, including the Savannah Junior Chamber of Commerce, the Kiwanis Club, and his church and my church, Wesley Monumental United Methodist Church.

He was also a man who recognized and enjoyed the great outdoors. As an avid boater, he spent a significant amount of time on the water, teaching his children, his grandchildren, and his great-grandchildren about life's lessons.

Whether it was having lunch at the Oglethorpe Club with his close friends or his continued involvement with the funeral home into his late eighties, Elmo was a committed and devoted man who always put his friends and family first.

Elmo, your love and service to your family and community will be missed.

REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF JIM MONAGHAN

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the life of Jim Monaghan and his dedication to Tybee Island, Georgia.

Born in New York City in 1927, Mr. Monaghan arrived in Savannah by sailboat in 1982 with his wife, Anne Merchant Monaghan. Soon after their arrival in Savannah, they moved to Tybee Island.

Over the years, Mr. Monaghan served Tybee Island with enthusiasm. He served on the Tybee Island City Council, volunteered at the Tybee lighthouse, and delivered stuffed animals to nursing home residents.

He was a board member and former president of the Tybee Island Republican Club. A true gentleman with an uplifting spirit and a warm smile, Mr. Monaghan rarely missed the club's dinner meetings, always enjoying the social atmosphere and meeting new guests.

Mr. Monaghan passed away last week at the age of 88. He is survived by his two children, Mr. James C. ''Tripp'' Monaghan III, and Mrs. Shane Sturm.

I am honored to celebrate the life, the generosity, and the character of Jim Monaghan. He will truly be missed.

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 48 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.

We thank You that we are a nation fashioned out of diverse peoples and cultures, brought forth on this continent in a way not unlike the ancient people of Israel. As out of a desert, You led our American ancestors to this promised land, where they declared their independence and constituted a new nation founded upon inalienable rights given to us by You, our Creator.

Bless our Nation with wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, and bless the Members of this people's House. Renew in us Your Spirit that we may affirm our freedoms by actions proven beyond words.

Bless us this day and every day. May all that is done 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 gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN 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.

CELEBRATING THE CENTENNIAL OF THE FARM CREDIT SYSTEM

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

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the centennial of the Farm Credit System.

One hundred years ago, the Farm Credit System began its mission to provide American agriculture with a steady hand and dependability, which they needed to provide for our Nation.

Throughout its history, the Farm Credit System has helped our farmers through the Great Depression, the agriculture crisis of the 1980s, and even the market collapse of 2008.

This deep-rooted understanding of our Nation's complex agribusiness industry and the people who work tirelessly to send products to market is what makes the Farm Credit System so critical to our producers and their future success.

This dedication to my district in upstate New York and to American agriculture across this great Nation is why I am proud to stand on the House floor today and honor the Farm Credit System on its centennial.

WE MUST NOT WEAKEN AVIATION SAFETY STANDARDS

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, in 2010 Congress passed landmark aviation safety legislation. The provisions of this law reflected the recommendations of the National Transportation Safety Board, which tragically were given urgency after the crash of Continental flight 3407 near Buffalo, New York.

The families of those who were lost in the crash turned their grief into purpose and led a relentless and heroic campaign to pass this law.

Years later—at this very moment, in fact—the families are across the street at a committee markup of the FAA authorization bill, amid rumors that regional airlines might encourage amendments to water down these safety reforms.

I want the families to know that they are not alone. The western New York congressional delegation will fight alongside them and against any attempt to weaken aviation safety standards.

Tomorrow marks the seventh anniversary of the crash. I call on this House not to forget it.

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET IGNORES FISCAL REALITIES

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

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, on Tuesday, President Obama released his budget for fiscal year 2017. Some might call this proposal a vision for the future of the country. Well, I am here to tell you the President's vision for America ignores our fiscal realities and the magnitude of the problems we face.

The national debt is nearly $19 trillion. Our country is in the middle of a fiscal crisis driven by reckless borrowing and runaway government spending, and President Obama once again offers us a budget filled with untenable tax hikes that never balances.

Something has to change or the legacy we leave to our children and grandchildren will be a crushing debt burden and a weaker nation.

Washington has a moral obligation to the American people to present a responsible budget that reins in wasteful Federal overspending and guarantees accountability for the use of taxpayer dollars. House Republicans will continue to do all we can to make this vision a reality.

IN RECOGNITION OF EVA HAMLIN MILLER

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

Ms. ADAMS. Madam Speaker, I rise today during Black History Month to recognize my mentor and friend, fellow artist and teacher, the late Eva Hamlin Miller.

Eva Miller dedicated her life to her art and her students, encouraging us to pursue our artistic goals. From the 1930s Harlem street scenes to stained glass windows in North Carolina, Mrs. Miller's artistic talents, range, and precision were phenomenal.

She was a pioneering voice for African American art, curating one of the first regional shows of African American art in the North Carolina Museum of Art in Raleigh and founding the African American Atelier with me 25 years ago, an art gallery focusing on African American art and artists located in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Eva Miller possessed an unwavering dedication to students, as a teacher at Tuskegee Institute, Bennett College, Winston-Salem State University, and North Carolina A&T.

Her legacy continues to live on, not only through her work but through the many students she taught and inspired.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION MONTH

(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. Madam Speaker, I rise today as co-chair of the bipartisan Career and Technical Education Caucus to recognize February as National Career and Technical Education Month.

Career and technical education programs play a key role in closing our Nation's skill gap by preparing students of all ages for the 21st century workforce and jobs. That is why I was encouraged by the inclusion of career and technical education center provisions in the recently passed Every Student Succeeds Act.

Not only does the ESSA provide much-needed flexibility to States and local education agencies, it also encourages businesses to get involved with their local schools. More schools will be able to use Federal funds to provide academic credit for apprenticeships and strengthen their career counseling programs.

This was a result of bipartisan legislation I introduced with the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN), my colleague and friend, aimed at informing school counselors of local labor market conditions so that they can best guide the decisionmaking process of their students.

It is my hope that this and other Federal education policies will provide support to schools, businesses, and community organizations in Pennsylvania's Fifth District and across the country as they work to prepare our students for the future.

I look forward to working toward improving and reauthorizing the Perkins Act for career and technical education training.

IN RECOGNITION OF CTE MONTH

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Speaker, as co-chairs of the Congressional Career and Technical Education Caucus, I am pleased to join the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON), my good friend, in recognition of CTE Month.

Across the country, students are using CTE programs to seek out career pathways, hone 21st century skills, and find good jobs. Unfortunately, while demand has increased for CTE, Federal funding has been reduced from its high level in 2010 of $1.3 billion.

It is time, Madam Speaker, that we reauthorize the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act to deliver student-centered education that provides the right skills for successful careers. We have the opportunity to remake Perkins in a way that works for the new economy in the 21st century. I urge my colleagues to seize this chance.

As Rhode Island's Governor, Gina Raimondo, has put it aptly, it is time to invest in skills that matter and work that pays.

RETURNING TO A FISCALLY RESPONSIBLE NATION

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

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the need to control our Nation's debt.

Due to a rapid and unsustainable expansion of the Federal Government, the Obama administration has racked up $8 trillion in new debt, pushing the national debt to more than $19 trillion. If we continue down this reckless path, the Congressional Budget Office projects a return to $1 trillion annual deficits by 2022.

Today, the House of Representatives is working toward returning to a more fiscally responsible nation by voting on the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act. This legislation will begin to restore fiscal discipline by requiring the U.S. Treasury Secretary to appear before Congress at least 21 days before hitting the debt ceiling to present the administration's plans to reduce the national debt.

While more work needs to be done, this legislation is one step closer to financial sanity and security.

I want to thank Representative MARCHANT for his hard work on this bill. I urge all my colleagues to support it.

THE NATIONAL CYBERSECURITY STRATEGY

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

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the national cybersecurity strategy included in the President's budget proposal for fiscal year 2017.

This is a solid framework that includes a 35 percent increase for cyber and a new high-level official focused solely on implementing a cyber strategy across the entire Federal Government.

Cyber hackers are costing American companies billions of dollars in intellectual property every year. Terrorists, like ISIS, organized criminals, and even state actors, such as Iran and North Korea, are honing their cyber skills, which could put our country at critical risk, including infrastructure shutdowns.

For years, I have advocated for a Cabinet-level cyber position with budget authority because the cyber threat is so severe. This new official should have real authority to drive change across the Federal Government.

We must also continue working on issues still unaddressed, such as the insider threat posed by people within the government. An example of that is Edward Snowden, who gave stolen American information to Russia and China.

This is especially critical in the wake of a data breach affecting more than 22 million current, former, and prospective Federal employees last June.

I urge my colleagues to support this priority.

CHILDREN'S BEREAVEMENT 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 would like to commend the Children's Bereavement Center, an organization located in my congressional district that has been providing support and lifting spirits for so many south Florida families after facing a tragic loss.

Founded in 1999, the Children's Bereavement Center offers free peer support groups and serves as an outstanding resource for children, parents, and caregivers, providing them with the aid they so desperately need while experiencing the hardship of losing a loved one, a tragedy that some families may one day experience.

When dealing with loss, it is often the grieving children who are affected the most. This wonderful organization has made it its mission to assist students at Miami-Dade County public schools, having helped over 1,300 children just this past year alone.

I am so thankful for the noble endeavor that the Children's Bereavement Center has undertaken so that adults and children can find a way to find peace and move forward with their lives.

CALIFORNIA'S DEVASTATING DROUGHT

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on the current status of California's devastating drought.

I urge the California State and Federal agencies to maximize the pumping of water in the delta to the allowable legal limits.

As a result of State and Federal agencies' inability to operate at the most flexible range available under the Biological Opinions of the Endangered Species Act, over 44,000 acre-feet of water has been lost just this last week during these El Nino conditions, and over 131,000 acre-feet of water has been lost this year, water that could be used to grow crops and to feed people. This is morally wrong.

Congress must pass legislation to provide relief for the people of the San Joaquin Valley and California. Senator FEINSTEIN's introduction of water legislation is a critical step. I urge the Senate to pass her legislation so we can enter into negotiations with the House-passed bill, which I strongly support.

Time is of the essence. Every day of delay only results in further losses of the vital water that is necessary for the people of the valley and the people of California. Californians need to use this water during these times of El Nino conditions.

I urge that we do the right thing.

□ 1215

LITTORAL COMBAT SHIP

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

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my disappointment with the President's budget request.

I am especially concerned about the President's proposal to cut the Littoral Combat Ship program. These ships are built, in part, by Austal USA in my home district.

I have seen these ships being built, I have talked to the Navy leadership, and I have visited with the sailors who are actually working on these vessels. They all support the LCS and the vital role it plays in the Navy's fleet. In fact, just last year, Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus said: ''We have a need, a demonstrated need, for 52 of these small surface combatants.''

Cutting the LCS program, along with failing to include an additional Expeditionary Fast Transport ship, would be a tremendous mistake as it relates to maintaining the workforce base that we have worked so hard to build up along the Gulf Coast.

So I have a message for the 4,000 people who work at the Austal shipyard in Mobile: This proposal from a lameduck Secretary of Defense and a lameduck President will not stand.

I will fight every day to make sure that our Navy has the resources they want and need to protect our Nation and keep sea lanes open. The LCS is a critical part of that mission.

CONGRATULATING YOLANDA ADAMS

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with great enthusiasm to honor and salute Yolanda Adams, an enormous and wonderful talent of gospel music, and to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Yolanda Adams Morning Show.

Many know that I introduced legislation to make September Gospel Music Heritage Month in order to honor the many talented Americans who enjoy singing, writing, and providing inspiration through gospel music. Elvis Presley won his first Grammy with gospel music.

I remember young Yolanda Adams singing in a church in Houston, and the inspiration she gave even then. She was a young teacher who worked until she finally knew that her talent was worthy of presenting it to the American people.

Yolanda Adams rose to fame as one of gospel music's greats, making her debut in 1988. I remember her song, ''Just as I Am.'' Since then, Yolanda has been wowing gospel audiences. She has been before the President of the United States and all over the world, but yet she is a humble person.

Following her illustrious music career, she began the Yolanda Adams Morning Show. These shows often don't last, but her spirit has guided it forward. She connects with listeners, bringing them warm and inspirational messages. Her music and growth has been wonderful.

Mr. Speaker, Yolanda's co-hosts, Anthony Valary and Marcus D. Wiley, give love and camaraderie every morning. They make it not just a morning show, but a celebration of friends and family.

I am delighted to stand here today to call Yolanda Adams an American treasure. She is a native daughter of Houston, and someone who understands God's blessings, but is not selfish. She provides those blessings to others through her musical genius.

Congratulations to Yolanda Adams for 10 years of the Yolanda Adams Morning Show.

TRIBUTE TO SUSAN JORDAN

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

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor the life and legacy of Susan Jordan, the beloved principal of Amy Beverland Elementary School, who served the Lawrence, Indiana, community for 22 years as an educator.

In January, when a bus accidentally lost control, Principal Jordan put herself between her students and the bus, saving their lives and losing her own. I am extraordinarily moved by her heroic sacrifice and the incredible outpouring of love and support from her students, fellow teachers, and the greater Lawrence community.

Principal Jordan was known for her warmth and her passion for her students to achieve their very best. At the start of every school day, she stopped by each classroom to welcome and encourage her students. Under her leadership, Amy Beverland Elementary was named a Four Star School by the Indiana Department of Education, its designation for excellence.

On behalf of Indiana's Fifth Congressional District, I offer my deepest sympathy to Principal Jordan's family and friends, the students who were injured, the Lawrence Township community, and all Hoosiers who mourn her loss and cherish her memory.

REMEMBERING FLIGHT 3407

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak today about Flight 3407 that

crashed in Buffalo, New York, 7 years ago tomorrow.

This plane crashed inside of the runway on an icy February night. We learned that the pilot and the copilot had never been trained at all on flying into an icy situation. The young woman who was the copilot had flown in the night before from Seattle. She was paid so little—around $13,000 a year—that she could not afford a motel room to sleep, so she slept on the floor somewhere. On the black box, you could hear them yawning before the crash.

In that plane crash were two of the best musicians in the United States, a woman who knew more about Rwanda and its problems than anybody else, and one of the most extraordinary anthropologists in the world. They died because these pilots had no idea of how to fly in those conditions.

Colgan Air, their owner, was trying to take some responsibility.

We have worked with the families of the people who died on that plane. They have selflessly come down here for 7 years, and we have finally gotten some regulation through the FAA of how much training they had to have, that at least the pilot or the copilot had to have some hours of flying time behind them that would be of some use.

Now, we are facing an FAA bill here today, where they are trying to undo those safety regulations. It absolutely applies to every last one of us in the United States.

For goodness sake, I implore my colleagues not to let it happen, that those regulations would be weakened and, once more, we would be flying people who are living on subsistence wages, unable to really cope with the weather or the elements.

We deserve better than that in this century.

PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

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

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, the President submitted his final annual budget proposal to Congress this week. It was my hope that the President would have used this opportunity to progress an agenda that reflects our Nation's needs. Unfortunately, it seems to be exactly the opposite.

The President's proposed budget is supposed to serve as a blueprint for our Nation's prosperity. Sadly, his plan offers an unrealistic way forward. Currently, our national debt stands at over $19 trillion. If the President got his way, that number would rise to $27 trillion over the next decade.

The President has chosen to ignore the facts. If Americans have to balance their checkbooks and live within their means, so should the Federal Government. To pay for his spending, the President hopes to raise taxes and institute a $10 per barrel levy on an already anemic oil industry.

I believe my constituents deserve better than that from the President, and we should work together to ensure certainty, not uncertainty, in today's challenging environment.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

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

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, we are a Nation of immigrants and a Nation of laws. When those two come into conflict, the responsibility for addressing it belongs in this body, the United States Congress.

We are a compassionate people. We need to unite families. We need to provide a pathway to citizenship. We need to make sure that companies in America have access to the talented employee pool that they need.

We are also a Nation of laws. We need to get serious about our border security. We need employment verification and real penalties for those who violate our laws.

It is past time for Congress to act on immigration reform. I renew my call for Congress to restore the rule of law and recognize that our Nation of immigrants must also be a moral Nation, leading the way for the next great generation of Americans to take their place alongside us as leaders of American industry, civil society, and even in this very body itself.

CRISIS AT OUR OWN BORDER

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend, along with other members of the Border Caucus, I traveled to the lower Rio Grande Valley sector of the United States border.

Mr. Speaker, the flood of illegal immigrants across the southern border has proven to be a mounting American crisis, greatly impacting Texas families.

You simply cannot understand the magnitude of the problem in the lower Rio Grande Valley unless you see it for yourself. It is impossible to understand the characteristics of this ever-changing region and why it is so difficult to manage. That is why I make regular visits to the border.

President Obama missed an opportunity when he refused Governor Perry's request to come to the border while he was in Texas in July 2014. I would renew that call for our executive to come to the border.

The United States, as a Nation, has a sovereign right and responsibility to define and defend its borders. In order for this problem to be improved, the executive must travel to the border and have the will to make this a priority and get it done.

TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION MONTH

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

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize February as Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month.

One in three teens will experience some form of abuse in a dating relationship. As a father of three young children, I recognize that this is not a partisan problem, but rather a violation of basic human rights that demands immediate action. I believe it is our collective responsibility as mentors, leaders, and even parents, to find a way to protect our youth and to prevent them from dating abuse.

While current Federal law prohibits someone from purchasing a handgun if they are convicted of abusing someone they live with, unfortunately, victims who have been abused by a current or former dating partner are not protected.

Abuse of a dating partner is unacceptable as domestic abuse, plain and simple, which is why I introduced the Zero Tolerance for Domestic Abusers Act with my good friend, Congresswoman DEBBIE DINGELL. I encourage all of my colleagues to support this important bipartisan effort.

In the meantime, we can make a difference by encouraging our schools, community-based organizations, parents, and teens to come together to combat teen dating violence.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO JOINT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE ON INAUGURAL CEREMONIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania). The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to Senate Concurrent Resolution 28, 114th Congress, and the order of the House of January 6, 2015, of the following Members on the part of the House to the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies:

Mr. RYAN, Wisconsin
Mr. MCCARTHY, California
Ms. PELOSI, California

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order at any time through the legislative day of February 12, 2016, for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules, as though under clause 1 of rule XV, relating to the bill (H.R. 757) to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes.

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

There was no objection.

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. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 611 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 611

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. 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. 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. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Energy and Commerce now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in 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. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. 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. On any legislative day during the period from February 15, 2016, through February 22, 2016—

(a) the Journal of the proceedings of the previous day shall be considered as approved; and

(b) the Chair may at any time declare the House adjourned to meet at a date and time, within the limits of clause 4, section 5, article I of the Constitution, to be announced by the Chair in declaring the adjournment.

SEC. 3. The Speaker may appoint Members to perform the duties of the Chair for the duration of the period addressed by section 2 of this resolution as though under clause 8(a) of rule I.

SEC. 4. 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.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 1 hour.

□ 1230

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS), 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. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members 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. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 611 provides for a rule to consider a commonsense, bipartisan piece of legislation that will fix a problem that was wholly created by the intransigence of the bureaucrats at the Food and Drug Administration. This important bill amends the difficultly drafted Affordable Care Act, which rigidly mandated that food establishments provide physical notices of the nutritional value of every food item that they offer.

Perhaps this is a noble endeavor in theory, until one considers that the inflexible rule put out by the Food and Drug Administration makes no allowances for establishments that allow for multiple variations of their offerings. This could mean that a pizza chain, for example, would have to provide calorie counts for every possible different type of pizza combination that one could order, a mandate that would result in a pizza place needing to literally wallpaper their establishment, and perhaps the establishment next door, with all of the different scenarios for personalized pizzas.

The rule provides for 1 hour of debate. It is equally divided between the majority and the minority of the Energy and Commerce Committee. The Committee on Rules made in order every amendment that was submitted to the committee to be considered, two Democratic amendments and one bipartisan offering. Finally, the rule affords the minority the customary motion to recommit, a final opportunity to amend the bill should the minority choose to exercise this option.

Mr. Speaker, the issue before us today in the underlying bill is not about whether restaurants should provide their customers with nutritional information; the issue is fundamentally one of the proper role of government. Since President Obama moved into the White House and NANCY PELOSI and HARRY REID served as his stewards in the 110th Congress, the Democrats have drummed a steady beat toward expanding the role of government in every direction in our lives.

H.R. 2017, the Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act, is bipartisan legislation introduced by Representatives CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS and LORETTA SANCHEZ to fix the Food and Drug Administration's unworkable implementation of the menu labeling law. The Food and Drug Administration's regulatory framework is not just cumbersome for the food industry, it also impedes a business' ability to provide meaningful information that customers can use to make nutrition decisions.

The Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act is critical to avoid harming consumer choice, harming jobs, and harming small business. The Federal Government should not presume to know how restaurants, supermarkets, cafes, convenience stores, and entertainment venues can best serve their customers and run their businesses, yet the Food and Drug Administration has done exactly that.

For years now, many restaurants and retail food establishments have disclosed caloric information to their customers. This industry expertise should have been instructive to the Food and Drug Administration as it developed the Federal regulation. In fact, the Food and Drug Administration took 3½ years before finalizing a rule that virtually ignores serious concerns raised about the harm of an overly prescriptive, one-size-fits-all approach.

Not only did the FDA disregard the input of consumers and industry experts, it also extended the scope of the regulation far beyond what anyone could have imagined when they voted for this bill in March of 2010. If the Food and Drug Administration is allowed to implement the rule as it stands, the Office of Management and Budget has determined it will require more than 14 million—14 million—compliance hours, in addition to costs exceeding $1 billion. Even the Food and Drug Administration acknowledged that initial compliance will cost almost $400 million, with recurring costs as high as $150 million per year. Likely, the actual costs for the private sector will far exceed those estimates.

Perhaps even more concerning than the costs, food service establishments. Food service establishments are going to face Federal criminal penalties for even the slightest failure to comply with the framework envisioned by the Food and Drug Administration.

Under section 403(a)(1) of the Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act, food labeling must be truthful and not misleading. Food labeling that does not meet the Food and Drug Administration's standard for ''truthful and nonmisleading''

is deemed ''misbranded.'' Under the U.S. Code, introducing misbranded food into commerce is a prohibited act, and the liable party shall be imprisoned for up to 1 year, fined not more than $1,000, or both.

Food to which these menu labeling requirements apply is deemed misbranded if the Food and Drug Administration's rule requirements are not met. It is not necessary that the person intentionally mislead customers. Under the Food and Drug Administration's framework, merely adding an extra slice of pepperoni will render the calorie content on the menu misleading, and your chef is now a criminal.

People say that the Food and Drug Administration won't put people in jail over this, so I don't think there should be an issue in saying just that, that people will not be put in jail for an extra slice of pepperoni. I don't think there is a problem with codifying that in statute. I think it will give great reassurance to food preparers in the industry.

The Food and Drug Administration's regulation is applicable to restaurants and similar establishments that sell ready-to-eat food that are part of chains with at least 20 stores. This would include bakeries, cafeterias, coffee shops, convenience stores, delis, entertainment venues, food service vendors, fast-food take-out or delivery establishments, grocery stores, confectionery stores, quick service restaurants, and table service restaurants.

Although stores may be part of a nationwide chain, there is substantial variation between regional locations. For example, convenience stores noted in their testimony that, unlike a McDonald's or a doughnut shop that have the same format everywhere they go, many convenience stores have different layouts based upon region, so coming up with a uniform standard would, in fact, be challenging. This means that all chains will incur individual costs for nutritional analysis and for menu labeling for each location, not just one time done at the national level.

Under the rule, the definition of a menu is applied broadly to mean any writing a customer uses to place an order. This approach would include everything from in-store menu boards to print advertising in the form of door hangers or circulars or online advertising. The rule requires that each menu item have a clearly visible calorie count, including separate calorie information for variable menu items such as toppings or flavor additives.

Pizza chains estimate that there are over 30 million combinations available to customers; and the calorie content for each option couldn't fit on any menu board that I have ever seen. Grocers estimate that the rule would include hundreds of items in stores that are offered subject to availability and demand, things such as fresh produce, baked goods, seafood, making it virtually impossible to have accurate menu boards without changing them on a nearly constant basis. Many of these businesses would likely stop offering the range of options that are currently available because it would simply cost too much to comply.

Clearly, the Food and Drug Administration's regulation does not provide a workable framework for businesses. This rule should be about ensuring customers are provided with accurate, trustworthy nutrition information to help inform their decisions, all the while, enabling small businesses the ability to comply.

Representative MCMORRIS RODGERS' bill is carefully constructed to create transparency for consumers, while maintaining the flexibility necessary for all regulated businesses to be in compliance. The Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act will establish a more reasonable standard for Federal regulation by applying nutritional disclosure requirements to establishments that derive more than 50 percent of their total revenue from the sale of food.

The bill also ensures that inadvertent human error will not subject a local franchise owner to crippling fines or possibly imprisonment. Nutritional information could be provided by a remote access menu for food establishments where the majority of orders are placed by customers off premises. Establishments with self-serve food may comply with the requirements for restaurants or place signs with nutritional information adjacent to each food item, and the bill clarifies that advertisements are not menus.

Yesterday, during the Rules Committee hearing, Ranking Member PALLONE testified that it is important that consumers have information at the point of purchase. I disagree with this point. Consumers should have the information when they are placing their order.

A menu board may work for some businesses where customers order at the counter where they also pay; but for something like a pizza restaurant where most people are ordering online or over the telephone, having the calorie information when they pick up their order actually won't be helpful to the consumer when they are actually making the decisions. This is an example of how the Food and Drug Administration did not consider the array of business types included in this rule, and this is why a legislative solution not only is necessary, but it is required.

The food retail sector employs millions of Americans, and it provides access to affordable, healthy options. The Federal Government must not impose arbitrary regulations that will cause unnecessary harm to businesses and customers. The businesses impacted by this rule widely support providing customers with the nutritional information to better inform their food decisions, but they want to do it in a practical and commonsense way.

□ 1245

This legislation provides clear guidance to small business owners, ensuring compliance and at the same time delivering that critical information.

I encourage all of my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on the rule and vote ''yes'' on the underlying bill.

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

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding me the time, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule. This is one of the strangest debates we have had in my time in the House here on the floor of the House. We are actually literally debating the fine print of menus in chain restaurants.

Frankly, I think the American people want to see this body address the real issues that they care about every day. They want our body to fix our broken immigration system and secure our borders. They want us to raise the minimum wage and make college more affordable. They want to make sure that Americans are safe and secure in their homes and that we can ensure for the next generation of Americans the same promise that our last generation has enjoyed in this country.

We know it is becoming even harder and harder for Americans to stay and thrive in the middle class, burdened with more and more college debt and with medical bills. It is time to improve that and make sure that we can restore a robust economy that works for all Americans.

The finer points of exactly the font size on menus is, of course, best left to the executive agencies. It is a complete waste of Congress' time. There is a 400-page guidance from the FDA, and Congress is now going into that through this bill and literally doing things like adjusting font size and changing definitions. What a bizarre way to spend not only an hour for this rule debate but time for the actual bill debate, amendments, and the vote. I wonder how much taxpayer time we are spending on menu font size, which I don't even know why we are even talking about that. How bizarre.

The Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act is advertised as a response to what some perceive to be FDA regulations they don't like. Fine. Elect a different President. There actually will be a different President. One of the things this bill ironically does is delays these rules until there is a new President.

So, I don't know, will Members of this body like rules better that are set by President Trump or President Sanders or President Clinton? I don't even think the topics come up in their campaign on what font size they want on menus and where they want the calories listed. I haven't heard it from any of my constituents.

Generally, people want information about calories and how much they are getting. They want to know that, if

they are getting a hamburger, it might make a difference if the smaller one is 300 calories and the bigger one is 500; maybe if I am watching my weight, I will order the smaller one.

That is generally what people want. These rules generally do that. But here we are using hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars changing a few things and saying, by the way, we want President Trump or Sanders to do this instead of President Obama.

I mean, why? The American people should be outraged. The American people look at Congress, and what do we have, like I think a 6 percent approval rating. Six percent of the American people are saying right on? Six percent of the American people want us to discuss exactly where it says how many calories your hamburger has at your fast-food restaurant? Maybe those 6 percent checked the wrong box on that congressional approval poll. But at least 94 percent of the American people think we ought to be doing something else, and so do I.

I think we should be working to balance the budget. I think that we should fix our broken immigration system and restore our borders. I think that we should grow the American economy, find a sustainable way to invest in infrastructure, find a way to provide a boost to the renewable energies economy, boost American exports in manufacturing, raise the minimum wage, make health care more affordable, and build upon the improvements of the Affordable Care Act.

But no, no. The Republican majority has decided we are going to spend the rest of the day today and tomorrow debating where and how on menus—and not even all restaurants, just some restaurants, with restaurants on all sides of this issue, by the way—that it says how many calories are in your hamburger.

While some say that they don't like the regulations, the reality is this bill actually delays and waters down the transparency that the American people want. Honestly, my constituents have not called about this. I don't think many of them care that much about where it says how many calories are in their burger. But to the extent they think about it, they just want transparency. They want to see it. So do I as a consumer, by the way.

When we work late nights here in D.C., I will order online from a delivery service. They will bring the food to my home. Sometimes I will go into their storefront, and sometimes those stores are chain stores that are under this.

Now, as a consumer, I like to see the calories at all those locations. What this bill would actually do is prevent that from happening. It would say, look, Mr. Store Owner or Ms. Store Owner of a Restaurant Franchise Chain That Delivers, you get 60 percent of your business at your door that comes in, 40 percent of your business is delivery, so you don't have to tell your delivery customers on your Web site how many calories are in that burger. If I am one of their delivery customers, I lose out on that transparency because of the measures in this bill.

And the converse, what if 60 percent of their food is delivery food and 40 percent are walk-in customers? Now you are saying that if I choose to go there, walk-in customers, sure, maybe the calorie thing is somewhere, maybe it is tucked under a magazine dispenser or it is on some back wall in the restroom, but it is not right there on the menu where I can actually see how many calories are in the item of my choice.

The American people like our labeling. They like transparency. You go to the supermarket, every item, you pick it up, there is a label that tells you the calories, and it tells you the ingredients. People like that for restaurants. They certainly don't like Congress trying to modify the fine print on the font size on 400 pages of thoughtful rules around exactly how this should be done and punting it to the next President, whom we don't even know who that is going to be, to start a whole new rulemaking process about something that is very simple.

People want to see how many calories are in what they eat. It is a very simple concept—very simple. People like it. People don't want us wasting time on it. Let's not waste time on it. Let's discuss the things people care about.

But, no, we are forced to, under this rule, spend even more time—and time is money. Time is money, not just of opportunity cost, but we could be talking about ending our budget deficit and restoring order to our border. We could be doing that. Not just the opportunity cost but actual cost. It costs money to keep this body up and running. We are paying our staffs, the lights are on, hundreds of thousands of dollars of taxpayer money to discuss exactly where and how the number of calories on your hamburger will be listed when there already are over 400 pages of rules which work and are still being fine tuned.

We had great testimony from the ranking member on the Energy and Commerce Committee, FRANK PALLONE, yesterday in our Rules Committee. He said that there are ongoing discussions with FDA, and they are well aware of some of these issues that can be improved.

Congress is best setting these broad directions, like the broad direction which I support which Congress actually did. This was part of the Affordable Care Act. If it were a separate vote, I would have been proud to support it too. We said chain restaurants need to label caloric intake. That is great. That is a broad direction. The details of exactly how to do it need to be figured out on the implementation side.

I can only imagine, if Congress got this involved with every single thing, this country would grind to a halt. Nothing could ever occur. No permit would ever be granted. No approval would ever occur of anything. It is simply the wrong way to run the largest, wealthiest, most democratic, and most free nation on the face of the Earth by grinding the country to a halt over Congress—the Congress of the United States—setting font sizes on restaurant menus. What the heck are we doing? It is a wonder that 6 percent of people, Mr. Speaker, approve of this Congress. I think they checked the wrong box.

The whole point of this labeling measure included in the Affordable Care Act was to empower consumers to make healthier decisions about the food they eat by simply allowing them to know what is in it. That is the broad direction set by Congress, making sure that we have a public health impact. We need a certain level of standardization so consumers can compare nutritional information on restaurants, just as we do on packages in stores.

If companies that make packaged foods had free rein to invent serving sizes on nutrition labels, or to put the labels on the inside of the container instead of the outside where you can't really see it, would anybody in this body argue that those labels were no longer serving the public good for which they were introduced?

This is the same thing. This is the same thing as putting a label on the inside of a jar, rather than the outside, to game the system. It seems to me like an effort to deprive the American people of information they want to see. You don't improve Federal standards by making them unenforceable in a court of law. You make them irrelevant by making them unenforceable in a court of law.

Mr. Speaker, I am one of these people who wants to know what is in their food. Many of my constituents are too. I am proud to represent the Second Congressional District of Colorado, one of the fittest congressional districts in this Nation, one of the districts with the lowest obesity rates, and a district in which people pride themselves on nutrition, healthy lifestyles, and exercise. I am proud to be a representative of that district. My constituents want to know what they eat. Menu labeling, which has been implemented in five States and dozens of cities since 2006, empowers consumers to make healthy decisions and know what they eat, which has never been more important.

We all know that obesity and diabetes are on the rise. Last year, almost half of American adults had diabetes or pre-diabetes. Medical costs are in the hundreds of billions to treat these diseases and growing. Eating well is the most significant thing that a person can do as a preventative health measure to prevent themselves from developing these diet-related illnesses, including obesity and heart disease.

As it stands now, nutrition information is already available on prepackaged foods. So when I cook at home, I know exactly what ingredients

are going into the meal I feed myself and my kids. It is right on the label. But when I go out to eat, I don't have the advantage of that same information.

In 2015, for the first time ever, Americans spent more money at restaurants than on groceries. Let me say that again: Americans spent more money at restaurants than on groceries for the first time in 2015. That is a big deal. An important part of the nutritional content that gives us sustenance comes from restaurants, and the American people want that same level of transparency at their restaurants.

With this particular bill, Congress would be moving away from the broad direction that it gave the FDA to basically micromanage over 400 pages of exactly, in what instances, where, and how labels need to appear to the detriment of transparency and access.

As my friend from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) mentioned in the Rules Committee, the FDA solicited significant feedback from stakeholders over many years, both during the negotiations of the Affordable Care Act and, of course, over the course of developing a final rule. They have delayed implementation for 2 years already to give restaurants and the retail food community more time. I am talking about printing things. How overly generous can you get?

With this bill, the Republicans are seeking 2 more years of delay. It is important to point out it has already been delayed 2 years. Again, this is a typical example of why the American people are so frustrated with Congress. This is a bill that will effectively grind things to a halt. Grind what to a halt? Telling you how many calories are in your hamburger, something that people want to know. That is what it will grind to a halt. To what end? To no end. It is a bizarre, unusual waste of time for Congress to be even debating this.

If this bill were to pass and be signed into law—which it won't be because, of course, the President does not support this bill—it would postpone regulations for another 2 years, leaving an entirely new structure about exactly how the caloric intake on your menus is portrayed to the next President of the United States. Let's get this done.

Under this bill, the menu labeling provision would go into effect, at the earliest, in 2018 and would be significantly watered down. Why is Congress sticking our noses in over 400 pages of rulemaking regarding this issue? If we have issues with the FDA, bring them up appropriately in oversight hearings of the FDA. At most, legislatively, perhaps a funding restriction amendment in an appropriations process to run a particular aspect of this regulation that a majority of this body doesn't like might be a legislative way to spend 10 minutes on it and resolve it. Ten minutes. Maybe the American people would think it reasonable to spend 10 minutes.

They don't think it is reasonable to discuss this for 2 days. Hamburger calories for 2 days and exactly what font size and where it appears? What is going on here, Mr. Speaker? This is simply an inappropriate way, a shockingly out-of-touch way, for Congress to spend its time.

My colleagues who support this bill have said that it builds flexibility for compliance. They say that it can help clarify nutrition information. I don't agree with those remarks, but I am more concerned with the provision of micromanaging the way that bills this Congress have already passed are implemented.

I am worried this bill would make the provision of nutrition information more confusing for several reasons. In fact, I think that is part of the nefarious goal of this bill.

Where are caloric counts supposed to be displayed? This bill would allow the restaurant or retail establishment to publish this information on one menu board, and not necessarily at the point of sale. So instead of on the menu at the point of sale, they can stick it in the bathroom. They can stick it in the bathroom. If you don't go to the bathroom, you won't see how many calories are in your burger. That is what they could do under this rule. Who the heck wants that?

As Mr. PALLONE pointed out yesterday, H.R. 2017 allows retailers to publish nutrition information in the format that receives the majority of their customers, whether it was in person or online.

□ 1300

Just because I order food delivered to my home, I might not get to know how many calories are in my family's dinner. Or conversely, if other people order delivery and I go into a restaurant, I might not get to know how many calories are in a meal that I am feeding my family.

I don't see why we don't just publish the information in the store, on takeout menus, and online. They have it, they know it, print it. It is easy. Do it. People want to see it. It is transparency. It is like letting prepackaged goods put their label on the inside of the package where nobody can see it rather than the outside. Or people buy things, if you buy your packaged goods online—and some people do—saying: Oh, it is on the Web site, so it doesn't need to be on the label. If you go in the store, you don't get to know what is in this product.

The businesses that are required to implement these regulations aren't even corner delis or mom and pop shops. This isn't about them. This is about restaurants with more than 20 locations. The FDA has exempted any business smaller than that.

In fact, the rulemaking has many exceptions already, including exemptions for specialty items, for temporary menus, for custom orders, and for daily specials. All exempt. They had a thoughtful process. They talked to restaurant owners. I haven't heard any complaints from my district about it, and people generally support the overall direction of transparency.

I am especially concerned with how this bill would eliminate mechanisms for enforcement by removing a provision requiring businesses to provide documentation of compliance. It means that it would be essentially impossible for businesses to be accountable for whether they are even complying with regulations. It would make these regulations in paper only, in name only. There would be no meaningful enforcement mechanism. If this bill were to become law, which it won't, it would effectively gut those transparency requirements.

The bill also prohibits civil lawsuits against businesses that attempt to deceive customers or circumvent the labeling process. If companies are willingly lying about what is in their products, in the calories and the nutritional content, of course, they should be liable for that—of course.

Should a company intentionally mislead with confusing labels, customers need a way to fight back. Instead, this bill calls for complete indemnity, and makes any labeling initiative meaningless because there is simply no reason to comply.

This bill allows restaurants to essentially invent their own nutritional information by using deceptive serving sizes and hide that information in bathrooms or on walls where consumers won't even see it, and not put it online or only put it online and not at the restaurant.

At the same time, if somehow customers are able to discern that an establishment is lying, it strips away the enforcement mechanism and civil liability from that.

What a colossal waste of time for the United States Congress to descend to the level of whether calories should be displayed in bathrooms, or on walls, or on menus in restaurants with more than 20 chains, when this Nation is in crisis and needs a responsible Congress to balance the budget and needs a responsible Congress to secure our borders and replace our broken immigration system with one that works.

It needs a responsible Congress to ensure the safety and security of the American people, it needs a responsible Congress to find a sustainable way to invest in infrastructure and growth, and it does not need a Congress to micromanage the font size of menus.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER), a member of the Education and the Workforce Committee.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this is just another example of excessive burdens placed on small businesses from Federal regulations.

The proposed menu labeling requirements by the FDA, which come from a provision of ObamaCare, will require restaurants, grocery stores, gas stations, and even movie theaters and miniature golf courses to list the number of calories in food and drinks they sell.

Thousands of small businesses will have to absorb the cost of providing new menu displays and calorie information. As a former small business owner, I can tell you this is money small businesses cannot afford.

Ultimately, the group that will pay the price for these new regulations is the American consumer through increased food and drink costs at their local restaurants and grocery stores.

Several large chain stores have welcomed these new regulations. I wonder why. They know that their small business competitors can't afford to purchase new menus and signs, placing them at a disadvantage to the larger chain companies.

I find it ironic that this administration that champions itself a small business advocate, continues to place additional burdens on small businesses at the advantage of larger corporations.

H.R. 2017, the Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act of 2015 remedies this glaring conflict and removes the unnecessary and expensive red tape so small business owners can continue to compete and grow our economy.

I encourage my colleagues to support small businesses by supporting this legislation.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes.

First of all, none of what we are even talking about applies to small businesses.

I have friends that own restaurants in Colorado in Boulder and Fort Collins. I have a friend that has three restaurants and another one has one restaurant. I actually used to own a part of a restaurant. I don't recommend that business to anybody. It is a tough business. This bill doesn't apply to any of those people. We are talking about businesses with over 20 restaurants. We are talking about the big guys.

I think that is why, for instance, the National Restaurant Association isn't even in favor of this bill. They represent many of the restaurants that feel that this is a step forward. They want their customers to know what is in their food because, guess what, when you know what is in your food, you are more likely to dine out.

The fact that restaurants have surpassed grocery stores for meals just shows the importance of restaurants to the American people. People want to know what is in their food. This bill would impede that. It is Congress micromanaging the fine print of a thoroughly vetted and negotiated rulemaking process that has already been delayed 2 years—it is Congress delaying it another 2 years—saying somehow this issue of exactly where in restaurants it displays the calories is so important that President Obama can't be trusted with it, we have to trust President Trump or President Clinton or President Sanders. That is what this body is effectively saying. It is a colossal waste of this body's time. It is time for Congress to focus on issues that matter to the American people.

That is what I hear about. I think it is what my colleagues hear about when we have townhalls when we are out and about in our districts. I haven't heard a single constituent—we are not even talking one—who said that they want the number of calories on the menu items to be harder to see or posted in less places at restaurants—zero. I have heard from literally zero constituents that they want this.

I have heard from several that they like knowing what is in their food. I think that most constituents—who I haven't heard from at all on this issue—are just utterly dismayed that Congress is spending a day and a half even debating this. How bizarre this is when there are real life bread and butter issues that they face—putting food on their table, paying their rent, paying their college loans, replacing their car that burnt out, making sure they don't lose their job, and having to work a second job to make ends meet and make their mortgage. That is what people are facing out there.

The fact that what this Congress is debating is so far removed from that dinner table talk at a family's house is why this Congress has such a dismal approval rating, which will continue to get worse as long as we debate these kinds of bills.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ALLEN), a valuable member of the House Agriculture Committee.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman, and I appreciate this time.

Yes, this country does have major problems, and certainly regulation is one of them. In fact, I just spent over an hour and a half of my time talking with the administrator of the EPA about the economic impact of that agency.

This is just another example of this government reaching out to require businesses to do things that, frankly, cost money and cost the economy. Every American deserves the opportunity at a good job, and we must grow this economy. That is why I am speaking today in support of H.R. 2017, the Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act.

This bill protects American small businesses from unnecessary costs and regulations, which, again, is the big problem we have with growing the economy. Mainly those in the restaurant and food industries are affected by this, establishing one-size-fits-all nutritional disclosure requirements.

As a small business owner for over 40 years, I know just how daunting new regulations are. New regulations mean more money spent and countless hours of compliance.

It is estimated that if this regulation is implemented, it could cost American businesses $1 billion to comply and 500,000 hours of paper. This is a serious issue. American small businesses do not have that kind of time, nor do they have that kind of money.

During a time of slow economic growth, we should not make it harder for Americans to start and stay in business. As we have seen in just about every industry, one-size-fits-all approaches do not work.

I am proud to cosponsor this bill, and encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 2017. This bill is common sense. It is in the name.

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

Mr. Speaker, instead of trying to water down transparency and preventive health measures, we should be focusing on what we can actively do to make this country healthier, happier, and safer, like investing in child nutrition, an issue that has broad bipartisan support. In fact, just a couple of weeks ago, the Senate Agriculture Committee passed a bipartisan rewrite of the Child Nutrition Act, and there is widespread support for reauthorizing key child nutrition policies, like the Summer Food Service Program, which really helps some of our most at-risk families ensure that kids are at school ready to learn because they have had their nutritional needs met.

By some estimates, as few as 18 percent of students who are eligible for free and reduced lunch during the school year also receive a summer meal. We can do better. The time of year should never dictate whether or not a child goes hungry in this country.

A bipartisan group of Senators agree, and they have offered an innovative solution to the issue in the bipartisan Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act. The House and our Education and the Workforce Committee should focus on issues like summer meals, which actually make a difference for families, rather than trying to prevent calorie information from being displayed large enough or in the right place where people can actually see it. God forbid.

We also should be focusing on policies like the Farm to School Program, which provide support for our local farmers and at the same time give kids the healthy meals that they need.

Educating our next generation about eating well while simultaneously introducing them to the values of farmers and growing food in our culture and on our land is a double win.

It would be great if Congress could roll up our sleeves and get to work on issues that the American people care about, rather than debating how to hide calorie information from consumers. We should be discussing how to make better nutritional information available to more people, how to feed

more kids that go hungry, how to improve our public health, and, of course, the big issues that we actually hear about, securing our borders, making sure the American people are safe and secure, investing in infrastructure, and growing our economy. That is what this body should be focused on.

I was told by my staff person that zero constituents of mine have called or written in asking me to support this bill. Three have written in opposed to this bill. The rest of them—792,000 of them—don't think we should be debating this bill. They haven't opined on it, and they continue to grow disillusioned with a Congress that is debating for a day and a half how to best hide nutritional information from them rather than improve the quality of schools, make college more affordable, make sure that they can afford their mortgage, and do something about the fact that it is getting harder and harder to get by in our country every day.

Mr. Speaker, national standards are important. They create something that consumers can recognize and can understand. Nutritional labeling standards on menus promote consistency and increased transparency. Standards make compliance easier and less costly. By engaging stakeholders in dialogue, the FDA has tried to accommodate retailers that will be affected by this bill, and worked to put this feedback into the final bill.

□ 1315

Sadly, Members of this body have responded, instead, by preemptively introducing legislation that would not only weaken the guidelines but would delay them for 2 additional years on top of the 2 years that they have already been delayed. This bill would create more confusion than it addresses. It undermines the effectiveness of the regulation by limiting a consumer's recourse for action in civil court, and it does not make consumers and the American people any healthier.

For all of these reasons and more, prominent healthcare groups across the spectrum oppose this legislation, including the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association, the Association of State Public Health Nutritionists, the American Public Health Association, the National Physicians Alliance, the Public Health Institute, doctors, and public health advocates.

I urge my colleagues to oppose H.R. 2017 as well. Menu labeling provides the necessary information to make healthy choices when eating out. Easy access to accurate information about the foods we eat serves our Nation's public health.

By rejecting this rule, Congress will be sending the message to the rank and file on both sides of the aisle, who, hopefully, will join me in opposing this rule and in bringing this down, that Congress should have priorities that the American people have in that we need to get Congress to work on dealing with the bread-and-butter issues that concern American families every day of the week, every hour of the day.

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up a bill to help prevent mass shootings by promoting research into the causes of gun violence, making it easier to identify and treat those most prone to committing heinous acts.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PAULSEN). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to bring down this rule and restore the faith of the American people and this institution and defeat the previous question. Vote ''no'' on the rule.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The simple truth is the faith of the American people does not hinge upon the fact that we will jail a chef for an inadvertent mistake made at a pizza restaurant.

Let me take just a few minutes to recap some of the history of the Affordable Care Act and, perhaps, a lesson in civics at the same time.

I am just a simple country doctor. My understanding of how a bill became law was, perhaps, relegated to the video ''Schoolhouse Rock!'' that I saw many years ago as a child with how a bill becomes law: You are just a bill on Capitol Hill. You go to committee. You get out of committee. You come to the floor. You go to the Senate. You go to a conference committee. You come back. You get voted on, and you are on your way. But, as Paul Harvey said, then there is ''the rest of the story.''

So let's examine the process for a moment.

We have the Affordable Care Act. Here is a bill that was sort of bumped around on Capitol Hill for a little over a year's time. Finally, it did get passed into law. We had a section in the Affordable Care Act, section 4205. Now, Mr. Speaker, I do not recall which special interest wanted section 4205 placed into the Affordable Care Act. I feel fairly certain that there was a special interest that did want this language in the bill, because the entirety of the Affordable Care Act was, essentially, written by one special interest or another. Yet here is a section that was in the Affordable Care Act, that was duly voted on by the House and the Senate, and that passed in March of 2010. I voted ''no''—let me be very clear on that—as did every Republican who was in the House of Representatives at the time.

Section 4205 is not a terribly long section, and it is not terribly difficult to read. Section 4205 goes on for, perhaps, four pages, and it talks about nutritional labeling. Nutritional labeling, in and of itself, is not a bad thing; but because of the way the law is written, after its passage, it was then handed off to a Federal agency—a Federal agency that is composed not of elected Members of Congress, not of anyone who is directly accountable to any single American constituent anywhere, but the Federal agency sits down and goes about the work of interpreting what Congress intended when it passed the law and how we are going to make this work in and amongst all of the other Federal rulings and regulations that are out there.

The Food and Drug Administration sat down to go about the task of writing the rules and regulations that would govern this one section of the Affordable Care Act—this four-page section in the Affordable Care Act. They, indeed, published their work in the Federal Register on Monday, December 1, 2014. Since we are talking about font size anyway, it is 100 pages of very small font writing, three columns per page; so there is a lot of stuff here—it is pretty dense.

You have heard me mention that I am concerned about the fact that a hidden, inadvertent addition of a single slice of pepperoni on a pizza could send someone to jail for a year. That, actually, is not covered in the remarks in the Federal Register; so let me save people some time if they want to read about where the penalties arise. The penalties arise because, as a consequence of the language in the Federal Register, a law known as the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, is amended as a result of this work.

The Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, section 403, reads:

> A food shall be deemed to be misbranded if its labeling is false or misleading in any particular.

That is pretty broad.

Now, if the food is misbranded, that then invokes a second part under the ''prohibited acts'' in the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act.

Under section 331:

> The following acts and the causing thereof are prohibitive: the introduction or delivery for introduction into interstate commerce of any food, drug, device, tobacco product, or cosmetic that is adulterated or misbranded.

We go back to the word ''misbranded.''

> A food shall be deemed to be misbranded if its labeling is false or misleading in any particular.

Now we come to a food that has been misbranded and the penalty for such an act when we get to the section of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, section 303, under Penalties:

> (a) Violation of section 331 of this title:
> Any person who violates a provision of section 331 of this title shall be imprisoned for not more than 1 year or fined not more than $1,000 or both.

Therein, Mr. Speaker, is the problem with the Affordable Care Act, as written and then interpreted and as it applies to existing law in the United States Code.

I would think that menu labeling, as a matter of course, is a marketing aspect. If you know that your restaurant is putting out food labeling that is accurate and upon which you can depend, great, as I may be more likely to go to such a facility; but, there, it is a voluntary choice. It goes from voluntary to compulsory under the language of the Affordable Care Act. Therein is the problem. That is the problem that Representative MCMORRIS RODGERS sought to correct of the inadvertent addition of a single food item in food that is prepared in a restaurant that has more than 20 facilities.

Think of a name brand pizza place. You may have a local franchise in your town. If you go there on a Friday night and if the calorie count is not identical to what has been posted on the menu board and someone checks, that chef could be imprisoned for a year. That is the reason that, indeed, constituents have written and that restaurant owners have written. They asked Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, and she responded to their requests, and that is why we have a bill in front of us today.

The rule that is under consideration right now provides for the consideration of an important fix to a harmfully crafted law and to a poorly written regulation.

I applaud my fellow Energy and Commerce Committee member CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS for her work and for doing all she could to bring all stakeholders together to craft a workable compromise.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on the rule and ''yes'' on the underlying bill.

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

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 611 OFFERED BY MR. POLIS OF COLORADO

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

SEC. 5. 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. 6. 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. BURGESS. 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. POLIS. 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 question will be postponed.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate agrees to the report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 644) ''An Act to reauthorize trade facilitation and trade enforcement functions and activities, and for other purposes.''.

DEBT MANAGEMENT AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT OF 2015

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BRADY 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 insert extraneous material on H.R. 3442, the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act.

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. 3442.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BYRNE) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1326

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. 3442) to provide further means of accountability of the United States debt and promote fiscal responsibility, with Mr. BYRNE 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.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

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

I am pleased to speak in support of H.R. 3442, the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act. I would also like to thank Mr. MARCHANT of Texas for his leadership on this legislation.

H.R. 3442 was considered by the Committee on Ways and Means in September of 2015, and it was passed with strong support. It is also highly relevant.

I have just come from our second hearing on the 2017 budget. Anything we can do to add clarity and stability to our budget and debt process is extremely helpful. The amount of debt this country currently owes is staggering—$19 trillion and growing. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the debt will reach $29 trillion in 2026.

Let's be clear about why this is happening. It is not because Americans aren't taxed enough; it is because Washington has a spending problem. As we look to the future, revenues will remain half a percentage point above their historical average as a share of the economy. Meanwhile, spending will rise from 21 percent of the share of the economy today to 23 percent in 2026, both of which are far above the historical average of 19.9 percent.

When Republicans took the House in 2010, this government borrowed 40 cents for every dollar it spent, and, today, it is 14 cents; but that is not good enough, because, under the current law baseline, it will go up to 21 cents per dollar in 2026. At this rate, if left unchecked, deficits will rise from over $500 billion this year to nearly $1.4 trillion in 2026. Congress needs to address this and consider real solutions to lowering the debt and bringing sustainability to our Federal Government. We can't do that if we don't have a debt management system that is consistent, transparent, and accountable.

The Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act would create a system that allows Congress to make informed decisions about the debt ceiling and consider changes before it becomes a crisis.

This bill would require the Secretary of the Treasury to report to Congress before the statutory debt limit ceiling is hit so that legislators have the information they need when considering the debt limit. That reporting would include the current State of the national debt as well as future debt projections and the administration's plans to meet future obligations.

The Secretary would also report proposals of the President's on how to reduce the debt in the short, medium, and long term and any proposals to improve the debt-to-GDP ratio.

Finally, the administration would have to submit a progress report if it requests multiple debt limit increases so that Congress and the American people can finally get information about the progress that is being made.

□ 1330

This legislation will also make the Secretary's reports available online so everyone in America can access this important information.

We are at a time when serious decisions must be made about how to grow the economy and stop the increase in the national debt. We can't do that if we don't have the necessary information. So this means that we need to be on the same page about the drivers of our debt and to have an open discussion about our intention to reduce the debt.

This bill would take a process that has become, I think, chaotic and difficult for everyone and instead create a system—a good, smart, open system—that provides a consistent framework.

As others have said, the national debt is a shared responsibility, and we need to focus on ways to address it and move forward sensibly. The current path we are on just isn't sustainable. It will require all of us, both in the legislative and executive branch, to work together to find solutions.

The Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act is an important step in improving this process. It not only provides clarity and transparency, but it also creates accountability and establishes a framework to discuss options and ideas on how to reduce this national debt.

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

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The chairman said this bill came out with strong support and it is relevant. Now, the vote in the committee—this was many, many months ago—was strictly partisan, and this bill is really a diversion. It was marked up at the same time as that Pay China First Act. Does anybody remember that irresponsible legislation that came to the floor that was passed by the Republicans and died the death legislatively it deserved?

So here we are with this bill, part of a two-package bill, that also is going nowhere. It is worse than that, because it is really a diversion, a diversion from what we really should be talking about. It requires the Treasury Department to provide to Congress information on the debt limit that we already receive, distracting from Republicans' repeated recklessness about default and reinforcing the false belief that the debt limit is a tool for managing the debt.

House Republicans refused to invite OMB Director Shaun Donovan to Capitol Hill this week to testify on the President's budget—an unprecedented action. We asked this morning in the Ways and Means Committee: Why did neither the House nor the Senate controlled by Republicans invite the OMB Director? Well, the chairman of the Budget Committee was there at the time and said something like: We don't have time.

That is really shameful. We are debating this bill together, which would require the Treasury Secretary to provide a report and come testify before Congress on the very debt reduction proposals they are refusing to hear about now, including from the Budget Director. If nothing else, Republicans are proving they are consistent with their inconsistency.

If we were to request from Treasury a new report related to the debt limit, it should focus on the dire consequences of default. It should provide detailed information on the veterans who would not get the benefits they earned. It should tell how many doctors and hospitals who treat Medicare patients won't be paid for care they already provided. It should enumerate the Pell grants we will not pay to students who rely on them to pay for college. And it should explain and enumerate the catastrophic consequences of default to our economy.

That is the kind of information Congress might need the next time we debate the debt limit if Republicans once again propose default instead of responsible action. Instead, Republicans are insisting on a report that would distract from the danger of default and do nothing to help reduce the debt.

If the real goal is debt reduction, as I said, Republicans should welcome OMB Director Donovan to explain the administration's ideas, and then they should sit down with Democrats and take bipartisan action now, as we did during the Clinton administration, when bipartisan legislation generated record budget surpluses.

So the Republicans, I guess, are trying to divert the focus from their inability to take action to reduce the deficit and instead blame Treasury and the administration.

The administration has issued a Statement of Administration Policy. They indicate, if the President were presented with H.R. 3442, his advisers would recommend he veto this bill.

Let me close by just saying how unfortunate it is to bring up this effort to obscure the problem instead of acting on legislation that is so badly needed, including addressing inversions that are going on one after another in this country. This, I think, demonstrates the total failure of Republicans to face up to what we are now facing. We should be acting on that instead of this bill.

Well, this is going to have the same fate as the Pay China First Act, such a terrible mistake it was. It is going nowhere. It will be strictly partisan.

So I say to the Republicans in this House, you talk about common ground; instead you bring forth something that essentially is a sham, and you can't stand together on what is essentially a sham.

Mr. PASCRELL, a distinguished member of our committee, at this point will control the remainder of the time on our side.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. COLLINS of New York). The gentleman from New Jersey is recognized.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, I thank the ranking member and the

chairman and, of course, my good friend from Texas (Mr. MARCHANT).

I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This week, the President sent his fiscal year 2017 budget to Congress and released it to the American people. His budget included numerous proposals to reduce the deficit by $2.9 trillion and grow our economy. In fact, under President Obama's leadership, we have seen deficits shrink to stark lows, the smallest it has been in 7 years.

However, the chairman of the House Budget Committee has refused to hold a hearing on the President's budget with the Office of Management and Budget. This is the first time in 40 years that the President's budget will not be granted a hearing. We separate the powers, but we never separate respect.

Ignoring the fact that the President just sent deficit reduction proposals to Congress, rebuffing the OMB Director's request to testify, the House has instead gone to consider legislation that requires the administration to submit deficit reduction proposals and come and testify about the debt limit and the deficit. Something doesn't quite add up here.

I have tremendous respect for the sponsor of this bill. I think he is acting in good faith—I think it is logical, but I don't think it is true; not everything logical is true, you know—the author of the bill and my colleague on the Ways and Means Committee. But I believe this legislation misses the forest for the trees.

When nearing the debt limit, the most important thing for Congress to know is the catastrophic consequences of a default, yet this bill makes no mention of such a report. Instead, the legislation before us today asks the Treasury Department to report to Congress on things that Congress is most equipped to know. So they are asking us to hear what we already should know.

The drivers and composition of future debt—that is us—and how the United States will meet its debt obligations, that is what is important to us and that is what is important to the American people.

Just a reminder of our constitutional roles: the Congress has the responsibility to enact spending and revenue measures; the Treasury Department, part of the executive branch, executes the laws that we enact—not vice versa. They can't spend money that we haven't authorized.

This bill would create new statutory requirements for the Treasury Department that are unnecessary and duplicative. The Secretary of the Treasury regularly corresponds with the Budget Committee about the debt limit and provides regular updates about the status of our ability to meet our debt obligations.

If I might add just at this point, we know what the Constitution says about the debt limit. The 14th Amendment is very clear, section 4:

''The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law, including debts incurred for payment of pensions . . . shall not be questioned.''

That is what the Constitution—you know, we refer to the ''we,'' constitutionalists, only when it suits our purpose and supports our arguments. I think we should look at the Constitution as a document which affects everybody at any time in any place within our borders.

Now, the Treasury provides us with the following: the budget, the Mid-Session Review—in fact, it is online; the Daily Treasury Statement, online; the Monthly Treasury Statement, online; the Monthly Statement of the Public Debt, online; the Schedule of Federal Debt and the Financial Report of the United States Government—all of which, I am saying again, are available on the Internet.

At the time this legislation was brought before the Ways and Means Committee in September of 2015, Republicans were considering a default on the full faith and credit of the United States. A default would have catastrophic consequences, including a collapse of world credit markets and a destruction of job markets.

Should Congress fail to raise the debt limit, the Treasury will not be able to pay veterans' benefits, pay doctors, pay hospitals, take care of Medicare patients, pay salaries to our troops or Pell grants to students who need them. These are expenditures that have already been authorized by the Congress, but if we don't act on the debt limit, we simply can't pay them. We can't.

Fortunately, we were able to come together. We worked together, believe it or not. We suspended the debt limit through March of 2017. The report triggered by this bill, H.R. 3442, will be wholly duplicative of information Congress has already received from the Treasury Department, the Office of Management and Budget. So much for government efficiency.

Well, I believe, my good friend from Texas, what we can and should do is come together in a bipartisan manner on a budget—what we can and we should do. But I believe that we will instead see a deeply partisan and ideological budget for my good friends on the other side that has no chance of garnering any Democratic support. I hope that is not the motivation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

I would like to thank the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee for his consideration and his speaking on the bill today and commend my colleague from New Jersey. We had a very lively discussion about this bill in the Rules Committee. Over the years, my colleague and I have been able to disagree very agreeably, and I trust that today will continue in that spirit.

□ 1345

Mr. Chairman, I introduced the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act because Congress and the administration need to focus on finding debt reduction solutions.

There is rarely a time that I appear in my district at a townhall meeting or even a gathering of just a few people where the subject of the debt of the United States of America is not the focal point of the discussion. I never go through a public meeting where someone doesn't raise their hand and say: What is Congress doing about the national debt?

When we began to contemplate this bill a couple years ago, we began to think about how we could put into law a process where Congress would not solve the debt problem, but we would begin a process where the committees of jurisdiction would have a full report from the Treasury and the Secretary of the Treasury about where we were with the debt and the plans of the administration and what they would do to reduce that debt.

When this bill was passed out of the Committee on Ways and Means in September, the national debt was $18.1 trillion. Now it is over $19 trillion. Debt held by the public is now roughly 74 percent of the economy's annual output. It is also a higher percentage than at any point in American history except for a very brief period around World War II. If current law remains unchanged, the Congressional Budget Office predicts that Federal debt held by the public will exceed 100 percent of GDP in 25 years. This is unsustainable.

Everyone knows that the national debt is increasing, but the existing strategy for dealing with the debt limit only fuels conflict and fiscal irresponsibility. This creates disruption and uncertainty, and it erodes the confidence in the American leadership and economy.

Five times in the last 5 years, the Treasury Department has had to employ extraordinary measures to avoid reaching the debt limit. These maneuvers are supposed to be a last resort. They were only employed six other times between the 1980s and 2011. Extraordinary measures have become the new normal, just like record levels of debt.

The goal of H.R. 3442 is to establish a new debt limit process that is more transparent, accountable, and timely. This legislation would allow Congress and the American people to take an early and accurate look at the debt and the statutory debt limit before it is reached, not after the press release that it has been reached is released.

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

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the distinguished minority whip.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Chair, the gentleman from Texas says he gets asked all the time about the national debt.

He can give a very simple answer—because the Congress keeps spending money and not paying for it. That is how you incur debt; you buy things and you don't pay for them. They can be all sorts of things. They can be Social Security, they can be Medicare, they can be battleships, they can be health care, they can be roads, they can be bridges. If you don't pay for them—it shouldn't be any surprise—you incur debt.

Who spends money in the United States of America? The Congress. Under the Constitution, we are the ones who spend money. I say to my friend from Texas, he might also say, Well, when you create $800 billion-plus of new debt by cutting taxes and not paying for them, you have less revenue, but you don't cut buying stuff, you have more debt. $800-plus billion in December. I didn't vote for that bill because we didn't pay for it.

Now, I have been in office a long time. It is easy and takes no courage to cut taxes, no courage whatsoever. What takes courage is buying things—and if people want them—saying, we need to pay for them. We need to pay for them so our children don't pay for them, so our grandchildren don't pay for them because, guess what, they are going to have their challenges in their time, national security challenges, natural disasters like Katrina or Sandy challenges, Ebola, AIDS, health crises. They are going to have to have resources, and we are spending them.

I have been here sometime, longer I think than the gentleman from Texas, longer than my friend from New Jersey. There is one person in America who can stop spending in its tracks. I have been here 36 years. No President in the 36 years that I have served has had a veto overridden of a bill that spent too much money. Not one. Not one Republican President, not one Democratic President. So a President can stop spending in its tracks.

Under Ronald Reagan, we increased the national debt 189 percent. It was less than a trillion dollars when I came to the Congress of the United States. It was increased under Ronald Reagan 189 percent, the largest of any President.

Under George Bush, in 4 years, it was increased 55 percent; under Bill Clinton, in 8 years, 36 percent. But guess what, during the last 4 years, we had a balanced budget, the only time in the lifetime of anybody in this body that we have had 4 years of balanced budgets.

Now, my Republican friends will say, well, we were in charge of the Congress. For the last 6 years you were. But you were in charge of the House, the Senate, and the Presidency under George W. Bush, and the budget deficit was increased 87 percent.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. PASCRELL. I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Chair, the President says he is going to veto this bill, but the irony is—and the chairman sits on the floor—the Director of the Office of Management and Budget has submitted a budget on behalf of the administration to respond exactly to the questions that this bill wants to ask.

For the first time in 41 years, the administration has been refused the opportunity to testify, which The Washington Post called, gratuitously, contemptuous. And then my friends have the audacity to bring a bill on the floor in the same week and ask the Secretary of the Treasury to come down and testify, talk about the debt when we know darn well why the debt is what it is.

It is our responsibility, because we incur it, to make sure that we pay our debt. That is our moral responsibility, as well as our constitutional responsibility. This is politics at its most contemptuous level. It is to pretend that somehow the President is responsible.

My friends, we ought to reject this bill not because of the bill itself, but we get this information, as has been so often said. We already get this information. You don't need the Secretary of the Treasury to come down here and give it to us. He testifies before the Committee on Ways and Means; he testifies before other committees.

Let's reject this bill because it is phony, not because substantively we don't need this information. We have it. It is redundant. It does what my friends on the Republican side so often say, we ought to not have redundant things.

Mr. Chair, I appreciate the fact that my time has expired. This bill ought to expire with it.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK), who serves on the Committee on Ways and Means and the Committee on the Budget.

Mrs. BLACK. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chair, our Nation is $19 trillion in debt. That is more than $58,000 for every man, woman, and child. Now, Tennesseeans know that mounting debt burden in Washington is not just an economic concern.

This is a national security issue and it is a moral issue, one that the President is willfully choosing to ignore. His latest budget would cause our debt to spike to more than $27 trillion over the next 10 years, and when the government maxes out its credit cards to pay for this runaway spending, the Obama administration routinely insists on a so-called clean debt limit hike, a blank check with no strings attached.

Mr. Chair, our constituents deserve better than that. They expect the Congress would assert its role as a coequal branch of government and leverage these opportunities to demand real cuts and to engage the administration in an honest conversation about Washington's spending addiction.

And that is why I support the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act. This commonsense piece of legislation would require that the administration come to here—yes, the people's House—before any potential debt limit increase and testify about the drivers of our debt and a plan to fix it. The Treasury Department would then be required to post this information on their Web site so that the American people can see the facts for themselves. After all, it is their money that we are spending.

Mr. Chair, this is about injecting some basic accountability into a budgeting process. Taxpayers and the next generation of Americans who will inherit this debt burden that we are accumulating today are owed at least that much.

I urge a ''yes'' vote on the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act.

Mr. PASCRELL. How much time is remaining, Mr. Chair?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey has 15 minutes remaining.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chair, I just want to remind the young lady from the other side of the aisle, my good friend, that everything she has asked for is pertinent and important, but it is already on the Internet.

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT), a distinguished member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. DOGGETT. Amnesia. Amnesia, Mr. Chair, once again pervades this Republican Conference. Where were these great deficit hawks 2 months ago when they had an opportunity to vote on increasing the national debt? They were there raising their hand ''aye'' in favor of hiking the national debt. Today, they come forward with the audacity to say let's solve the runaway national debt problem; we want another government report to do it.

Yes, at Christmastime, these deficit hawks went on a spending spree right here in this House. Not a spending spree to provide more educational opportunity for our children, not a spending spree to provide more medical research dollars for our scientists and physicians, not a spending spree to do something about our crumbling roads or to build a competitive infrastructure, but a spending spree with tax expenditures from the Tax Code to stuff every silk stocking they could find. Anyone who had a powerful lobby, they were here to get an expanded or extended tax cut.

Here is what was said 2 months ago, and I quote:

''Budgeting in this country has pretty much become a joke. Members of Congress give heartfelt speeches''—the same kind we are hearing today—''about being responsible. . . . And then time and time again, they cast votes that add billions and even trillions of dollars to the debt. The rampant hypocrisy is quite galling.''

''How can lawmakers claim that their budget will achieve balance when they just passed a deficit-financed tax deal that blows a big hole in the budget?''

Those weren't the words of a Democrat. Those weren't the words of a progressive institution. They were the words of Maya MacGuineas, the president of the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, a bipartisan organization. On their board is Mitch Daniels, Alan Simpson, and a host of Republicans.

That final bill that they voted for 2 months ago added $830 billion to the national debt over the next 10 years, as they borrowed money from abroad to give it to Wall Street and other special interests. It will cost us about $2 trillion over the next two decades.

One of the biggest items in that budget was a giveaway to Wall Street banks, the same Wall Street banks that helped bring this country to its knees in the economic crisis. Yet they came in and they got a tax break in order to encourage shipping more jobs overseas, which is what that particular tax break does.

They come back to us today, having added to the debt so much. Never seeing a tax break for a special interest that they didn't like—to borrow from Will Rogers—they come to us today and say give us a report, give us another speech.

When we had the Treasury Secretary in front of our committee all morning, our Republican chairman was candid. He was cordial, but he was candid in saying that everything that the Treasury Secretary was offering was dead on arrival, would never see the light of day.

This is a wasted endeavor that ought to be rejected.

□ 1400

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM), the chairman of the Oversight Subcommittee of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Chairman, Mr. MARCHANT has gotten people's attention this afternoon. I am really surprised at how lively and engaged our friends are on the other side of the aisle.

So, it begs the question: What is so provocative about this bill? What is so provocative and incendiary? Apparently, having the administration come with a plan, as it relates to the debt, is a provocation.

I don't think our friends on the other side of the aisle have to take the bait. In fact, the ranking member said it came out with only Republican votes. If I were a Democrat, I wouldn't admit that it only came out with Republican votes. I would be trying to claim credit for this.

Why? Because I come from the State of Illinois. Mr. Chairman, let me tell you what happens when you avoid problems. The State of Illinois has avoided problems year after year after year. My home State now has a $100 billion unfunded pension liability. That is a fact. Illinois has a crisis.

What Mr. MARCHANT is proposing is very simple and very clear. If this is provocative, I don't know how to deal with it. It requires the administration to lay out a proposal to reduce the debt in the short term: 1 to 2 years.

The criticism of the administration's current budget is that it never balances. Ever. Think about that. Hello. Never. There is never a balance.

So, what he is saying is they have got to come in and show how they are going to deal with this. Short-term, medium-term, understanding its relationship debt to GDP; all of these things are so important.

We are told: Hey, go to the Internet. That is where your information is. No; what we need is for the administration to understand the information on the Internet—if that is where it is—and come in and present it in a cogent and clear way.

Yes, Congress has the primary responsibility. Yes, the House Republicans have articulated a view that says we can balance this, we can deal with these programs, and we can deal with these cost drivers. We have been met time again by a stiff arm from the President of the United States, who has now redefined the concept of balance. Balance used to mean one plus one equals two. Now the administration says that balance is—what was their latest vernacular—long-term fiscal sustainability. That is ridiculous.

Representative MARCHANT needs to be congratulated. This is a great idea. We ought to be celebrating this. If I were a Democrat, I wouldn't admit to voting against it.

I urge passage of the bill.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I just heard something from my good friend from Illinois that bears repeating, which is to have the administration come and testify on their deficit plan.

The President's budget includes $2.9 trillion in deficit reduction. You have refused a visit from the administration to discuss it. How is that for provocation?

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. TOM PRICE), chairman of the Budget Committee.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I thank Mr. MARCHANT, my good friend, for introducing this legislation.

Before I address the legislation, I want to talk very briefly about the President's budget.

The President has, indeed, introduced a budget. It raises over $3 trillion over a 10-year period of time. It increases spending. It increases the interest payments on the debt so that they approach $1 trillion at the end of 10 years.

We thought it was appropriate to save the President the embarrassment of bringing him before our committee, because when you put that budget on the floor, which we have done in the past, the President gets two votes from his own party. Just two. So we thought it was appropriate to save the President that embarrassment.

I want to commend my friend, Mr. MARCHANT from Texas, for introducing this legislation, H.R. 3442, today. This is really a simple and straightforward piece of legislation. The bill enhances accountability, reduces potentially disruptive risks to our economy, and would help Congress reach real debt reduction solutions that the American people so clearly desire and deserve.

Under this act, as we approach any debt limit, the administration would have to appear before Congress and provide testimony on what is driving that national debt so that we know that they actually appreciate the drivers of that debt; relate a clear, unambiguous series of proposals on deficit and debt reduction, which they don't do—by the way, the President's budget never balances—and update Congress on progress being made toward debt reduction, which is a principle that we believe and the American people believe is important, but, apparently, this administration does not.

As Budget chairman, I can tell you there is nothing more troubling than the ever-increasing spending that happens around here, especially in the automatic programs. That is why I am heartened that this bill would require the administration to project the fiscal health and the long-term sustainability of major programs like Medicare and Social Security, that, by the way, are going broke unless something is done.

This bill will help further educate the American people on the dire need to save and strengthen and secure these programs. Our budget—the proposal that we put forward—has proposed positive solutions. We need the administration to be a cooperative partner in getting solutions enacted. Forcing them to confront these challenges will be helpful. This bill will do that.

It is pretty simple, Mr. Chairman. House Republicans have been proposing action our Nation needs to take in order to get spending under control and reduce our debt. It seems only fitting and proper that the administration should have to do the same. That is why I am urging a ''yes'' vote on this bill.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I just heard something very interesting. When I hear things interesting, I like to repeat them.

So, we are going to save the President the embarrassment. The ranking member, SANDY LEVIN, mentioned that. He said today that is less than a lame excuse: to save the President embarrassment.

You should be embarrassed balancing the budget on the money from the Affordable Care Act, which you have recommended we destroy. How is that for embarrassment?

I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY), a distinguished member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chairman, the issue of the Nation's deficit is a real concern, but let's be honest: the issue of the country's deficits are of greater concern to our constituents at home than they appear to be to many people in this Chamber.

Our constituents understand and support some government spending is necessary to keep our country going strong. Our constituents understand that some debt is needed. Like government, they incur debts, too: a mortgage, a car loan, a student loan, credit card debt, a small business loan. They also get alarmed when they see deficits that are too high.

So, that is why it is the job of Congress and the President to develop a budget and raise and spend the necessary revenue to operate the government while also meeting the demands of our constituents.

This week, President Obama submitted his budget plan to the Congress for review. Within that budget is a plan to sensibly cut the Nation's deficit by $2.9 trillion.

I think there are some good ideas in the budget. Maybe others disagree. But Congress should at least discuss it. Yet, earlier this week, they refused to allow the White House to come to Congress and discuss the budget and the deficit.

We are spending time and taxpayer money to debate a bill to mandate the White House come to Congress and discuss the budget and the deficit when, earlier this week, these same folks refused to allow the White House to come to Congress and discuss the budget and the deficit.

It is a telling action by my Republican colleagues, as they want to look like defenders of the taxpayers' money by demanding answers on how to reduce the deficit—which is a good thing—while blocking the ability for us to actually get any answers on how to reduce the deficit.

Because they refuse to invite the White House Budget Director to discuss the budget, let me share with you a few things that White House officials would have said if they were invited to speak before the Congress on the budget and the deficit.

Do you remember the $800 billion TARP funds paid to the Nation's largest banks by the Bush administration? The banks have repaid the money—with interest—under President Obama.

Those trillion-dollar annual deficits that started under President Bush's administration, in part due to the TARP fund and in part due to the Republican recession of 2007–2009, are gone.

More Americans are working now than ever in the history of the United States, with private businesses adding over 14 million jobs under the policies of Democrats. One of those policies was supporting the U.S. auto industry. When my Republican friends wanted to destroy and bankrupt Detroit, Democrats voted to save the U.S. auto industry. Today, the American car industry is on fire and has added over 645,000 American jobs since 2009.

Now, Republicans will argue they are pushing forward to eliminate annual deficits and not increase the debt. But that simply is not true. The Republican budget, while theoretically balancing in 10 years, increases the national debt by $3 trillion in that time period, which necessitates an increase in the debt ceiling. Therefore, Republicans, despite their claims and their rhetoric, have to increase the debt ceiling or risk the U.S. being in default.

So, Republicans claiming they won't raise the debt ceiling are either not being honest about raising the debt ceiling, not being honest about their budget, or they want the U.S. to not pay its bills and be in default. Which is it?

Additionally, the Republican budget eliminates $5.5 trillion in spending on programs like student loans, unemployment insurance, child support programs, as well as Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. PASCRELL. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. CROWLEY. At least they detail these cuts, such as ending Medicare as you know it.

Even more sinister, their budget—which every one of them brags about supporting—includes $1.1 trillion in spending cuts that are not even detailed, except to say they will go after retirement programs for Federal employees, military personnel, and veterans. They very cleverly hid those cuts in a footnote in their budget.

I am wondering on what page of their phony budget they create unicorns, because everything else in their so-called budget is one big, giant fairy tale.

So, Mr. Chairman, let's not fool the American people. They know what exactly is going on here.

They want to have it both ways: they want to call the White House on the carpet and say they want to discuss the Nation's deficit, and, at the same time, this very week, give the Budget Director an invitation to come before the Congress and talk about the budget and the deficit.

The American people are asking: What is going on? They know exactly what you are doing. Once again, you are using rhetoric, but not addressing the real problems of everyday Americans.

Mr. Chairman, we need to get down to the American people's business and get the answers we need and that they demand.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I think a careful review of the bill will reflect that this bill's effective date will be 2017.

While I cannot say with any certainty who the President will be or which party it will be, I would remind the House that this bill puts the responsibility on the administration, regardless of which party holds the White House, and it is an ongoing responsibility that will further the discussion and collaborative nature of our solutions to this debt.

□ 1415

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BRAT).

Mr. BRAT. I thank the gentleman from Texas very much.

Mr. Chair, I had some prepared remarks, but the opposition just brought up rhetoric and unicorns in the same sentence, and so I feel obliged to respond with a couple of preliminary remarks. I will just make four.

The rhetoric is easy to come by in this city, but the facts are very clear. I have never seen a Democrat budget that has been smaller than a Republican budget. Every year they turn in a budget that is significantly bigger than ours. That is just fact number one.

Fact number two, our budget balances in 10 years. I have never seen, in my history here, a Democrat budget that balances in any time horizon—and we are talking about the debt.

Point number three, we are talking about the President and his commitment to fiscal sanity. I have never heard the current President mention our unfunded liability problem, which is in the $100 trillion range. That is the most serious number and economic challenge our country faces. I have never heard our President bring that up as a problem to solve.

And finally, when it comes to fiscal restraint on the other side, the winner of the New Hampshire primary on the opposition side is calling for 90 percent tax rates and free everything.

So, when it comes to rhetoric, those are just four simple facts I offer to the other side when it comes to fiscal responsibility.

I want to move forward and commend Representative MARCHANT for putting this bill forward. This country desperately needs to have an honest conversation about our fiscal problems, the full range, from the debt of $19 trillion to the unfunded liabilities at $100 trillion. Total outstanding public debt exceeds $19 trillion. We just passed that this week or so. The unfunded liabilities are multiples of that.

Deficits are exploding, in the $500 billion range per year. Deficits by 2026 will be about $1 trillion a year. That will bring the total debt to about $30 trillion in a decade. All of this is on the back of our children. If we continue on the path of the status quo, we will end in a debt crisis as China is in now.

That is why I support this bill, because it advances the dialogue exactly when Presidential leadership is most needed, when the debt limit looms. Having leadership from a responsible President could make a world of difference.

Of course, talking isn't the end goal. Talk must spur action. These problems get harder to solve the longer we wait.

According to CBO's 2015 long-term budget outlook, if we wait 10 years, the costs will be nearly one-third greater as a percentage of GDP, and even larger in dollar terms. That is why it is so important we address this critical issue head-on now.

It is also getting harder to address the drivers of debt. Annual spending bills cover only 30 percent of Federal spending, and it will be 22 percent in 10 years.

The rest of Federal spending is on autopilot. Back in 1966, autopilot consumed 34 percent of Federal revenues. By 2026, autopilot spending is on track to be 98.7 percent of revenue in a vastly larger economy.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MARCHANT. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. BRAT. Some say it is all demographics. That is a narrow view. As society changes, our institutions have to keep up. That is what we are trying to do in this bill.

We cannot continue to ignore the looming fiscal debt crisis until it becomes catastrophic. Let's address it now while we can still make meaningful reforms. I thank Congressman MARCHANT for taking steps in that direction by proposing this bill.

Let's come together, pass this bill, and continue with the reforms that will make the economic outlook for our children and for future generations greater and brighter. Our fellow citizens expect no less.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, how much time do I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey has 6 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Texas has 10 minutes remaining.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS), who is a member—a distinguished member, at that—of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. I want to thank the gentleman from New Jersey for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to H.R. 3442, and I do so because the bill imposes burdens on Treasury that are totally unnecessary and will do absolutely nothing to improve our national debt.

It is Congress that makes spending and revenue decisions, and it is Congress' responsibility to raise the debt limit, when needed, to enable Treasury to fulfill the debt obligations that we have made. If you owe, you pay.

Rather than wasting our time on a redundant report by Treasury that does nothing to grow the economy, we should focus our time on creating jobs and strengthening families.

I can think of many things that we could be talking about: raising the minimum wage, creating summer jobs for youth, creating jobs through infrastructure development, supporting businesses to hire more workers, and increasing grant aid to families so that they can afford college.

Although our economy has demonstrated some solid labor market trends, we know that there are still individuals who are not benefiting from the tremendous economic recovery that we are experiencing.

For example, the University of Illinois at Chicago just completed a study that showed that half the African American males in the city of Chicago between the ages of 20–24 are not working and not in school. And we could be using this time—our time—to figure out ways to bring these individuals into the labor market so that they become productive citizens, rather than reviewing another report that tells us nothing that we don't already know.

So I oppose the legislation not because it is such bad legislation, but it is just a waste of our time, energy, and effort. We need to be figuring out ways to solve problems.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, at this time I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RENACCI), one of my colleagues on the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. RENACCI. I thank the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3442, the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2015.

This bill isn't about budgets. I have listened today. It is about a process, a process to keep our eye on the debt by all Members of Congress. Americans want us paying attention to our national debt.

Our collective debt has now surpassed $19 trillion, which is $58,000 per American. Sadly, these numbers are only a tip of the iceberg as they don't include, as my colleague from Virginia (Mr. BRAT) indicated, tens of trillions of dollars of unfunded liabilities stemming from some of our entitlement programs.

To me, this is inexcusable. We need an accurate accounting of our country's financial health, and this legislation is a sorely needed first step only, a first step to start the dialogue in finding a solution to this growing problem.

H.R. 3442 will require the Secretary of the Treasury to provide a report to Congress prior to the debt reaching the statutory limit. The report must include historic, current, and projected levels of debt, the drivers and composition of future debt, and how the United States will meet the debt obligations if the debt limit is raised.

As someone who has spent nearly 30 years in the business world, I know the importance of leveraging debt to grow a business and, in this case, to move the government forward. I understand that sometimes we have to borrow. But if I showed up to a bank without an explanation and plan to repay my obligations, I would be laughed out of the building. If I told the bank, ''The financial statements are on the Internet,'' ''I have sent them to you already,'' or, ''You already have them,'' the laughing would stop and the debt would be called.

Why should raising the national debt limit be any different? The Treasury should have to present a plan to Congress.

This straightforward legislation is not divisive. It will apply to both Democrat and Republican administrations. It will not even affect the current administration.

Let me be very clear. Our debt is not a Democrat or Republican problem. This is an American problem.

As I travel throughout my district in Ohio, I hear from my constituents regarding their concerns about the direction of our country and what we are leaving our children and grandchildren. Congress must work together to put our national debt back on a sustainable path. That is what this legislation starts the process of doing.

I would like to commend Mr. MARCHANT for his leadership on this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to join me in support.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL).

Mr. WOODALL. I thank my friend from Texas for bringing this bill to the House.

I confess, Mr. Chairman, I have served on the Budget Committee since I arrived in this House 5 years ago, and I have listened to testimony on every single budget the President has submitted to this Congress. Among all the calls of the redundancy of this legislation, I want to just encourage my colleagues to read the five short pages that are this bill. It says this:

> Not more than 60 days and not less than 21 days before the debt ceiling is to be raised, the Secretary of the Treasury shall submit the following: a detailed explanation of proposals of the President to reduce the public debt in the short-term, which is the next fiscal year; the medium term, the next 3 to 5 years; and the long term, the next 10 years.

Five years I have served in this institution; five budgets of this President I have looked at. Not one reduced the debt by one penny this year, next year, 10 years from now, or 100 years from now. This is not redundant.

What Mr. MARCHANT is asking of not this President, but the next President, whoever he or she may be, is to not promise the American people everything on their children's credit card, that if you are going to come to the American people and ask for a credit line increase on America's credit card, you ought to offer at least some semblance of a plan for paying the bill back.

I have heard the charge of hypocrisy here on the House floor. Again, I serve on the House Budget Committee. Every

single year, this House, Republicans and Democrats, pass budgets that balance. Every single year, this House, Republicans and Democrats, pass budgets that plan not just to pay back a penny of debt, but all of the debt.

We can't expect less from our next President. We have to expect more. Republican or Democrat, the next President, before coming to ask for the debt ceiling to be increased, should come with a plan for eventually paying that debt back.

Mr. Chairman, it is embarrassing to me that a clean debt ceiling increase is part of the national parlance. I have got seventh, eighth and ninth graders back home who know what a clean debt ceiling is.

We should never have a clean debt ceiling increase. We should never raise the American people's credit line without a plan for paying it back. Not once, Mr. Chairman, have we considered a bill on the floor of this House that has the requirement that Mr. MARCHANT is proposing today.

The burden will fall on us to implement it, but leadership falls to the White House as well. Don't come and ask the American people for more money until you come with a plan for eventually balancing the books. That is not too much to ask, Mr. Chairman. In fact, it is too little to ask, but it is a fantastic first start.

I ask all of my colleagues to support this bill.

□ 1430

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, if the gentleman on the other side has no more speakers, I am prepared to close.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, I am prepared to close.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Chairman, from a few speakers today on the other side, I have heard ''Apocalypse Now.'' Both sides of the aisle, I think, want to get to a day when we balance the budget. We did it several years in a row at the end of the Clinton administration.

I believe my friends on the other side of the aisle are well-intentioned in drafting this legislation. I believe they wanted to focus attention on the ways to address our debt and deficit. I agree. I believe that instead of toying with default—because that sends a horrible, horrible message to the world economy—we should do our job as Members and discuss real, long-term solutions to our budgetary challenges.

In fact, I think my good friend from Texas would agree we had an outstanding discussion in the Rules Committee because I never heard that discussion on the floor of the House. Maybe I missed it. I don't know; did I miss it?

Our discretionary spending, which we use to make critical investments in the infrastructure, education, and laying a foundation for our Nation's future for our kids and our grandkids' economic growth, that discretionary spending is at the lowest level since 1940. Even the gentleman from Virginia, who started to refer to it anyway, said a few moments ago, only talked about 30 percent discretionary money. But it was wrong what he said. We have not done anything to our insurance programs or entitlements.

The Affordable Care Act here rears its head again, extending Medicare for 12 more years. I think that is a pretty big deal in talking about one of these mandatory costs that we have, 12 years more because of the Affordable Care Act.

By the way, if you get rid of the Affordable Care Act, what are you going to do with the people who don't have insurance anymore? What are you going to do about the 12 years we have extended for Medicare? Perhaps that is all in this phantom budget we have out there.

Cost increases moving forward will be driven by mandatory programs—you know it, and I know it—like Social Security and Medicare, mostly due to an aging population. We started to address this problem with the Affordable Care Act. We have a long ways to go.

Many Members of this body have reasonable proposals to address the growing cost of health care and Social Security on both sides of the aisle. So I believe we would be better served working together and debating together than sitting here today talking about another report that tells us what we already know.

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

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for the continued debate on the bill. This bill is very simple. The bill does not try to talk about the past. It doesn't try to address the Reagan administration or the Clinton administration or the Bush administration or the Obama administration.

It tries to look forward and say that the Secretary of the Treasury, 21 to 60 days before he announces that we will reach the debt ceiling—in this case, next year it will be March of 2017, so about this time next year—if this bill is made law, the Secretary of the Treasury will appear before the Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee—they could meet jointly—and give a plan from the administration on what the administration intends to do about the national debt.

It is important to know what the intentions of the current administration are about the national debt. The report will first provide a detailed accounting of the state of the national debt. It would include the composition and trajectory of the debt as well as the administration's plans to meet the obligations in the event that Congress agrees to raise the debt.

Second, it would just say here is the administration's proposal to reduce the debt in the short term, the medium term, and the long term. The answer from the administration may very well be we have no intention whatsoever of addressing the debt in the short term, the medium term, or the long term. If that is what the Treasury Secretary wants to report to Congress, that could be his report.

Third, if the administration requests subsequent debt-limit increases, the Secretary would be required to provide a progress report on prior debt reduction proposals.

Finally, the bill would require the Treasury to put all these documents online so the American people can read the report for themselves.

The Nation owes $19 trillion. The debt is growing every second. Addressing the debt is a shared responsibility, and we should use all available tools to manage this responsibility.

This type of process is not new. In fact, today, the Chairman of the Federal Reserve is appearing before the Senate and earlier this week appeared before the House. Under the Humphrey-Hawkins Act, it required the Federal Reserve Chairman to appear before Congress to give a statement on monetary policy. I don't think it is too much to ask for one meeting a year for the Secretary of the Treasury to come to Congress and state his or her opinion and view about the national debt and the administration's plan on how it plans to reduce the debt.

In fact, this bill would be a simple, first step to addressing that problem. I urge the House to pass this bill.

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

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. The bill shall be considered as read.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3442

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 ''Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY REPORT TO CONGRESS BEFORE REACHING DEBT LIMIT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 31 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 3131. Report before reaching debt limit

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Not more than sixty days and not less than twenty-one days prior to any date on which the Secretary of the Treasury anticipates the public debt will reach the limit specified under section 3101, as modified by section 3101A, the Secretary shall appear before the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Finance of the Senate, to submit the information described under subsection (b).

''(b) INFORMATION REQUIRED TO BE PRESENTED.—In an appearance described under subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit the following:

''(1) DEBT REPORT.—A report on the state of the public debt, including—

''(A) the historical levels of the debt, current amount and composition of the debt, and future projections of the debt;

''(B) the drivers and composition of future debt; and

''(C) how, if the debt limit is raised, the United States will meet debt obligations, including principal and interest.

''(2) STATEMENT OF INTENT.—A detailed explanation of—

''(A) proposals of the President to reduce the public debt in the short term (the current and following fiscal year), medium term (approximately three to five fiscal years), and long term (approximately ten fiscal years), and proposals of the President to adjust the debt-to-gross domestic product ratio;

''(B) the impact an increased debt limit will have on future Government spending, debt service, and the position of the United States dollar as the international reserve currency; and

''(C) projections of fiscal health and sustainability of major direct-spending entitlement programs (including Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid).

''(3) PROGRESS REPORT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—A detailed report on the progress of implementing all proposals of the President described under subparagraph (A) of paragraph (2).

''(B) EXCEPTION.—The report described under this paragraph shall only be submitted if a Secretary has already appeared at least once pursuant to this section during any term of office for a particular President.

''(c) PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall place on the homepage of the Department of the Treasury a link to a webpage that shall serve as a repository of information made available to the public for at least 6 months following the date of release of the relevant information, including:

''(1) The debt report submitted under subsection (b)(1).

''(2) The detailed explanation submitted under subsection (b)(2).

''(3) The progress report submitted under subsection (b)(3).

''(4) Such other information as the Secretary reasonably believes is necessary or helpful to the public in understanding the statutory debt limit, Government debt, and the reports and explanations described under paragraphs (1), (2), and (3).''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of analysis for chapter 31 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 3130 the following:

''3131. Report before reaching debt limit.''.

The Acting CHAIR. No amendment to the bill shall be in order except those printed in part A 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 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.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. GRIJALVA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in part A of House Report 114–420.

Mr. GRIJALVA. 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, after line 3, insert the following:

''(B) the historical levels of Federal revenue, including corporate and individual Federal income taxes as a percent of the gross domestic product;''.

Page 4, line 4, strike ''(B)'' and insert ''(C)''.

Page 4, line 6, strike ''(C)'' and insert ''(D)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 609, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, my amendment simply asks that, in the spirit of this bill and the context of examining the debt, we take a look at Federal revenue trends, which are a critical part of the conversation we are having. Specifically, this amendment asks Treasury to include in their report the historical levels of Federal revenue, including information on corporate and individual Federal income taxes.

While we may disagree on the merits of the underlying bill, I hope that we can agree that it is important to have a complete picture of the Federal budget when looking at debt and deficit issues. When we look closer at our current revenue policies, a fuller picture emerges. This picture could change our perspective on the need to cut programs that Americans hold so high and, instead, raise questions about the need to close loopholes that prevent us from investing in areas of the budget that support the middle class and working families.

Here are a few reasons that we may want to consider changes to this conversation:

Corporations used to contribute $1 out of every $3 in Federal revenue. Today, it is $1 out of every $10. At the same time, corporations are more profitable than almost ever before.

American taxpayers are losing about $90 billion every year due to offshore tax loopholes.

In the 1950s, corporate taxes were about 6 percent of the economy. Today, they are 1.9 percent.

All in all, Federal revenue contributed by corporate taxes has dropped by two-thirds over the last six decades.

Mr. Chairman, this amendment would also allow Treasury to look at individual tax rates so that we can examine if the wealthy are really paying their fair share. Currently, many tax loopholes are reserved for wealthy Americans. These tax giveaways are leaving the middle class to pick up their tab.

Some multimillionaires and billionaires are paying a lower effective tax rate than the average American family. This is wrong. Hard work should never be taxed at a higher rate than making money off Wall Street.

Our Tax Code is full of tax loopholes and tax breaks benefiting big corporations and the rich. When they don't pay their fair share of the taxes, the rest of us pick up the tab. American families end up paying higher taxes or getting fewer services, and the country goes deeper into debt.

If corporations and the rich paid their fair share, then the economy will work better for everyone. Instead of making seniors pay more for Medicare or cutting Social Security benefits, we should close loopholes that allow large corporations to hide profits offshore. Instead of cutting funding for repairing our roads and bridges, we should end huge tax subsidies to oil and gas companies making record profits. Instead of cutting funding for teachers and firefighters, we should ask multimillionaires and billionaires to pay at least as high a tax rate as those public servants pay.

America's richest corporations should not be able to dodge fair taxes to pay lower rates than middle class families.

It is time to address corporate tax dodging and invest in America again. If we close these tax loopholes for corporations that ship jobs overseas and hide profits offshore, we can raise billions of dollars to invest in America. We could make our classrooms less crowded, improve roads and bridges, and provide more security for the American people.

Unfortunately, the bill we are voting on today leaves out this entire conversation and, instead, offers false choices of austerity or default.

Please, I hope my colleagues will join me in asking for a fuller picture of our tax policies by supporting this amendment.

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

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition, although I am not opposed to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, this amendment to H.R. 3442 brings very valuable information and transparency to the debt-limit process. The amendment offered by Mr. GRIJALVA would strengthen the legislation by requiring the administration to report additional information on Federal taxes and revenue.

However, I will note that revenues are above their historical average as a share of GDP, so the problem surrounding the unsustainable trajectory of our national debt isn't that Americans are not taxed enough; it is that Washington spends too much.

With that said, I support the text of the gentleman's amendment.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. HUELSKAMP

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in part A of House Report 114–420.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. 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 5, strike ''and''.

Page 4, line 8, strike the period and insert ''; and''.

Page 4, after line 8, insert the following:

''(D) any reduction measures the Secretary intends to take to fund Federal Government obligations if the debt limit is not raised, including—

''(i) notifying the Congress when the limit has been reached; and

''(ii) notifying the Congress when the Secretary has begun taking such measures and specifying which measures are currently being used.''.

Page 4, line 21, strike ''and''.

Page 4, line 25, strike the period and insert ''; and''.

Page 4, after line 25, insert the following:

''(D) the plan of the President for each week that the debt of the United States Government is at the statutory limit, to publicly disclose, on the website of the Department of the Treasury, the following:

''(i) All reduction measures currently being used by the Secretary to avoid defaulting on obligations of the Government.

''(ii) With respect to each reduction measure, whether or not such measure is currently being used—

''(I) the total dollar amount of such measure that has been used; and

''(II) the total dollar amount of such measure that the Secretary estimates is still available for use.

''(iii) The date on which the Secretary estimates that all reduction measures will be exhausted, and the Government will begin defaulting on its obligations.''.

Page 6, after line 2, insert the following:

''(d) REDUCTION MEASURES DEFINED.—For purposes of this section, the term 'reduction measures' means each of the following:

''(1) Directing or approving the issuance of debt by the Federal Financing Bank for the purpose of entering into an exchange transaction for debt that is subject to the limit under this section.

''(2) Suspending investments in the Government Securities Investment Fund of the Thrift Savings Fund.

''(3) Suspending investments in the stabilization fund established under section 5302 of title 31, United States Code.

''(4) Suspending new investments in the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund or the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund.

''(5) Selling or redeeming securities, obligations, or other invested assets of the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund or the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund before maturity.

''(6) Such other measures as the Secretary determines appropriate.''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 609, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. HUELSKAMP) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to offer this amendment on a very important bill, and I appreciate the work of the gentleman from Texas. I believe the bill is necessary. My amendment, hopefully, will provide some additional information.

As we know, Congress has the authority to set the debt limit. The President, through the Secretary of the Treasury, however, has the apparent authority to set the date to which all the cable networks peg their doomsday countdown clocks. We saw this firsthand in 2011 and 2013.

Even if receipts, expenditures, or use of extraordinary measures change their internal projections of the exhaustion date, Treasury is not required in any way to provide regular, independently verifiable updates to Congress or the American people. Instead, the elected officials charged with making the ultimate decision on increasing the Nation's maxed-out credit card are expected to simply take Treasury's word for it—sometimes months after an initial estimate.

My proposed amendment is very simple. It would require that Treasury provide a weekly reporting of the extraordinary measures and the projected exhaustion date per our Nation's debt limit.

□ 1445

It is a matter of transparency. But it is also exactly the information we need as Members of Congress to fulfill our constitutional responsibility on this issue.

Consider just how long the use of extraordinary measures lasted in 2015. They were originally utilized on March 15, yet the Treasury set November 3 as the date of exhaustion—over 7 months later. That creates, I believe, a lot of uncertainty, and Treasury continues to control the entire process. Transparency is always a better policy.

Mr. Chairman, to further illustrate why this is needed, just last week, a report was issued by the House Financial Services Committee that found that apparently the Department misled Congress regarding their capabilities and plans concerning debt payments back in 2011 and 2013.

Without going into too much detail, the findings of the report, I believe, are clear. The Treasury did not report to Congress the specific actions they could take once the debt limit is reached.

I urge the House to support my amendment to help ensure the American people and Congress are equipped to make informed judgments on this critical issue of the Federal debt limit.

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

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chairman, Democrats don't want to default. We believe we should get our deficits under control now and not at the moment of default.

I believe my Republican colleagues continue to run from deadline to deadline, creating great anxiety. I don't know if you all noticed how the markets are reacting today with the situation in Europe and in China. We are not doing so well, yet we continue this notion of bringing back before the people, before the world, the notion that we will have a default someday and we will prioritize the payment of default, creating the notion or the idea that somehow the U.S. Government might even default on its bills someday. That in and of itself is very destabilizing, and we will have an amendment coming up a little later on this afternoon.

In fact, this President—our President—has a proposal in his budget to cut an additional $3 trillion from our Nation's deficit on top of the $4 trillion in deficit reduction that has already been enacted into law. In fact, this President—President Obama—cut the $1 trillion Bush deficit in half—in more than half—in 4½ years.

America is moving forward. But the underlying issue is the Republicans are afraid that if they allow the White House to come here to the Hill in the form of a budget director to testify on the budget, these pesky little facts will become more commonly known to the American people.

I only have last year's Republican budget to go by—I wait with bated breath for the 2016 budget to come out—but all I have is the 2015 budget. Although there is some transparency that would make cuts in order to balance the budget—they make cuts in Social Security, they make cuts in Medicare, they make cuts in Medicaid and other health—they would entirely eliminate the Affordable Care Act. We all know what complications come with that—no pre-screening; if you are under 26, you would no longer have your parents' insurance; those who already have preexisting conditions would be discriminated against by insurance companies. We know all the bad things that you all want to see come to fruition.

But then you also have another less transparent line that says: other mandatory cuts, to the tune of $1.1 trillion. You don't spell out what that means. But I would imagine—and I have to assume—it would mean making mandatory cuts to our veterans, to military personnel, and to Federal employees, just to name a few. To get $1.1 trillion in additional cuts, those are where the cuts would come from.

That may be your platform—you want to make cuts in veterans, in military personnel, and in Federal employees. Those are cuts you are going to propose. You should just make it more transparent. The American people are looking for transparency. They want the debate. We know the cuts you are ready to propose right now in terms of Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and the Affordable Care Act.

Let's be honest, you want to cut military and Federal employee pensions, but you are not spelling it out here. I wonder how the folks nearby in Virginia or in Maryland feel about the cuts you want to make in Federal employee pensions. You don't actually spell it out in your budget. You call it ''other mandatory cuts.''

The American people should assume what that means. We are just trying to give a little more transparency to what your cuts actually mean. They mean cuts to military and Federal employee pensions. Just a little honesty, just a little transparency. That is what the American people are looking for.

Democrats oppose the GOP plans of threatening default or the Pay China First Act bill, which means no Social Security checks, if that were to go into effect, no doctor reimbursements from serving Medicare patients, and it calls into question the paying of our troops. What it really does, though, is it calls into question what we have prided ourselves on as Americans, and that is that we pay our debts. We don't even create the suspicion.

Alexander Hamilton is rolling in his grave today because you are even creating the suspicion that you would not pay the American people's debts. We have an obligation to do our work, to do our business, not for shenanigans, but to get the people's work done. Mr. Chairman, I would suggest that this bill doesn't really further or advance getting the people's work done. It is just creating more bureaucracy and more time on the floor taking up more precious time in debate, but that is where we are at.

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

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MARCHANT).

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

This amendment that Mr. HUELSKAMP has offered requires the administration to report on extraordinary measures on a weekly basis so that Congress will have the most up-to-date information available.

I can tell you that at the very heart of this bill, as I began to put it together a couple of years ago, was the very fact that through a press release the Secretary of Treasury could come out and pick some date out of midair and say we were going to reach the debt ceiling. Then we would go month after month after month not knowing whether he would come out again with another press release that says: Well, it will be next week.

It is my opinion—and I agree with Mr. HUELSKAMP—that the Secretary of Treasury needs to inform Congress what extraordinary measures he or she is using that week to extend the debt limit deadline.

It is a great amendment, and it adds to the bill.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate support from the gentleman from Texas, I appreciate support from the Ways and Means Committee, and I certainly appreciate the comments across the aisle of the need for transparency.

We are an information vacuum on this issue as Members of Congress and the American people. This simply requires a weekly report so folks outside of the Department of Treasury know what is happening with our Nation's credit line.

I urge my colleagues to support my amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. HUELSKAMP).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. NEWHOUSE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in part A of House Report 114–420.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. 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 5, strike ''and''.

Page 4, line 8, strike the period and insert ''; and''.

Page 4, after line 8, insert the following:

''(D) if the President recommends that Congress adopt, in general, a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States to help control the accumulation of future debt.''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 609, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Chairman, it is very fitting today that we are considering this bill. It is the same week that the President released the final budget of his administration—a budget that would add nearly $2.6 trillion to our national debt over the next 5 years. In fact, this President has never submitted a budget to Congress that would balance.

Few Americans may realize this, but just last week, our national debt reached $19 trillion—Mr. Chairman, $19 trillion. When the President came into office in 2009, the debt stood at $10.6 trillion. That is nearly doubling our national debt in just 7 years' time.

Mr. Chairman, we are on a high-speed train, careening towards a fiscal cliff. Soon it may be too late to slow this train down.

If I could, in the name of all that is fiscally sane, I would enact an amendment to the Constitution right now requiring us to balance our budget. But, unfortunately, Mr. Chairman, our Constitution requires two-thirds of our colleagues here in Congress to approve that amendment, which history and previous votes on constitutional amendments have shown is a very difficult bar to reach. While this measure may not be the balanced budget amendment that our country desperately needs and deserves, it will help draw a very clear line of distinction in the sand.

Mr. Chairman, the amendment that my colleagues from Virginia and Ohio and Alabama and I are offering would simply require the President to tell the American people whether or not they support a balanced budget amendment when he or she asks for a debt ceiling increase. It is as simple as that. This is about transparency and about being open with the American people about where you stand on this very critical issue.

It would provide a very clear contrast if the President asked to raise the debt ceiling by trillions of dollars in this case, but offers no support for a measure that would put an end to our Nation's debt problems for good.

Make no mistake, time is quickly coming when our Nation will have to make the decision if we want to restore the fiscal health of our Nation to a state of stability and prosperity for future generations, or go down the same road of nations like Greece that have been shattered by their debt woes. When that day comes, the American people deserve to know who is standing where.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia). The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chairman, I have three children. I hate it when they come to me on Sunday night and say: Dad, I have a paper due tomorrow, can you help me out with it? In many respects that is how I feel my Republican colleagues are treating government today. They are like children that need to be forced to do their homework, forced to do their job, and they are doing it always at the last minute.

In many respects, some of the amendments we are talking about today are memorializing the notion of running government from deadline to deadline. We really shouldn't be doing that. You don't make good judgments. I dare say that my children's papers aren't as good when they wait until the last minute to do them, and I suspect that maybe we don't run government when we go from deadline to deadline. We shouldn't run our government this way.

Democrats have taken the action to lower the deficit and restore the economy. Democrats don't want to default. I believe we should get our deficit under control now and not the moment of default. I know I may sound a little bit like the gentleman running for President, Mr. RUBIO, because I am going to be repeating myself a little bit here, but I think some of the facts bear repeating.

That is where the President again has proposed $3 trillion in deficit reduction on top of the $4 trillion in deficit reduction that has already been enacted into law. Again, this President

cut the $1 trillion Bush deficits by more than half in just 4½ years.

America is moving forward. America doesn't need to be great again. We already are great. We have the ability to deal with our fiscal problems if we stop doing it from deadline to deadline and address them in a smart and healthy way.

The underlying issue is Republicans are afraid that if they are allowed to bring the White House again here before us today to testify on their budget that they have proposed, that again pesky facts will get in the way. I will just point them out again.

□ 1500

We have a little yellow line going through it here.

Other mandatory cuts in the Republican budget are to the tune of $1.1 trillion. Again, I don't know exactly what they are, but I can only assume that those cuts are to the military personnel's and veterans' pensions and to Federal employees' pensions.

I don't know how many fellow employees who live in the Virginia area, for instance, are paying attention to the debate today or how many of those who live in Maryland are paying attention to the debate today. I suspect, if they are, they are a little concerned about this one line that is highlighted, because it would include, under the Republican budget for 2016, mandatory cuts to veterans', to military personnel's, and to Federal employees' pensions. I just think we need to be more open about what those cuts would be to balance the Republican budget.

Mr. Chairman, I have nothing personal against the person who is offering the amendment. Again, I just think it further moves forward this notion that we are going to continue to operate the government deadline to deadline. The American people are sick and tired of the government's operating in this way. They want a more thoughtful government. This is not an answer to that.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MARCHANT).

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, this amendment offered by Mr. NEWHOUSE would absolutely strengthen H.R. 3442.

By requiring the Secretary of the Treasury to report to Congress information on the debt ceiling, the President recommends that the Congress adopt a balanced budget amendment. This would add more clarity to the process. Therefore, I recommend to the Members that they vote ''yes.''

Mr. NEWHOUSE. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chair, how much time do I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New York has 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chair, once again, I would suggest that my Republican colleagues need to be more clear, more transparent.

The gentleman just mentioned transparency. The Republican budget is begging for transparency. The American people want to know exactly what is meant by ''other mandatory cuts to the tune of $1.1 trillion.'' Where do those cuts end up being made? Again, I can only suggest it is to veterans', to military personnel's, and to Federal employees' pensions.

People living in the greater Metropolitan Washington, D.C., area, those who live down by Norfolk, Virginia, and other heavy military as well as governmental personnel areas, have to question—and I hope they are questioning—what the Republicans mean by those mandatory cuts. I believe it means veterans', military personnel's, and Federal employees' pensions will be cut if the Republican budget is enacted into law.

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

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Chairman, in closing, this is a very simple amendment that just requires the administration to state whether or not it would recommend that Congress adopt a balanced budget when it asks for a debt ceiling increase. Our national debt is one of the biggest threats that exists to our Nation. The American people need to know where the administration is and where Congress is on this important issue.

When the President ran in 2008, he promised that his administration would be the most transparent administration yet. This helps him keep that promise. Today, it is all about transparency—letting people know where we stand.

I ask my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on this important amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MS. KELLY OF ILLINOIS

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in part A of House Report 114–420.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Chair, 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 5, strike ''and''.

Page 4, line 8, strike the period and insert ''; and''.

Page 4, after line 8, insert the following:

''(D) an economic forecast of the negative consequences of failing to raise the debt limit, including costs associated with public health and safety.''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 609, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Chair, my amendment is simple. It merely expands the report the Treasury Secretary must submit per the underlying bill to include an analysis of the economic costs of failing to raise the debt limit, especially with regard to the costs to our Nation's public health and safety.

I agree with my friends on the other side of the aisle that misguided deficit spending poses a serious risk to our Nation's long-term financial stability. It is crucial that we get our fiscal house in order. Simply raising the debt limit without discussing strategic ways to increase revenues and cut costs is unacceptable. Equally unacceptable is not acknowledging the serious short- and long-term costs of failing to raise the debt limit, causing the country to enter into default.

Federal tax dollars fund a variety of programs in every single one of our congressional districts, programs that are essential to the continued well-being of our constituents. Seniors rely on Social Security checks and on Medicare reimbursements. Veterans depend on their much-needed VA benefits. State and municipal police forces receive funding through Department of Justice grants. Our Nation's hospitals receive Federal tax dollars.

It is not an exaggeration to say, if the United States of America defaulted on its loan obligations and if it could not pay its bills for expenses already incurred, the health and safety of its citizens would be put at risk. If America were to enter into default, what would happen? Would the Social Security Administration be able to cut checks? How many Americans would be unable to obtain essential medications? Would the U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the TSA, or State and local police units furlough agents and officers? How many fewer cops would be on the beat to keep our communities safe?

All too often, our debates in Washington about the national debt and deficit are not grounded in reality. We simply analyze economic concepts in the abstract, but our decisions and our debates have real, immediate, and lasting impacts on the daily lives of our constituents.

If we are going to engage in a discussion on the pros and cons of raising the debt ceiling, let's keep in mind the real, on-the-ground consequences that the decisions will have on everyday Americans.

If we are going to require the Treasury Secretary to report on the costs of the growing national debt, let's be fair and require that the report discuss the immediate and lasting costs of failing to raise the debt ceiling on our Nation's public health and safety.

The bill's author, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MARCHANT), stated his goal was to have a comprehensive discussion of the debt ceiling. A comprehensive discussion must include not only the long-term costs of continued deficit spending, but the short-term costs of default, as well as its far-reaching ripple effects.

This amendment is one of common sense and is intellectually honest and fair. It would have zero budgetary impact, and it would ensure the report is as meaningful as possible; so I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support it.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the gentlewoman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, this amendment would require the administration to speculate on the impact of default on our Federal debt. It doesn't call for any specific report. It doesn't call for any specific numbers.

It is not the point of H.R. 3442 to speculate. H.R. 3442 is a sensible step in creating a process to consider the debt limit with information and transparency. I do not feel like this amendment gives any support to that priority.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Chair, 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 Illinois will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. DUFFY

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 5 printed in part A of House Report 114–420.

Mr. DUFFY. 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 21, strike ''and''.

Page 4, line 25, strike the period and insert ''; and''.

Page 4, after line 25, add the following:

''(D) whether the Administration acknowledges that it is technologically capable of paying only principal and interest on the national debt, as opposed to other obligations, in the event that the debt limit, as specified under section 3101, is reached.''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 609, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. DUFFY. I thank the gentleman from Texas for all of his good work on this legislation.

Mr. Chairman, as all of us know in this institution and around the country, we are $19 trillion in debt. We borrow around $3.8 billion a day, and we spend about $250 billion a year to service our debt. One of the tools that we have in this Congress is the debt limit in order to get the administration to help reform the way we spend.

In 2011, Congress challenged President Obama. When he asked to have an increase in the debt limit, we said let's have a decrease in how much money we spend. As a political fight played out, the administration promised that chaos would ensue across the global markets if the debt limit were reached, and it also said that any proposal that would prioritize payments through the Treasury for principal and interest on our debt could not be taken seriously. Mr. MCCLINTOCK had a bill that would have done just that.

The Committee on Financial Services, the committee on which I serve, did an investigation, and we found that, though they said Mr. MCCLINTOCK's bill could not be taken seriously, they actually had a plan to do just what Mr. MCCLINTOCK had recommended, which is, if the debt limit is reached, prioritize payments. They weren't being honest with the American people, because what they wanted to do was to use the argument of chaos to put pressure on Republicans to cave and not demand that we reform the way that we spend.

My amendment here today is very simple. All it says is let's make sure that the Treasury comes clean and tells the American people whether it can pay principal and interest before other obligations so that America does not default on its debt. It is very simple. No one here wants to hit the debt limit, and no one wants us to be the next Greece or Puerto Rico, but that is going to take working together in order to make sure we have budgets that balance at some point in the future.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chair, as I read it, this amendment requires the Treasury to notify Congress about which obligations it would be able to pay were Congress to choose to default and prioritize debt as a vision in the Pay China First bill, which the House has twice passed on a party-line vote.

First, a bill that plans for default sends a very disturbing signal to the world economy. Here is what we have with us: the gentleman, apparently, through the Speaker and the sponsor of this bill, in good faith, wants to pay China first before vets, before Medicare payments, before salaries for our troops, et cetera. The gentleman wants to pay China first. Of all of the people lined up who are going to get paid, the gentleman wants to pay China first. Excuse me for repeating myself.

The intent of the amendment is to accuse the Treasury of deceiving Congress about its ability to prioritize debt payments. The Treasury does not currently have the capability to prioritize between types of payments in the event it does not have enough cash on hand to pay all of the bills due on a particular date. That is how it works.

□ 1515

In such an event, Treasury would likely hold all of its bills until it has enough cash on hand to pay those bills. This would repeat daily in a cascading fashion. The result would be disastrous, a first-time immediate default on U.S. credit.

Let me repeat the 14th Amendment. It is clear, simple, and concise. The 14th Amendment to the Constitution, section 4, says:

''The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law''—that is us—''including debts incurred for payment of pensions . . . shall not be questioned.''

I think that to even entertain the idea of default is counterproductive. To entertain the idea sends a real message to the financial markets all over the world, including our own. I think that is a disturbing thing. I don't think you want it, and I don't think we want it.

Now, when you look at how the debt was incurred, when you look at that graph about what contributed to this $19 trillion, zillion, gabillion dollars, you are talking about, it could be very interesting in case of history—history is important here. History 101—what contributed to that debt: two wars unpaid for, two tax cuts in 2001 and 2003 unpaid for, plan B Medicare prescription drugs unpaid for.

Look, we passed legislation on this floor. We are all culpable here, Democrats and Republicans. So when you stand up and pontificate—you don't have to be in a Presidential election either—and you pontificate about those guys simply want to tax and spend, you have short memories. You have selective memories. We have that at times, too, ourselves on our side.

Well, you are talking about something pretty darn fundamental, and that is the budget, and that is the deficit of this country. This is an absolutely unnecessary amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY).

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chairman, I remind the gentleman from New Jersey that there is no such thing as a gazillion dollars. Having said that, we are talking real money here. We are talking trillions of dollars in debt, no doubt.

I think the gentleman made reference, as well, to the Constitution and spelled out that we shouldn't even hint at the notion of not paying our debt; yet that is exactly what this amendment would do, similar to legislation that passed here last year and the year before that that would suggest that maybe the United States won't pay its bills. That is not going to happen.

Even in your own budget, you would raise the debt ceiling by $3 trillion in order to pass your budget. So you know you are going to raise—if you had your druthers, you would raise the debt ceiling as well.

I think the gentleman from Wisconsin also had to understand that these are debts that are already owed, not future debts. They are debts we already owe that we have to pay back to make sure the world understands the U.S. pays its debts.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman from New Jersey has expired.

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Chairman, I would just note that this bill guarantees that we pay our debt. That is exactly what this bill does. So I would note that the Democrats are making the argument for me.

I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK).

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, the law that established the Treasury Department already instructs it to manage the revenue to support the public credit. This already includes prioritizing payments to assure the national debt is always honored, as the Constitution commands. Without this, a stalemate on the debt could endanger the Nation's credit.

Well, during recent debates over raising the debt limit, the Treasury Department denied that it can prioritize to preserve the Nation's credit. Thanks to the Financial Services Committee's investigation, we now know this was a deliberate and calculated lie told to increase pressure on Congress. Emails revealed that Federal Reserve officials were incredulous and appalled that the administration would make such statements because they ran a severe risk of panicking credit markets.

This amendment simply requires that, when we approach the debt limit, the Treasury Department tells Congress and the public what it is actually preparing to do to assure this Nation's creditors that their loans to this government are completely secure.

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Chair, I yield to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MESSER), someone who has worked very hard on this issue as well.

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of this important amendment.

Frankly, the opposition to this amendment is baffling. During the debt ceiling debate last year, the administration repeatedly told Congress and the American people that, if we don't raise the debt ceiling, we would default on our Nation's bills, that the seniors would miss their Social Security checks, that interest on the debt would go unpaid, and that it would all bring the U.S. economy to its knees. This, as it turns out, wasn't true.

Contrary to their posturing, recently exposed documents have shown that the administration was planning to prioritize payments in the event the debt ceiling was reached, the very thing they told us they couldn't do. This is beyond partisan politics. It is fear-mongering.

Very simply, my colleague's amendment requires this administration and future administrations to acknowledge their ability to prioritize payments after hitting the debt limit. It is a good idea.

I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. DUFFY. May I ask the chairman how much time I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Wisconsin has 5 seconds remaining.

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Chairman, I would just note that $800 billion from ObamaCare to Medicare came from Democrats; $250 billion a year in interest goes to China.

Let's balance the budget. I would love to see the Democrats' plan to balance.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. DUFFY. 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 gentleman from Wisconsin will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MR. MESSER

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 6 printed in part A of House Report 114–420.

Mr. MESSER. 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 21, strike ''and''.

Page 4, line 25, strike the period and insert ''; and''.

Page 4, after line 25, insert the following:

''(D) any extraordinary measures the Secretary intends to take to fund Federal government obligations if the debt limit is not raised, a projection of how long such extraordinary measures will fund the Federal government, and a projection of the administrative cost of taking such extraordinary measures.''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 609, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MESSER) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleague from Texas (Mr. MARCHANT) for his great work on this important bill, a bill that seeks to make the administration accountable for the out-of-control national debt which others have said just hit a staggering $19 trillion.

Mr. Chairman, like the underlying legislation, the amendment I am offering today holds this administration and future administrations accountable, too. Many don't realize the enormous power Congress has given to the Treasury Department to use so-called extraordinary measures when we are about to hit the debt ceiling.

To pay our bills and delay hitting the debt limit, Treasury has the authority to take more than $350 billion out of government accounts, including government worker pension and retirement accounts. This is an incredible power, shifting around hundreds of billions of taxpayer dollars and dodging the limit Congress has placed on borrowing.

Our Constitution says that Congress, not the administration, has the power of the purse. So these extraordinary measures, which in effect enable the Department to run up bills or IOUs beyond the debt limit, should be transparent. Congress and the American people have the right to know what Treasury is doing with our money. At present, it is astonishing how little transparency the Department is statutorily obligated to provide.

Very simply, my amendment requires the Treasury to report on what extraordinary measures it intends to use if the debt limit is not lifted. It requires them to project how long such measures will fund the Federal Government so Congress and the American people know well before we near the limit how long those measures will last.

It requires the Treasury Department to estimate the administrative costs associated with taking any extraordinary measures. If moving all this money around costs additional money, we should all know about it.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chairman, we are talking about brinksmanship once again. I think this is a very unhealthy debate we are having because this is the not the way we should be running government anyway, from deadline to deadline.

As I mentioned earlier, we should be sitting down and working these issues out and not having the world on the precipice of seeing the Nation default. No good will come of it, and absolutely no good comes from talking about it because it will never happen. We will not do it. We will not allow our country to default.

They continue to talk this way because it is the way they are running government, whether it is the government shutdown or the debt limit or the highway trust fund or the Export-Import Bank or the FAA, which we are going to be taking up soon. I am sure that that will go to the last second before we will ever actually act. They will probably do a delay and do it a little later on in the year because that is the way we operate around here. It is unfortunate.

Mr. Chairman, I point out there is a reason why the President has proposed a $3 trillion cut in the deficit on top of the $4 trillion that has already been enacted into law. It is to lower the national debt. We are working toward it.

In fact, this President cut the trillion-dollar Bush deficit in half in less than 4½ years.

One last time, I want to point out that we see the Republican budget. We understand the clarity in terms of the cuts you would make to Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and the Affordable Care Act.

There is one portion here, ''other mandatory cuts,'' and I suspect we know what they are as well. They are cuts to veterans', military personnel's, and Federal employees' pensions—veterans' pensions, military personnel's pensions, and Federal employees' pensions.

I suspect people who live around Richmond, Virginia, or down by Norfolk would be very concerned about those cuts you may propose, as well as those folks who live in Virginia and Maryland surrounding Washington, D.C. A lot of Federal employees work around here. I know there are a lot of military employees as well. I think they are concerned about their pensions, the ones that you want to cut in the Federal Republican budget.

Mr. Chairman, I am just looking for a little more transparency.

I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chair, I thank the gentleman from Indiana for introducing the amendment. I know it is in good faith.

I am looking at my favorite chart since I have been here about what causes the public debt. I hear all of these folks talking about it—in both parties running for President—about the public debt, and I don't know what public debt they are talking about, to be very frank with you.

Let me tell you what the public debt is all about that we are talking about: $19 trillion and rising. Most of the debt that we carry from year to year—and we have to pay interest on that debt, as you well know—comes from either the tax cuts of 2001 and 2003 combined with the two wars we never paid for. I mean, those are the facts. I didn't make them up.

So we have very little in the discretionary part of the budget. It is only 30 percent of the total budget. We do have a solution to part of the problem in that we extended Medicare for one of those mandatory costs for 12 years. That is what the ACA did.

I am telling you we ought to learn what the facts are, and then maybe we would reduce the number of bills as well as the amendments.

The Acting CHAIR. All Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Chairman, how much time do I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Indiana has 3 minutes remaining.

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Chairman, with all due respect to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, their arguments seem to be summarized this way: that somehow if we just would all go bury our head in the sand that we would be better off.

I mean, the reality is this: our Nation does have a $19 trillion debt. The reality is that every time this Congress had set a debt limit for our spending, we have breached that debt limit and had to raise another one. The reality is, as we have approached these debt limits in recent years, the Department of the Treasury has taken what they call extraordinary measures, doing it under the law to try to lengthen the amount of time until we hit that debt limit.

This amendment is really a very modest one. All the amendment says is, if the Department of the Treasury is going to take extraordinary measures to avoid the limit on debt that has been set by Congress, that they ought to tell us all what they are doing. They ought to define what it is. They ought to define how much time we are going to buy with these extraordinary measures, and they ought to tell us what it costs as we juggle all this money around. Because when you start juggling money around, as everybody knows in their own life and in their own bills they have to pay, it costs money. That is all this amendment does.

□ 1530

That is all this amendment does. All this amendment does is make sure that as we approach the next debt limit and the Department of the Treasury takes the next extraordinary measures—we can bury our head in the sand and say it won't happen, but our entire Nation's history says it will—that we ought to define what they are going to do. They ought to tell us, tell the American people. They ought to explain how much time that buys, and they ought to say how much it costs. I hope my colleagues can support that.

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

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chairman, the gentleman speaks of burying one's head in the sand. I think an example of that is not asking the OMB Director to come up to the Hill to talk to the Congress about the President's budget.

As I mentioned before, the President's budget proposed $3 trillion in additional cuts to the Federal deficit. I may not agree with all the cuts the President is proposing, but I think it is a healthy thing for the President's representative, the Director of the OMB, to come before the Congress and speak about that; yet the other side of the aisle has refused to allow the OMB Director to come speak to the Congress to talk about these issues.

So there is hypocrisy and then there is hypocrisy. Talk about putting your head in the sand. There is not enough sand for you all to put your heads in.

The facts are the facts. Reductions are taking place. Accept it. They may not be pretty. The President is proposing them. At least listen to him before you totally disregard it before he has an opportunity to speak to you all. That is what has happened.

Again, I know what the Republican budget says. It says cuts to veterans' pensions, military pensions, as well as to Federal employee pensions. That is what your budget does. Be honest about it. You talk about Social Security cuts. You make a lot of cuts, but at least talk about the other miscellaneous mandatory cuts, which really hurt people. I am not going to support that. You all may. It is in your budget. I am not going to support that. Democrats are not going to support that. You all may support that, but you have to respond to your constituents when you force these cuts down their throats.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is reminded that all remarks are to be addressed to the Chair.

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Chair, how much time is remaining on my side?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Indiana has 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Chairman, this debate is a remarkable one. There is only one group here that has a budget that balances. For the fifth or sixth or seventh year in a row, we will be submitting a budget that balances.

The gentleman speaks of the President's budget. The President is going to have the unique historical legacy of having never offered a budget that balances, ever. This one doesn't. His others haven't. The truth is that, when the President's prior budgets have been put on this floor, they have received virtually no votes, like my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. That is the truth.

Again, back to this very simple amendment. All it does is say, when the Department of Treasury uses extraordinary measures, they should be clear with the American people about what they are doing, how much time that buys us, and what it costs. It is a commonsense amendment. I urge my colleagues to support it.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MESSER).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 7 OFFERED BY MR. GRIJALVA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 7 printed in part A of House Report 114–420.

Mr. GRIJALVA. 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 21, strike ''and''.

Page 4, after line 25, insert the following:

''(D) projections of earnings of individuals, including salary and wages by decile, and

''(E) projections of consumer spending and the impacts of such projections on gross domestic product.''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 609, the gentleman

from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, my amendment requires the Treasury Secretary's report to also include individual salary and wage information as well as projections of consumer spending and the impact of spending cuts on the gross domestic product.

Stagnant American wages in recent decades are, without a question, the country's most central economic challenge, and the issue of wealth and income inequality continues to be a persistent strain on our economy and, indeed, our society. Raising wages is the key in strengthening the middle class, reducing income inequality, and moving families out of poverty.

I am offering this amendment because we have to start getting realistic about the priorities of the American people.

When Americans sit around their dinner tables, their number one discussion is not about the national debt. Their number one concern and discussion is providing for their families and how they are managing their own budgets. Many are seeing that, while costs are rising, their paychecks are not. Everyday items are becoming unaffordable, and workers are sick and tired of working full time and still struggling to get by.

Since 1979, the vast majority of American workers have seen their hourly wages stagnate or, indeed, decline. From 1973 to 2013, hourly compensation of a typical production worker rose just 9 percent, while productivity increased 74 percent. In short, people are working harder and harder, and their paychecks are getting smaller and smaller.

America now has more wealth and income inequality than any major developed country on Earth, and the gap between the very rich and everyone else is wider than at anytime since the 1920s. Shrinking American paychecks are the root cause of rising income inequality, and a host of issues have come with that.

Wages drive our economy and consumer spending amounts to more than two-thirds of U.S. economic activity. A rise in consumer spending would provide a needed boost to the U.S. GDP. It is time to stop suppressing wages through policy choices that are slanted toward helping the wealthy. It is time to recognize that our decisions have a direct impact on a person's paycheck.

Any report attempting to look at long-term fiscal issues of this country must examine why 58 percent of all new income since the Wall Street crash has gone to the top 1 percent. We should be considering how every decision will impact a family's income, and the fact that the underlying bill does not include information on wages is an injustice to struggling American families.

I urge you to support this amendment and show the American people that the Members of Congress are not just fighting for policies that protect the wealthy but, indeed, for policies that protect us all.

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

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, the goal of the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act is to create a sound process for considering the Federal debt limit. This amendment is not focused on that goal and, instead, asks for the administration to speculate about unrelated and impractical issues such as projection of wages at various percentiles. Instead, we should be spending our time focused on the drivers of our debt and how to come up with a credible solution to slow the trajectory of our debt.

I oppose this amendment and ask that Members vote ''no.''

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, the bill overall is a push to continue to deal only with austerity as a plausible budgetary policy for this country. We can see what that austerity only has done to our country so far. This is how we ended up with sequestration. This is how we stifled GDP growth and harmed our overall economic recovery.

The best way to address our long-term debt is to maximize our economic potential. We can't cut our way to prosperity. Instead, we should focus on protecting American workers and families so that they have the wealth necessary to make our economy grow and prosper again.

Mr. Chairman, I urge a ''yes'' vote on the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 8 OFFERED BY MR. TAKANO

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 8 printed in part A of House Report 114–420.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk made in order under the rule.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 4, line 21, strike ''and''.

Page 4, line 25, strike the period and insert ''; and''.

Page 4, after line 25, insert the following:

''(D) how delayed action by Congress to raise the debt limit and the threat of default impacts the economy, including, but not limited to, the impact on the gross domestic product (GDP), interest rates, employment, household wealth, and retirement assets.''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 609, the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of my amendment to help Congress better understand how the mere threat of default would impact our economy.

The Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act gathers information from the Treasury about our Nation's debt but omits critical details; namely, the consequences for the country when my friends in the majority play a game of chicken with the full faith and credit of the United States.

When the majority threatened the default in 2011, it was American families who paid the price. Household wealth fell by $2.4 trillion. Consumer and business confidence plunged. The S&P 500 dropped 17 percent, $800 billion in retirement assets were wiped out, and our credit rating was downgraded, all thanks to Republicans threatening to force an unprecedented default on America's debt.

If the extreme wing of the Republican Party is going to hold the economy hostage over the debt limit, they should at least understand the damage they are causing. My amendment requires the Treasury to include in its report to Congress the impact that the threat of default and congressional delay would have on the economy.

The report would include the estimated effect on the gross domestic product, interest rates, employment, household wealth, and retirement assets. Honestly, I hope we never have to see this impact assessment produced. I hope we never again have to convince Republicans that raising the debt limit is a basic responsibility of Congress, not a bargaining chip. But their record says otherwise.

The next time Republicans seek to score political points and push a radical agenda by threatening not to pay America's bills, I want the public to understand the cost of that threat. I think we will find pretty quickly that the American people have no appetite for petty politics when it comes to the debt limit. I urge my colleagues to support my amendment.

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

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act focuses on creating a process of transparency and accountability to

deal with the debt ceiling. This bill gets Congress, the administration, and the public on the same page about why we continually find ourselves in this position. Raising the debt limit without any plan to get our debt under control in the future is not a plan.

This amendment does not advance that goal. Instead, it goes in the opposite direction and attempts to focus our attention on the potential effects of brinksmanship.

I urge Members to vote ''no'' on this amendment.

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, my amendment does address the issue at hand. It does address the threat, just the mere threat of brinksmanship with paying our Nation's bills. History has shown that just the mere threat of defaulting on our bills has brought about damaging consequences to our economy and to the welfare of our people.

I urge my colleagues to support my amendment.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. TAKANO. 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 gentleman from California will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments printed in part A of House Report 114–420 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 4 by Ms. KELLY of Illinois.

Amendment No. 5 by Mr. DUFFY of Wisconsin.

Amendment No. 7 by Mr. GRIJALVA of Arizona.

Amendment No. 8 by Mr. TAKANO of California.

The Chair will reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote after the first vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MS. KELLY OF ILLINOIS

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) 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 184, noes 234, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 71]

AYES—184

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
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
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Dent
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gibson
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.
Jolly
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
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
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—234

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
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
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
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
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
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
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)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
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

NOT VOTING—15

Bonamici
Castro (TX)
Cohen
Fincher
Herrera Beutler
Hudson
Huizenga (MI)
Lieu, Ted
Moore
Pallone
Pocan
Reed
Smith (WA)
Wasserman Schultz
Westmoreland

□ 1605

Messrs. GOHMERT and HUELSKAMP changed their vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

Messrs. KATKO, McNERNEY, and DOGGETT changed their vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. DUFFY

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY) 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 Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 240, noes 176, not voting 17, as follows:

[Roll No. 72]

AYES—240

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
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
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
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
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)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
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
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—176

Adams
Aguilar
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
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
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
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
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
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
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—17

Bonamici
Brat
Castro (TX)
Cohen
Fincher
Herrera Beutler
Hudson
Huizenga (MI)
Lieu, Ted
Moore
Pallone
Pascrell
Pocan
Reed
Smith (WA)
Wasserman Schultz
Westmoreland

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1610

Mr. BUCHANAN changed his vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. BRAT. Mr. Chair, on rollcall No. 72, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Stated against:

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chair, during the rollcall vote No. 72 on the Duffy Amendment, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

AMENDMENT NO. 7 OFFERED BY MR. GRIJALVA

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) 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 Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 171, noes 245, not voting 17, as follows:

[Roll No. 73]

AYES—171

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Connolly
Conyers
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
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
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Peters
Pingree
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
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
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—245

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
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Cooper
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
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
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
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)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perlmutter
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
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—17

Bonamici
Castro (TX)
Cohen
Davis, Danny
Fincher
Herrera Beutler
Hudson
Huizenga (MI)
Lieu, Ted
Moore
Pallone
Pocan
Reed
Schakowsky
Smith (WA)
Wasserman Schultz
Westmoreland

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting Chair (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1613

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 8 OFFERED BY MR. TAKANO

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) 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 Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 190, noes 227, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 74]

AYES—190

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
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
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Dent
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Fitzpatrick
Fortenberry
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gibson
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.
Jolly
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Miller (MI)
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Upton
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—227

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
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
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
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
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
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—16

Bonamici
Castro (TX)
Cohen
Fincher
Herrera Beutler
Hudson
Huizenga (MI)
Lieu, Ted
Moore
Pallone
Pocan
Reed
Smith (WA)
Valadao
Wasserman Schultz
Westmoreland

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting Chair (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1618

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois changed his vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The Acting CHAIR. There being no further amendments, under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CARTER of Georgia) having assumed the chair, Mr. JENKINS 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. 3442) to provide further means of accountability of the United States debt and promote fiscal responsibility, 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

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. DOGGETT. I am.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Doggett moves to recommit the bill H.R. 3442 to the Committee on Ways and Means with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendments:

Page 4, strike line 22 and all that follows through line 25 and insert the following:

''(C) an analysis of the following:

''(i) Long-term revenue lost from tax avoidance and evasion resulting from tax loopholes exploited by businesses, including corporate inversions, base erosion, unlimited deferral of foreign earnings, and loopholes that encourage the offshoring of jobs and profits.

''(ii) Long-term revenue lost from tax avoidance and evasion resulting from tax loopholes abused by the wealthy, including carried interest, estate tax rules, capital gains rates, and deductions and exemptions that widen income and wealth inequality among individuals.

''(iii) Long-term revenue lost due to unfair policies in the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, including those specified in paragraphs (1) and (2), which contribute to growing tax avoidance and evasion by American businesses and individuals who are increasingly more discouraged by corporations and wealthy individuals not being required to pay their fair share of taxes.

''(iv)) Long-term revenue lost due to unfair policies in the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 which harm middle-class workers and families and the long-term revenue effect of a shrinking middle class.''.

Page 5, line 16, strike ''information, including'' and all that follows through line 2 on page 6 and insert ''information.''.

Mr. MARCHANT (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, to address a problem that has impacted our country for generations, some of our problem-solving colleagues have devised a surefire remedy. They are demanding another government report. Instead of actually voting to prevent more debt when they had the opportunity, they want a report.

Approval of this motion will not kill the report, it will not kill the bill, nor will it send it back to committee. Rather, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended, but it will be a more complete report that more completely describes the problem with which we are dealing.

Some of my Republican colleagues have a near insatiable desire for tax cuts that don't pay for themselves. They don't mind borrowing from foreign sources to provide more tax preferences to Wall Street or the privileged few. This motion would simply expose the cost of this false ideology. It would add a requirement that the public just find out how much these special-interest tax loopholes cost.

Specifically, this report would be expanded to include inversions. These are schemes by which some multinational corporations are renouncing their American charter, their American citizenship, in order to dodge taxes, while continuing to remain in America and claim the benefits of being American, paid for by their business competitors and other taxpayers. We have had a recent string of these inversions, which are really perversions of our Tax Code by those who refuse to pay their fair share of the cost of national security and other vital services.

American corporation Johnson Controls, for example, has announced its intent to merge with Tyco. Tyco was once an American citizen, before it became a citizen of Bermuda, before it switched to become a citizen of Ireland—all the while being managed in New Jersey. And Pfizer, the largest pharmaceutical company, is seeking the luck of the Irish—the Irish taxes, that is—but it certainly refuses to charge Americans lower, more reasonable Irish pharmaceutical costs.

These are the same companies that are insulted by the notion that they ought to pay a higher rate on their earnings than the people who clean up the boardroom at night.

The Republican chairman of a Houston oil services company wrote me a long time ago rejecting this notion as unfair and unpatriotic.

He said:

We are proud of our country, and we are willing to pay U.S. taxes to receive the wonderful benefits of U.S. citizenship. My strongly held view is that if companies want to be headquartered in some tax haven, then the management should give up their U.S. citizenship and move there.

I agree. But that is not what happens. With our current tax loopholes, they don't have to move much more than a mailbox and few staff members.

Since the U.S. Supreme Court thinks that corporations are people for many other purposes, I agree with former Secretary Hillary Clinton's proposal to treat these charter-changing corporations as individuals like the super rich individuals who turn in passports and leave America. Apply an exit tax to previous profits that these corporations want to take out of the country.

There is much more that the Treasury Department can and should do now, since what it has done so far under existing legal authority has not accomplished very much.

Today, let's just get a report about it, about a giant rip-off of America. Corporations which are shipping their jobs and profits overseas while paying their lobbyists and their chief executive officers more than they pay the United States Treasury in taxes in any given year have made a pretty good investment for themselves, but it is not too great for the rest of us. They could not do it without enablers in this Congress.

American companies who stay in America and contribute to building American manufacturing in America deserve to have a level playing field. They help keep us secure at home and abroad, and they deserve to be treated fairly. In order to create more opportunity for all, we need more responsibility from all. Let's at least get a report about it.

That is all that this motion to recommit does is to ask for a report to go along with the report that they are seeking from the Treasury Department to tell us what is happening, how our middle class—our working Americans—are having to pay more because some others won't pay their fair share.

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

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge the House to reject this motion to recommit and adopt the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act. It is a commonsense solution to Washington's debt-crisis mentality.

H.R. 3442 creates a process to bring transparency, responsibility, and consistency to the debt management process. Regardless of whether a person supports raising the debt ceiling or not, everyone should support a process that gives us more information to make an educated decision.

□ 1630

The Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act requires the administration to report on the state of the national debt before the debt ceiling is reached. It also requires the administration to make recommendations and report information about how to reduce the debt and how America can meet its future obligations.

This accountability will give Congress the information it needs when considering the debt limit. All of this information will be made public online.

H.R. 3442 is a strong first step to move government away from its current crisis approach and changes the focus into coming up with solutions for our debt problem. I am a firm believer in H.R. 3442.

I urge all Members to reject this motion to recommit, and support the legislation.

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

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

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 5-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by 5-minute votes on passage of H.R. 3442, if ordered; ordering the previous question on House Resolution 611; and adoption of the House Resolution 611, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 179, noes 238, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 75]

AYES—179

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
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
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
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.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
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
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—238

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
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
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
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)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
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—16

Bonamici
Castro (TX)
Cohen
Fincher
Herrera Beutler
Hudson
Huizenga (MI)
Lieu, Ted
Moore
Pallone
Pocan
Reed
Roskam
Smith (WA)
Wasserman Schultz
Westmoreland

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1636

Mr. POMPEO changed his vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

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

Mr. DOGGETT. 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 267, noes 151, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 76]

AYES—267

Abraham
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bera
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Blumenauer
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Byrne
Calvert
Carney
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Delaney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duckworth
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Esty
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Himes
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)
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lipinski
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)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Ruiz
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schrader

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
Torres
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Vela
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—151

Adams
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Beyer
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Connolly
Conyers
Courtney
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kirkpatrick
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Pingree
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—15

Bonamici
Castro (TX)
Cohen
Fincher
Herrera Beutler
Hudson
Huizenga (MI)
Lieu, Ted
Moore
Pallone
Pocan
Reed
Smith (WA)
Wasserman Schultz
Westmoreland

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1642

Mr. DOGGETT changed his vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question 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, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

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

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 237, nays 178, not voting 18, as follows:

[Roll No. 77]

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)
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
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
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
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)
Mullin
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
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—178

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
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
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
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
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
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
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—18

Bonamici
Buchanan
Castro (TX)
Cohen
Fincher
Fortenberry
Herrera Beutler
Hudson
Huizenga (MI)
Joyce
Lieu, Ted
Moore
Pallone
Pocan
Reed
Smith (WA)
Wasserman Schultz
Westmoreland

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1649

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. POLIS. 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 237, noes 174, not voting 22, as follows:

[Roll No. 78]

AYES—237

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costa
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Cuellar
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
Flores
Forbes
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
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
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)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
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
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—174

Adams
Aguilar
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Courtney
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
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
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
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
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—22

Amodei
Bonamici
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Castro (TX)
Chaffetz
Cohen
Fincher
Fleming
Fortenberry
Herrera Beutler
Hudson
Huizenga (MI)
Joyce
Lieu, Ted
Moore
Pallone
Pocan
Reed
Smith (WA)
Wasserman Schultz
Westmoreland

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1655

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.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, my vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 71 on the Kelly of Illinois Amendment to 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 "aye."

My vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 72 on the Duffy Amendment to 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."

My vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 73 on the Grijalva Amendment No. 7 to 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 "aye."

My vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 74 on the Takano Amendment to 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 "aye."

My vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 75 on the Motion to recommit 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 "aye."

My vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 76 on the final passage of 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."

My vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 77 on the Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 2017. 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."

My vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 78 on H. Res. 611—Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 2017—Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure 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 CLERK TO MAKE CORRECTIONS IN ENGROSSMENT OF H.R. 3442, DEBT MANAGEMENT AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT OF 2015

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Clerk be authorized to make technical corrections in the engrossment of H.R. 3442, to include corrections in spelling, punctuation, section numbering and cross-referencing, and the insertion of appropriate headings.

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

There was no objection.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to correct the RECORD regarding my

vote during yesterday's consideration of the Democratic motion to recommit on H.R. 3293, rollcall 69. While my vote was recorded as ''no,'' it was my intention to vote ''aye,'' as I strongly support scientific research into causes and the prevention of gun violence.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H. RES. 571

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my name be removed as a cosponsor of H. Res. 571.

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

There was no objection.

NATIONAL COURT REPORTING AND CAPTIONING WEEK

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

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of National Court Reporting and Captioning Week, which is taking place next week.

Court reporters and captioners are highly specialized professionals who record our most important public events and provide vital closed-captioning services to nearly 48 million Americans.

My own parents met in court reporting school and went on to start a small, successful business. The training is rigorous. Certification requires one's ability to type at a rate of 225 words per minutes. A court reporter is transcribing this very moment in Congress.

The New Hampshire Court Reporters Association recently celebrated its 30th anniversary, but the profession's history in the United States extends much further. Because of court reporters, we have an accurate record of the first days of our country as our Founding Fathers drafted the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

I would like to thank court reporters and captioners for their service, enabling public participation in our democracy—a cornerstone of representative government in the United States.

□ 1700

TRIBUTE TO SANFORD ''MAN MAN'' HARLING III

(Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Sanford Harling III, a widely known and well-loved 12-year-old from Norristown, Pennsylvania, affectionately known as ''Man Man.''

Sanford tragically died after he selflessly dove back into the flames of his own burning home to rescue his father, who was bedridden while recovering from hip surgery. Unbeknownst to Man Man, his father had already escaped through a second-story window.

Although this courageous 12-year-old never reemerged from the smoldering ruins of his home, his memory now resonates well beyond his community thanks to this remarkable act of heroism.

While the honor and recognition that Sanford deserves cannot return him to the embrace of his family, perhaps his shining example will inspire other deeds of lifesaving bravery and devotion. He will be forever remembered in our community and our country as a hero.

I offer my deepest sympathies to the Harling family and to everyone who knew and cherished this young man's character.

SUPREME COURT STAY ON CLEAN POWER PLAN

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

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, every day hardworking American families are living with greater burdens placed upon them by their own Federal Government. As our constituents struggle to pay their bills and realize the American Dream, they do so under a weight of taxes and burdensome regulations from Washington.

This week, the working guy or gal actually got a reprieve from one of these costly burdens when the Supreme Court placed a stay on President Obama's so-called Clean Power Plan. The $480 billion plan—yes, that is billion, with a B—would increase electric rates for millions of Americans. In Kansas, electric utility rates may spike by 30 percent.

At townhall meetings with constituents, I rarely have a constituent come up and ask for a 30 percent increase in their electric rates, yet Washington will make Americans foot the bill once again.

What do we get for the $408 billion in hidden taxes and higher electric utility rates? A potential one one-hundredth of a degree reduction in global temperatures.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the Supreme Court for placing a hold on this Big Government tax on my constituents. Finally, a win for the little guy.

FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE SURVEILLANCE ACT SECTION 702 AND SPYING BY NSA

(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, the NSA is using a loophole in the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act to spy on Americans without a warrant. Under section 702 of FISA, government agents may seize information from databases on suspected foreign terrorists.

While seizing the information on these terrorists, NSA also seizes data on Americans without a warrant, data that includes emails, texts, and voice communication. This is an unlawful interpretation of FISA.

It was never the intent of Congress that section 702 would be used to create databases of information that would later be searched for information on American citizens without a search warrant and without that individual's knowledge.

I have introduced legislation that would prohibit warrantless searches of government databases for information that pertains to U.S. citizens.

The NSA has and will continue to violate the constitutional protections guaranteed to every American unless Congress acts. Until we fix this and make the law clear, citizens will never be sure or safe that their private conversations are secure from the eyes and spies of government.

The Bill of Rights cannot be trampled upon in the name of national security, whether the NSA likes it or not.

And that is just the way it is.

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

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

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to bring attention to the recent outstanding achievements of the University of Texas at Austin. This public university, which I represent, has continued to fulfill the Texas Constitution's mandate that UT be a ''university of the first class.''

I regularly meet with President Greg Fenves and Chancellor Admiral William McRaven. I would like to praise them for their continued dedication to upholding the core values of UT—particularly the students' and faculty's cutting-edge research and development of new technologies.

A top public university, UT has conducted $650 million worth of innovative scientific and scholarly research. In the past few years, the Cockrell School of Engineering has invented new technologies, including a device that will improve physical therapy for patients recovering from spinal cord injuries.

The Dell Medical School, under the leadership of neurologist Dean Clay Johnston, is planning to reinvent medical education and healthcare thinking. They are transforming the way we learn about health.

The students at UT are taught by some of the most brilliant minds in the country. More than 200 members of the National Academies and 12 National Medal of Science recipients serve as UT professors.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the University of Texas at Austin on these impressive accomplishments. Our country is proud of Texas' flagship university. What starts at the University of Texas truly does change the world.

I say, ''Hook 'em.''

In God we trust.

HONORING CLAIRE BENTON

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Claire Benton of Minnetonka for earning the Congressional Award Silver Medal. The Congressional Award is given by Congress to recognize initiative, service, and achievement in young people.

In order to earn the Silver Medal, Claire needed to complete over 400 hours in voluntary public service, personal development, physical fitness, and expedition/exploration. Claire served her community by volunteering at her local public library and spending time as a counselor at an adventure camp. She also reached the physical fitness goals by participating in cardiovascular and endurance activities that helped her increase her running distance from 8 miles to 20.

Mr. Speaker, the Congressional Award was established in 1979 in order to inspire young people like Claire and recognize their efforts to better themselves. Claire's hard work and dedication inspire other young people to become future leaders in service to their community.

Congratulations, Claire.

SUPREME COURT REJECTS EXECUTIVE OVERREACH

(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, yesterday we saw the Supreme Court reject yet another of President Obama's executive overreaches.

The President's effort to unilaterally micromanage electrical power plants across the Nation, without any legal authority to do so, would drive up energy costs in virtually every community and nearly half a trillion dollars in additional costs.

In just the last few months, Federal courts have rejected the President's amnesty plan, his EPA's waters of the U.S. power grab, and now his power plant regulation. The message of these decisions is clear: the President should abandon his efforts to end-run around Congress, which in nearly every case have been found to violate the law, and work with Congress, the people's House, to address the issues facing our Nation.

JOB LOSSES IN THE COAL INDUSTRY

(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, I rise today on behalf of some recently laid-off coal miners from Somerset County, Pennsylvania.

For 7 years, President Obama has been targeting their jobs and, in the process, sacrificing the families and communities who depend on those jobs. The Obama Administration is using the EPA to conjure up regulations to all but eliminate a major part of the energy industry in western Pennsylvania.

What do you say to a hardworking, middle class dad, who has a wife, three kids, and a mortgage, whose livelihood has been taken away? This particular dad's job is but one of 40,000 jobs that have been lost in coal country. This assault on good, family-sustaining jobs is one of the reasons the average family income has never fully recovered from the Great Recession.

Yesterday, Fed Chair Janet Yellen testified about headwinds facing the economy. I suggest there are a number of manmade anthropogenic—to borrow a phrase—headwinds, and the EPA's regulatory assault is one of them.

Sacrificing the livelihood of hardworking Americans for some personal political philosophy is unconscionable. I will continue to fight against the President's war on middle class jobs.

HONORING REPRESENTATIVE MICHAEL GARVER ''MIKE'' OXLEY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I would ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the topic of this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CHABOT. I include in the RECORD two eulogies that many of us actually heard personally given in Findlay, Ohio, when we attended a very wonderful service for our colleague, Mike Oxley, recently. These two specific eulogies are from his son, Elvis, and from Jim Conzelman, who is his long-time devoted chief of staff.

[Jan. 5, 2016]

EULOGY OF MIKE OXLEY

O–H–I–O

My name is Michael Chadd Elvis Oxley, son of Patricia and Mike, husband to Jennifer, and father to Maximus Garver Oxley. I stand before you this afternoon to mourn the loss of and celebrate the life of my father.

As the joke goes, ''How do you know if someone is vegan or does Cross Fit?'' They'll tell you.

Bob Hope
Beachboy Al Jardine
Orville & Wilbur Wright
General William Tecumseh Sherman
Archie Griffin
Wendy's
Cooper Tire
Marathon Petroleum
Kroger
Victoria's Secret

You may have heard of these, they're from Ohio. And so was one Michael Garver Oxley.

Everyone in this church knows, on average, between 300–500 direct or indirect accounts of where my father's golf ball landed, what club was implemented at the time, and the associated weather conditions, so I won't focus on that today.

Looking back now, I see how supremely fortunate I am to have had Mike Oxley as my father. I can go to YouTube, LexisNexis or the Hancock County Historical Museum Oxley Government Center, click a button and see my father in action again. 99% do not have that beautiful blessing, and for that privilege I am thankful and humbled.

However, if I may make one request of you when you have a chance: I want your personal stories. Not for attribution, not for publication. I want the insider view into my father from your perspective. I want meat. For instance, a member of the Real Miami staff reached out to me and said how charmed she was that rather than sitting at the big donor table, Dad sat with the staff to ask them about their Miami experience, and it touched her heart. A former Member shared with me yesterday that Dad politely brokered a meeting between him and a Committee Chair so that a public flare up would soon be quelled and that closure could be reached on an important issue.

I know all too well where Dad's ball landed, or how the press statements were presented. I selfishly want this living history to be the very marrow on which I can chew when I miss him the most. I want more in a time when I have less.

When my father was, so we thought, in his final days in October, Dad pulled me close and reminded me that I tended to get things wrong the first time, but the second time I got them right. He told me he loved me and was proud of me, which is all I could have ever asked for.

My father and I had grown closer in my 30's once I had found the love of my life, earned my MBA, and started my own business—all things I did right the second time—our relationship elevated to a much higher level.

The next day Dad awoke and decided it was time to have cataract surgery. By that afternoon, with renewed ability to clearly see his Grandson and Buckeye football, Dad had a new zeal for life and a new inspiration to get better. Thank you, Dr. Harry, for extending my father's quality and quantity of life.

Quote: ''When the New York Giants, a team you would give your right arm to beat, and vice versa, sends you a gift—that's something. When everybody down to the groundskeepers and those boys in white coats remember you with trophies—that's something. When you have a wonderful mother-in-law who takes sides with you in squabbles with her own daughter—that's something. When you have a father and a mother who work all their lives so you can have an education and build your body—it's a blessing. When you have a wife who has been a tower of strength and shown more courage than you dreamed existed—that's the finest I know.''

''So I close in saying that I might have been given a bad break, but I've got an awful lot to live for.''

Most of you may not know that quote because it is the third stanza after a much more memorable, pithy truth:

''Fans, for the past two weeks you have been reading about the bad break I got. Yet today I consider myself the luckiest man on the face of this earth. I have been in ballparks for seventeen years and have never received anything but kindness and encouragement from you fans.''—Lou Gehrig July 4, 1939.

To me, there could be no more fitting parallel to Dad on so many levels.

Dad's Bucket List was largely accomplished:

Retired the Roll Call Trophy

Visited most continents multiple times

Propelled significant legislation in telecom reform, brownfield cleanup, spectrum auction, fractions to decimals, terrorism risk insurance, and anti-fraud.

Mentored hundreds of aspiring politicos on both sides of the aisle.

Raised countless funds for charities and fellow candidates.

Rode an ostrich in Ohio, a camel in Egypt, and Air Force One with Reagan.

Fostered the love of golf in his grandson.

And shared all of these experiences with his life partner of 44 years.

He did everything he could to enjoy one last reunion, one last round of golf, and one last embrace of his family. It was that fighting spirit for which he was known in life as he will be in death.

I am so thankful for this outpouring of love and affection and on behalf of the Oxley family we sincerely appreciate you celebrating Dad's life today. This will not be easy for any of us for a while, but I know we will regularly convene over martinis (see thrus) in order to help one another through this. That would be Dad's will.

On the night before he passed, my father texted me ''Are you awake?'' which indicated he wanted me to check in on him. This was a simple request to fulfill and I did. Retrospectively, I look at that one layer deeper. ''Awake'' in the ancient Greek is ''Gregorio'' and it takes on a more metaphysical definition—conscious, active, focused, vigilant.

Thanks to you, Dad, I am awake. I am very awake.

Good afternoon friends and family of Team Oxley!

I am Jim Conzelman and had the honor serving as Mike Oxley's Chief of Staff from August of 1981 to January of 2007.

Pat, Chadd, Jennifer thank you from all of us for sharing ''The Ox'' with us for so many wonderful years.

Over the past couple of days, notes have poured in regarding the passing of our friend Mike Oxley. Allow me to read a couple of them to you.

''He was a dear friend, one of the true good guys . . . a rarity in this town, a man of integrity, a great American!'' It goes on and on. Heartfelt notes that mean so much to this family.

Simply put, Mike was an extraordinary human being. He was comfortable in his own skin. I remember once Mike telling the staff they could schedule him in any event in the district, ''just do not put me in blue jeans and boots and send me to a farm to talk AG issues. That dog won't hunt.''

If you were to look at our office photo album, you would see Mike on many a farm in Ohio's Fourth Congressional District wearing slacks, white shirt with rolled up sleeves talking substantive AG issues with farmers. Mike was very comfortable. He was not a phony, it came through and they loved him. You can understand why.

He enjoyed people and respected them as human beings. In all the years I have known Mike I never heard him talk down or poorly about another person. This was especially true with his colleagues in the House. It just wasn't in his DNA to tear someone else down to make himself look better. He was as comfortable talking to friends and neighbors as he was to colleagues in the House, the Senate and even the President of the United States.

Mike won in a special election in 1981. President Reagan invited him to come to the White House to meet and have a photo op in the Oval Office. Over breakfast he told son Chadd that he was going to meet the President. Chadd, ever the capitalist, gave Mike his autograph book and asked him to have the President sign it with just his name.

The meeting went very well, but ran way over schedule because of Mike's ability to connect with the President. He almost forgot to have the book signed but at the last minute remembered. That night at dinner Chadd was given his book back. To Chadd with best wishes Ronald Reagan. Chadd was not happy. ''Dad I only wanted the President's name. Now with mine on the page it has decreased value if I want to sell it later.''

Mike also connected with President George H. W. Bush. He talked to the President, then Vice President to come out to Ohio to do a political event. After the dinner speech, the Vice President and Mrs. Bush mingled with Mike and Pat's friends. The Oxleys had been asked to ride with the Bushes in the motorcade and return to Washington with them on Air Force 2. The Secret Service Agent had strict instructions . . . when the VP departs you must be with him. As time went by, Mrs. Bush left the room, Pat Oxley left the room, the Vice President left the room. Mike was engaged in conversation with friends and became totally engrossed in the conversation. Nothing else mattered to him at that time than talking to his friends. I told him . . . ''sir you must leave.''

''In just a minute'', Mike replied. ''No Mike NOW.'' He ran out catching the just as the motorcade pulling out. But that was the way Mike was. When he was talking to you, you were the most important person in the room and you knew it.

Another amazing attribute of Mike's was his optimistic outlook on life. Most of this optimism was due to his beautiful bride, Pat Oxley. Pat you never get enough credit for being the only one that kept Mike ever optimistic and grounded. Thank you PAT for all that you did.

Do you realize how difficult it was to be an upbeat Republican in 70's and 80's? House Republican's got beat ALL the time . . . in committee, on the floor of the House and even on the field with the Republican Congressional Baseball team.

But Mike was always the optimist. He knew we would eventually win and was always looking for opportunities that would help others in our great country . . . such as distant learning, telemedicine, saving Marathon Oil in his hometown of Findlay from a hostile takeover, keeping the Abrahams M–1 Tank in Lima from being mothballed and of course making corporate governance stronger with his signature Sarbanes Oxley legislation.

With each of these endeavors, Mike always came prepared. At any hearing, any markup, any meeting he always knew his facts and what to say and when to say it. Mike always made a point, but never at anyone's expense. He would show up on time or early to meetings because it was a right thing to do. You would usually find him chatting with staff or witnesses and would stay to the bitter end of a meeting or hearing long after most had left. He would look you straight in the eye and regale you with stories of that 4 letter word . . . . golf, or baseball talking about his beloved Detroit Tigers or basketball in the House gym and beating Congressman Ed Markey, now Senator Markey in the free throw contest. It should be noted Mike never told us when Ed beat him in the contest.

He was always prepared with the follow up . . . returning phone calls, and thanking folks for their hard work. Many here today have legislative red-lines they worked on with personal thank you note from Mike. One former staffer told me, ''I was a no body and he thanked me. I will treasure this forever.''

All of these Oxley attributes set an example whether it was professional or personal he always did the right thing.

Mike loved his family. First decision after being elected to Congress was moving Pat and Chadd to DC.

If you look at the official portrait Mike insisted on having the family photo in it. This was PJ and PM. (pre Jennifer Oxley and pre Max Oxley). If he was Chairman today, I know he would have figured out a way to have their likeness photo shopped . . . No artist shopped in.

All in all future politicians will go to campaign school to study and learn the Oxley Model.

Treating people as human beings and with respect. Being optimistic and looking for opportunities to leave this world a better place than you found it.

Being prepared to engage with life . . . showing up on time, thanking everyone, communicating face to face with people.

Setting an example by always doing the right thing.

H O P E . . . . This is why he was a great Congressman, great Chairman and a great friend to all of us.

Ralph Waldo Emerson once said that the important thing is ''not length of life, but depth of life.'' From his family to his friends to his accomplishments, I can't think of a person who led a deeper, fuller, richer life than Mike Oxley.

You all know Mike loved music . . . music of the 50's 60's 70's . . . 80's no so much. He could identify all the artists and could sing all of the lyrics. He was seldom wrong. Allow me close with a song that was #1 in 1973 that written and sung by the late John Denver. It goes like this—

Sunshine on my shoulders makes me happy,
Sunshine in my eyes can make me cry.
Sunshine on the water looks so lovely,
Sunshine almost always makes me high.
If I had a day that I could give you,
I'd give to you the day just like today.
If I had a song that I could sing for you,
I'd sing a song to make you feel this way.
If I had a tale that I could tell you,
I'd tell a tale sure to make you smile.
If I had a wish I could wish for you,
I'd make a wish for sunshine for you all the while.

Thank you Mike for touching our lives and making the sun shine on all of us.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Mike Oxley, who served in this body for 25 years and who, sadly, passed away from lung cancer on January 1 of this year. Today would have been Mike's 72nd birthday, and he will be missed by those of us who had the pleasure and the honor of knowing him. I served with Mike in this House for 12 years, from 1995 to 2007, and I will always remember that time very fondly.

Mike Oxley was a lot of things: an attorney, an investigator, a leader, a competitor, an avid golfer, and so many more things. He was dedicated to serving his community and serving the people of the State of Ohio and the people of our entire country.

Mike graduated from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, in 1966. Speaker RYAN, my son, and many other distinguished people are graduates of Miami University in Oxford. Mike graduated with a degree in political science and

obtained his law degree from Ohio State University.

Following law school, Mike was a special agent with the FBI, working primarily in Washington, Boston, and New York. In that position, he learned a number of investigative skills that he would later use here in Congress.

After his time with the FBI, Mike returned to Ohio and began a private law practice, but he was called to service once again when he was elected to the Ohio House of Representatives in 1972. He served in the Ohio House until 1981, when he was elected to Congress in a special election to fill a vacancy upon the death of Congressman Tennyson Guyer. Mike would represent the people of Ohio's Fourth Congressional District for the next 25 years.

Upon his retirement from Congress in 2007, Mike continued to find ways to serve our Nation when he was in the private sector. He was a member of the board of trustees for the University of Findlay. He remained active at his alma mater, Miami University. Most recently, he was a senior adviser on the board of directors of NASDAQ OMX Group, Inc.

After being diagnosed with non-small cell lung cancer, a type of lung cancer usually affecting nonsmokers like Mike, he joined the board of directors of the Lung Cancer Alliance. He would dedicate much of his remaining time in fighting lung cancer, including serving as chairman of the Lung Cancer Alliance board, beginning in 2014.

Mike was a very good man. He really was. He was a family man. In fact, his wife, Pat; his son, Elvis; his grandson, Max; and other families members; as well as his chief of staff, Jim Conzelman, are with us in the gallery this evening.

As they know, he loved life. He had a very infectious laugh. He was a golf enthusiast. He loved sports of all sorts and regularly played pickup basketball with other Members.

For many who served with him, we will never forget his dedication to the congressional baseball team and the baseball game. He viewed the game as a chance for Members from both sides of the aisle to put aside their differences and engage in a friendly contest of America's pastime, all while raising money for charitable causes. But that didn't mean he didn't want to win. He did.

In fact, he was so dedicated to the game that he was always trying to recruit new players to improve the Republican's prospects on the diamond. Not surprisingly, in the eight games that Ox managed the Republican team, we beat the Democrats seven times. We have gone downhill from there.

At times, though, Mike's competitive streak may have gotten the best of him. In the 1994 game, Ox was playing first base when then-Representative, now-Senator SHERROD BROWN was racing to beat out a ground ball. As Ox reached for an errant throw, the two men collided and Mike broke his arm. You would think that might discourage him from playing in the future, but the very next year there was Ox taking the field again and leading the Republican team.

That is who Mike Oxley was: a true competitor who never backed down from a challenge. Yet he approached challenges, whether it was the congressional baseball team or a divisive fight here on the House floor, with a positive, optimistic demeanor, a smile on his face, and usually a kind word for those in the opposition. Put another way, he would disagree without being disagreeable, which is an admirable trait and an invaluable skill in all areas of life.

Here is what I will remember most about Mike Oxley: he was a friend, a colleague, and, more importantly, he was a decent, genuine family man who was gracious and well-liked by everyone who had the pleasure of serving with him.

He will be missed.

□ 1715

To Mike's wife, Pat, his son Elvis, his grandson Max, and the entire Oxley family, please know that those of us who knew Mike are saddened by your loss, but we appreciate the time you allowed us to spend with him here in the United States Congress. You are in our thoughts and our prayers. God bless all of you.

There are many other Members who will be sharing some of their remembrances here during this Special Order. I would like at this point to turn to one of our colleagues also from Ohio who was a very, very good friend of Mike Oxley and just a great American himself, the gentleman from the great State of Ohio (Mr. TIBERI).

Mr. TIBERI. Mr. Speaker, how significant and beautiful that today, the day of Mike Oxley's birth, we celebrate his glorious and beautiful life. Thank you, Pat. Thank you, Chadd Elvis. Thank you, Jennifer and grandson Max. Thanks to all of you for sharing Mike Oxley with us, as Mr. CHABOT said: It was really a special, special honor.

I met the Ox when I was a senior in college, a congressional staffer for then Congressman John Kasich. I got asked to help staff an event that Congressman Oxley and Congressman Kasich did here in Washington, D.C. It was called a Washington Fly-In. Here this Congressman by the name of Mike Oxley met me and was as nice to me as he was to his colleagues at this fly-in, as a young guy who came in for this event from Ohio.

Ironic that 15 years later—we didn't know—that I would be his colleague. He treated me the same then, the same throughout the time that I knew Mike. The way that he treated people was kind of inspirational for a really important guy. He led in that way, too. His staff treated people, whether they be here in Washington or back in Ohio, with the same type of respect that their boss treated people.

After that election in 2000, we had a freshman orientation. I replaced the man that I had worked for in the 1980s and early 1990s, John Kasich. I was at this freshman orientation filling out this form for committee assignments.

Another Congressman from our delegation, who seemed to be the chairman of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, came up to me and said: Well, you know, just fill out that form and put Financial Services, a brand-new committee to be chaired by Mike Oxley, and Education and Workforce, a committee that is going to be chaired by me, as your committees because that is what you are going to get.

I said to then Congressman Boehner, well, Committee on Financial Services sounds really good, Committee on Education and the Workforce not so much.

So I filled out my form, and I put Committee on Financial Services among some other committees. I excluded Education and the Workforce. About 10 days later, I got my committee assignments, Committee on Financial Services and Committee on Education and the Workforce.

I told my new chairman, Mike Oxley, the story. I said: Was this thing wired? In his glorious, special way, he got that grin, and he just laughed, as Mike Oxley often did. He was such a cheerful guy. He was a special chairman.

I didn't realize then how lucky I was to have Mike Oxley as a chairman for 6 years on this brand-new committee. Every year that went by, more and more Members wanted to be on this committee. It was obviously an important committee, but they also wanted to be on a committee chaired by Mike Oxley. His disposition was great, but he also was such a team guy. It was just in his blood that he wanted to get things done, and he wanted to help the team, the team being our Republican Conference, the team being the Congress, the team being members of the Committee on Financial Services.

I remember one day we were doing a delegation meeting, and during the meeting Mike said: I am going to do an event for one of the members of our Committee on Financial Services. If you have nothing going on, why don't you join me? I am driving. We get into his car, and out blares Beach Boys music, which obviously was one of Mike's favorites.

As we are listening to the song, I am thinking how ironic, this makes so much sense. It made sense then; it makes sense now, going back to a simpler time. Mike was pretty simple in how he was a Congressman and how he was a chairman. It wasn't about him. It was never about him. That is why he was such a great mentor.

It was about moving the issues forward. He put newer members or subcommittee chairmen in charge of issues. He helped us through it. When the light shone, he ignored it. He shared it, he put us out in front. It was about the team.

As Mr. CHABOT mentioned, he was a great manager for the congressional

baseball team for the Republicans. He was a manager as our chairman. He was a great manager as our chairman. We learned a lot. We learned a lot from Mike Oxley—not just members of the committee, but staff members, so many people who have come through this building, who have come through the Rayburn Building. He was a mentor.

He made a lot of people who touched his life better. He made me better as a Member of Congress. He made me better as a person, and I appreciate that, Pat. We thank you for having you share him with us. God bless you all.

Mr. CHABOT. I thank the gentleman. We greatly appreciate the gentleman's comments here this evening.

I now yield to another gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STIVERS).

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a fellow Ohioan who had distinguished service in this body for 25 years and made a huge difference for everyday Americans for 25 years. Today would be his birthday, Congressman Mike Oxley, Chairman Mike Oxley, who made a huge difference.

I did not have the honor of serving with Congressman Oxley, but what I did have was a chance to meet him and have him be an adviser and a mentor. When I got here and got on the Committee on Financial Services, a committee that he was formerly the chairman of, he took me under his wing. He introduced me to hundreds of people. He helped me find my way here. He helped make sure I got on the path to being a good legislator. He did that, not really knowing me before that.

He became a great friend, a great mentor, and a great adviser. I am really thankful that he was willing to share his time and energy and talents with a guy like me. I want to thank his wife, Pat, his son Chadd, and all the whole Oxley family for letting him share his life, even after he left Congress, with folks who were coming in brand new, trying to make a difference.

He will be remembered as somebody who made a difference for all Americans who wanted to figure out how to make sure they could invest their life savings and not be taken advantage of. Obviously, the famous bill that bears his name was part of a bipartisan response to the Enron crisis. He deserves the credit for saving our financial system and making sure it was safe and sound in the future for all Americans.

He would always take on tough issues. He would always work with people across the aisle. That is who he was and what he did. He served the people of his district proudly, and he worked to bring people together. He was loyal, optimistic, and pragmatic. Even though he was a strong Republican, he would work with Republicans and Democrats to get things done. I think there is a lot that we could all emulate from Mike Oxley's service. We could learn a lot today and in the future.

My thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Pat, and the entire Oxley family during this difficult time. Even during his time when he had lung cancer, he was optimistic and happy and helping other people. I know he has got to be a tough guy to lose and not have around every day because he brightened everybody's day. I know I miss him, and I know you will miss him, and America misses Mike Oxley, and they should.

I hope that in saying good-bye today, we can honor his incredible legacy that he left and the difference he made for America into the future. I just want to remember Mike Oxley as the incredible patriot and friend and mentor that he was and say Godspeed, Mike Oxley.

Mr. CHABOT. I thank the gentleman. This is a bipartisan evening, so I would now like to recognize our colleague, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. DAVID SCOTT).

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I, too, rise to say some words for a very, very, very good man, Mike Oxley. When I came to Congress in the year of 2002, I was assigned to the Committee on Financial Services, and that is where I met Mike Oxley. Our lives intertwined. He was a tremendous help to me on that committee as I was breaking in.

I am very delighted, and it opened my eyes to a world which I was only dimly aware when he asked if I would join him as one of the Members to travel to Scotland and to Europe and to be able to visit and to sit with other bankers and financial people to learn the importance of finance, to learn how it is important for the United States to stay totally in front and to maintain our financial system as the most powerful system in the world.

In order to do that, you have to get across the world and talk with other financial systems. I found out, and it took me going over there to the Bank of Scotland to realize why Mike Oxley wanted to do that, because very few people knew—and I didn't know—that the Royal Bank of Scotland was the fifth largest bank in the United States. To go to Europe and to meet with the finance ministers in Europe, in Brussels, in Paris, and the reason for that was because there was the emerging markets of derivatives and swaps, which was just a burgeoning part of the economy. Now it is an $800 trillion piece of the world's economy.

I went and learned so much there. We went to make sure that the United States had what would be seen as equivalency, to be able to deal with these other nations and their financial systems and banking systems. Then to come back, and roughly 8, 9 years later, and I am sitting now as the ranking member on the subcommittee in Congress that deals with derivatives and swaps. Quite honestly, ladies and gentlemen, when I went with Mike Oxley, I did not know what a derivative was.

Now, Mike and I became friends. When you travel with people, you get to know them, you get to share things with them. I came back, and Mike Oxley comes to me one day. I am wondering what this is about.

He said: David, I have got to see you; David, I have got to see you.

I said: Mike, what is it? What is it?

He said: I heard that your brother-in-law is home run king Hank Aaron. Can I meet him?

Everybody knows that Mike Oxley loved baseball. He loved baseball I am sure almost as much as he loved politics. I know his family knows how much he loved baseball.

I said: Sure, sure.

It was a great evening when Hank came back up. I had dinner, and I invited Mike Oxley to join me and his guests with me and my wife and Hank Aaron, my wife's brother, for dinner at The Capital Grille. Ladies and gentlemen, what an evening that was. I mean, to be there and to hear Mike Oxley and home run king Hank Aaron talk baseball, two great Americans loving America's pastime.

I remember at one point Mike Oxley said: Hank, can I ask you a question?

So Hank said: Sure.

He said: Who was the toughest pitcher who ever pitched against you?

Hank said: All of them, all of them.

Mike said: All of them, all of them.

We would carry that story many times in our conversations.

He said: Oh, man, I will never forget that, when Hank said ''All of them.''

A great man. You know, we all live a life. There are three things that we all are going to see on that gravestone: the year we were born and the year we died, but then there is that other thing. There is that dash in the middle, and the question in everybody's life is, what did you do with your dash, that period from when you were born to when the Lord calls you home.

□ 1730

Mike Oxley did a tremendous amount. One of the things he did was touch my life. Mike Oxley helped me. Mike Oxley was my friend.

I know everybody joins me in saying from the bottom of our hearts to the family, to this Congress, to the people of America: We thank God for sending Mike Oxley our way.

Mr. CHABOT. I thank Mr. SCOTT for his tribute to our colleague and friend, Mike Oxley.

I learned something here this evening. I did not know that I had Mr. SCOTT's brother-in-law's picture up on my wall. He was here in Washington 15 years ago or so, and I was like a kid meeting one of his heroes. I got a picture with him, and it is hanging on my wall.

I yield to my colleague also from Ohio, Mr. LATTA.

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, to Pat and Elvis, again, you have heard such great tributes not only at the funeral not too many weeks back, but this last week in the memorial service in Findlay, and with the Members here tonight.

I will go back. I can remember Mike's first race that he ran for the

Ohio General Assembly. I was in high school at the time. I used to drive my dad around the district, so we would run into each other quite often while we were campaigning.

I know that one of my aunts from Putnam County thought that Mike was just about perfect. She used to rave about Mike all the time. That is the type of person he was. He had an infectious smile, a great laugh, and he could connect with people.

As you have heard from many of the folks speaking here tonight, that is what made Mike such a great individual. He knew how to reach out and touch people and how to get those people to work together and make things actually work.

One of the times I will never forget is back in 1981, after Tenny Guyer passed away, the election was taking place that summer. I was studying for the bar at the same time, but I can still remember everything that was going on. They were tough times. Having gone through a special election myself, I know what those things are like. Mike was one of those kinds of individuals that things didn't affect him; he just went into it and got things done.

One of the things I mentioned just last week at the memorial service is what my dad taught me years ago. There are two types of people that get into public service. There are folks that want to be politicians and there are folks that want to be true public servants.

He said to always remember what the difference between a politician and a public servant is. A politician is a person who goes out there and sees how much they can take from the people they represent for their own benefit, while a public servant sees how much they can give of themselves back to the people they represent. That was Mike. He was that true, dedicated public servant.

With redistricting over the years, I have several of the counties that Mike represented. I can tell you that when I am out, it is quite often that I have people come up to me and tell me about something that Mike did for them. I don't care if it was Social Security, a veteran's case, or Medicare, you name it, people remember those things because Mike was out there. He was a very caring person because, again, he never forgot the folks back home.

When you talk about the folks back home, Mike never forgot his roots in Findlay, Hancock County. Hancock county is my dad's home county. There are great people that live there.

Mike and Pat were very, very generous to the University of Findlay and one of the buildings there. Mike, as the chairman mentioned, served on the Board of Trustees. He was very, very influential with his service. He gave of his time. He wanted to make sure he left things better than he found them. He did this with helping Miami University, his alma mater, and with the Findlay-Hancock Community Foundation, where Mike and Pat were so generous in establishing a scholarship.

One of the things I would really like to talk about is that one of the things Mike really believed in was the Hancock Historical Society. They established the Mike Oxley Government Center. I remember the day the Center was dedicated not more than 2 years ago. Then-Speaker Boehner came up. It is one of those things that I think people need to go and see.

Again, Mike truly wanted to leave things better than he found them. He also believed the best way to do that is to educate our kids. There is an interactive center where people can go in—especially children—and learn about their government.

Mike said this is the greatest form of government that the world has ever seen. To make sure you have that government go on to the next generation, you have to make sure that the children and those students know what to do when they become adults. Sometimes it is too late once they become adults and don't learn these things.

At the Oxley Government Center, it is in perpetuity now. The children in Hancock will have that opportunity to learn about the greatest form of government the world has ever created and make sure that it does continue on. He really, truly believed that our children are our future.

To get into it again, as my dad said, you want to make sure that you are a true public servant, to give of yourself not 90 percent, not 100 percent, but 110 percent. That is what Mike did.

Again, that legacy is going to continue on because the people back home will never forget it. As I am out in the district that Mike represented, as I said, I hear it from his former constituents. It is not that they just like Mike, they loved him.

Again, Pat and Elvis, from the bottom of our hearts Marcia and I offer our deepest sympathies. The world was a much better place because Mike Oxley was in it.

Mr. CHABOT. I thank the gentleman from Ohio for his very nice remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida, Dr. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I thank Mr. CHABOT for his leadership on this issue.

It is funny that the gentleman should call me Dr. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, because I do have my doctorate from the University of Miami. One of the rivalries that I enjoyed with Mike Oxley is that he would wear this obnoxious Miami shirt whenever we were at the Congressional Baseball Team practice. I said: That is the fake Miami. I would wear my University of Miami T-shirt and he would remind me all the time that Miami University was the first.

I am so pleased and so honored to be part of this Special Order that has been organized by my dear friend, Mr. CHABOT of Ohio—he really is; we have such similar backgrounds—in remembrance of a colleague and a dear friend, the late Congressman Mike Oxley. I am not from Ohio. As you heard, I am from Florida.

Mike and I served together here in the people's House for over 15 years. When I got here in 1989, Mike had already been serving for a few years, and I looked upon him with great respect. He was a man who was driven by his commitment to his constituents. I was always very impressed with that.

He served his great State of Ohio and our Nation with great dedication, integrity, and efficiency. These were qualities that were seen in his work throughout his years of service in the United States Congress.

As chair, as we heard, of the Financial Services Committee, Mike was known to reach across the aisle. You have heard speaker after speaker talk about how bipartisan he was in ensuring that every American could prosper.

He worked on bills ranging from the interest of the financial sector to the improvement of commerce to the enhancement of emergency management always with the consumer—always with the American people in mind. It was during his tenure that we were able to pass bills like the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act that allows consumers access to free credit reports, which reduces identity theft.

Mike Oxley was a born leader, a natural leader. He was coauthor of a bill that sought to fight corporate fraud. We thank him for that. He was guided by the principle of economic prosperity and what made America great. His legislative record and legacy speak for themselves.

He was a kind man. He was good to all of the Members. That is why so many of us are here saying good things about him. He deserves that and more. He was enthusiastic about public service. He had a work ethic that is sorely missed in the people's House.

I had a special relationship with Mike because, as I pointed out, he was a player and then manager of the Congressional Baseball Game, which I foolishly joined many years back when I was younger and thinner and fitter.

Encouraged by Mike, I actually became the first woman to get on base in this traditional game. Mike made sure that this charity—it really is a charity game—was able to generate thousands of dollars for various charities around this great town.

Though Mike is no longer with us, we should not be mourning the loss of a life, but celebrating an extraordinary life lived. May Mike's memory live forever in our hearts and in our minds.

Mr. CHABOT is doing the same thing that Mike Oxley would do by leading this great tribute to a Member of Congress. I thank Mr. CHABOT for his leadership.

And I thank Mike. I know that you are enjoying a good, cold beer and a great baseball game in heaven.

Mr. CHABOT. I thank the gentlewoman very much for her very nice remarks this evening.

I yield to another Buckeye, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JORDAN), chairman of the Freedom Caucus and a dear colleague of ours.

Mr. JORDAN. Normally, I don't have prepared remarks when I come to the floor, but I thought when you are honoring someone like former Congressman Oxley, it is best to have them in written form.

Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues from Ohio and across the Nation in paying tribute to former Congressman Michael G. Oxley, who passed away at the beginning of the year after a battle with lung cancer. I thank my colleague from Cincinnati, Mr. CHABOT, for putting together this Special Order on what would have been his 72nd birthday.

Mike was one of the finest and most respected public servants Ohio has ever known. He was tireless in his promotion of his hometown of Findlay and all of Ohio's Fourth Congressional District: its people, businesses, and institutions.

His work on behalf of Lima's Joint Systems Manufacturing Center, commonly known as the Tank Plant, helped preserve that vital facility and its skilled workforce for a long, long time, ensuring that it remains open today to make the armaments that our Armed Forces need to keep our great country safe.

I am grateful to my colleagues who have already spoken about some of Mike's many accomplishments. I want to share something perhaps lesser known about this individual: his longtime connection to Buckeye Boys State, a week-long educational exercise for high school boys hosted by the American Legion of Ohio.

Mike attended this program as a young man, and always said that it helped prepare him for a career in public service. From 1978 through 2006, he was the keynote speaker at the graduation ceremony—an event that he often said was one of his favorites of the year.

In these speeches, he encouraged Boys Staters to develop a clear vision, set high goals, work hard, and act with integrity at all times. These life lessons, no doubt, inspired the many thousands of young men who have had the privilege of attending Boys State during that timeframe. Mike took great pride in being inducted into the Buckeye Boys State Hall of Fame, an honor shared by a select few, among them being Neil Armstrong.

Of course, the titles Mike held most dear were of husband, father, and grandfather. Our prayers continue to go out to his family. I know they are joining us here today. We offer them our sincerest condolences at this difficult time.

Mr. Speaker, we remain grateful that decent men like Mike Oxley are willing to commit their lives to public service and to inspire others to do the same.

□ 1745

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS).

Mr. LUCAS. I thank Chairman CHABOT for the opportunity to visit this day about our friend and old colleague.

Mr. Speaker, I came to this body in May of 1994 in a special election; and I can't remember whether it was that day or the next day or the day after, but that is when I met Mike.

He had a way of charming and disarming you, a way of being warm. Mike, from that very first moment, referenced me as ''Big Frank.'' Now, I am not sure whether he was representing height or girth, but that was his affectionate term.

He noted to me in that first conversation we had that he, too, had been a ''special election baby'' and that I was pursuing the route that he pursued, not coming in as a part of a big class, but coming in by myself, as he had done in 1981, getting to know the Members, working the way to the committee that I would want to be on, as he had done.

He had a very open-arms sort of a fashion. Now, I will confess that, even at that point, I understood in those days, as a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, an E&C guy, the unique nature of that committee. But he was always kind and warm to me.

And when, as the result of a great compromise—actually, a statement, when we became a part of the majority then not that many months later—because Mike had served in the minority from 1981 until we became the majority in 1995, in January. He had served in the minority. He understood both sides of the perspective.

Ultimately, in the great compromise of 2001, when he came to be chairman of what used to be the Banking and Urban Affairs Committee, the Financial Services Committee, and brought substantial new jurisdictions to the committee, Mike made a huge difference.

Suddenly, it went from the committee that Members wanted off of to one of those committees that everyone wanted to be on. Suddenly, it became a committee of action that wasn't just a constant battle over whether Karl Marx or Adam Smith was right, but a committee that made a difference.

And the way he worked with both Republicans and Democrats, the way he addressed the crises that we dealt with—Sarbanes-Oxley being a major example of a piece of reform legislation that no one ever thought would occur; that was Mike Oxley.

As my friends have said before and my friends will say after me, an amazing fellow, a charming personality, a kind of individual that I would describe as an old-school Member of Congress, an old-school chairman.

What do I mean by that? Someone who cared about this place and cared about the Members. Sometimes that is absent now in what we do. But he cared about the institution, and he cared about the membership. He cared about the country, and it was demonstrated in his work product.

I am a better person, a better Member of Congress, for having served with Mike from the day I walked in here in 1994 until his retirement at the end of 2006, a better Member.

I think this place is better for him having been a Member.

The only regret I have is that there are not more Mike Oxleys out there; there are not more Mike Oxleys out there. But, you know, his legacy, I think, should lead all of us to try and emulate the way he conducted himself, the way he focused, the way he worked. If we do that, then his spirit will live on.

Again, Chairman CHABOT, thank you for the opportunity to come and visit about my friend and the fellow that I served with for half of his career in Congress.

And to the family, thank you for having shared him with us for all those years, all those years. Thank you.

Mr. CHABOT. I thank the gentleman from Oklahoma for his tremendous remarks here this evening. And we really do appreciate his recollection of his time shared up here with Mike.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEEHAN).

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio especially for taking the time to organize this very appropriate tribute to Mike Oxley.

Do you ever get one of those people that you walk into a room and you make eye contact, and you just get a smile on your face? That was Mike Oxley.

It was just that moment which, that sense of fun was part of that original contact. And I can remember it as fresh today, the first time I met Mike Oxley.

But it wasn't as a Member of Congress that I really became aware of Mike Oxley. It was some years ago, in a previous time, when I had been a United States attorney serving in the Department of Justice.

It was a very serious time for our country because it was in the immediate aftermath of the Enron crisis, one in which Americans all over the country, and many small investors, began to have a concern about the integrity of the very institutions which they had entrusted some of their resources.

As a member of the United States Attorney's Office, I was appointed by the President to be sitting with other U.S. attorneys and a number of cabinet members on something called the Corporate Fraud Task Force. It was the group, under the auspices of Michael Chertoff, which was responsible for initiating the investigations and the prosecutions into those who had committed the corporate misdeeds.

But, at the same time, we were aware that while we were going backwards

and looking at conduct that had taken place, the real challenge was moving forward. How do you instill a sense of confidence back in the very institutions which people have relied on for their economic confidence?

It was a guy on a committee here in Washington, D.C., who understood the essence of what this was all about. And it wasn't a huge, 2,000-page bill with all kinds of regulations en gros; it was a bill that was built on a very simple principle.

I think, in many ways, it reflected who Mike Oxley was, from his days as an FBI agent, but somebody who knew that, when you were in a position of power or responsibility, you had that responsibility to those below you, and your obligation and your word needed to be connected with that.

And when it really drilled down it, that was the essence of what Sarbanes-Oxley was all about, the idea that you would certify, if you were the fiduciary, that you knew the accuracy but, really, the underlying integrity of that information because it represented the little people.

So when I came to see Mike Oxley for the first time, and it was by the good fortune to be part of something called the Ripon Society, and his former chief of staff, Jim Conzelman, runs that program. And I was invited in, as a young freshmen Representative, to become part of this organization which has a tremendous purpose.

You see a guy named Mike Oxley for the first time. You know of him, but you have never really met him. And I think about that reputation. Gee, this guy is a pretty important guy. What it is going to be like?

But he is the kind of guy that sits you down and says: Hey, why don't you sit here and have a cup of coffee with me. And it's a funny story about a golf game he may have had, a couple of observations about some of the things you might be thinking about as a young Member of Congress, and an arm around your shoulder and says: If you ever need me, let me know. I'm happy to be there for you.

Anytime I ever saw Mike Oxley from that point forward, it was that same sense, a little smile, probably a little story about his last round of golf, and always a warm feeling.

Mike is going to leave quite a legacy. But when you think about what it stands for, the two things that I saw in him in the very end, first and most significantly, the work that he had done with that bill which will not only bear his name moving forward but will forever leave that sense of responsibility and integrity associated with our fiduciary responsibilities in that financial space.

But it was also this powerful guy, Mike Oxley, who used that influence that he had, after he had contracted cancer, to turn that into a positive and make that a part of his mission in life, to use that influence he had to gather other people around him who were powerful and wealthy and, otherwise, to focus on moving forward with finding the way that we can continue to treat and ultimately cure those with cancer.

It is a tremendous legacy and one in which I would hope any one of us, as one of my previous colleagues had said, we wish that we could fill that dash between the beginning of life and the end of life with such fullness, with such integrity and such fun.

Thank you, Mike, for what you did for all of us.

Mr. CHABOT. I thank the gentleman for his very poignant remarks this evening.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON). And one of the things that JOE BARTON is known for—he is known for many, many things around here—but one of the things he is known for was when Mike Oxley was no longer the coach of the baseball team, he turned over the reins to JOE BARTON.

Mr. BARTON. I thank the gentleman. I appreciate being one of the eulogists for Mike Oxley.

I am going to go at this a little bit differently than the other speakers. I am going to talk about Mike Oxley as the baseball player and manager of the Republican baseball team.

I didn't get here until 1985. I assume that Mike immediately became the starting first baseman for the Republican baseball team when he got elected in the special election.

The photograph to my left shows the baseball team from 1992. And in his beloved Cincinnati Reds uniform, next to some skinny kid from Texas, is Mike Oxley. Carl Purcell of Michigan was our manager. I was on that team. Mike was on that team. Dan Schaefer of Colorado, who later became the manager; Jack Fields; Jim Nussle; Governor John Kasich, who is now running for President; CHRIS SMITH, who is still in the House; Rick Santorum, who later became a Senator and a Presidential candidate; Dean Gallo. And the skinny guy on the very left is the current chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, FRED UPTON.

Mike was a hard-hitting first baseman. He was a very good player. And my favorite story on the baseball team, we were playing out in Virginia at the old Four Mile Run Park, and we weren't playing in the fancy Nationals Stadium like we are today.

Mike was in his customary position at first base. I was the pitcher. They hit a pop fly down the first base line. And the Democratic runner who had hit the fly was running to first base, and he ran into Mike.

Mike fell to the ground. He didn't catch the pop fly, and he began writhing around on the ground, holding his wrist.

You know, we have to be honest. Mike was known as somewhat of a jokester and a prankster, and I thought he was kidding. I didn't think he had hurt himself. So I went over and kind of kicked him in the ribs and said, get up, let's get going. He said: No, no. I'm hurt. I'm hurt.

They took him to the bench, and we finished the inning. Even when we got over onto the bench, he was still holding his wrist. And I kidded him again. I said: Mike, come on. You have got to get back in the game.

Well, they took him to the emergency room; and, as his wife, Pat, knows, he had broken his wrist. He actually broke his wrist. So from then on, I never kidded him about things like that.

When Dan Schaefer, who was the manager right before Mike Oxley, retired, the tradition on the baseball team is that the current manager picks the next manager.

□ 1800

So Dan Schaefer called Mike and me into his office and said: Which one of you two wants to become the next manager?

We both said that we wanted to become the next manager. Mike had seniority on me by 2 years—maybe 3 years.

I said: Well, I will be the assistant coach, and, Mike, you can be the manager if that is the way Dan wants to do it.

Mike looked at me, and he said: I will only do it one time.

I said: Okay.

Well, that one time turned out to be about 12 years. He was the manager for 12 years. Every year he would say to me: Joe, this is the last one, the last one.

But about the time he became manager, we became the majority. We elected a bunch of really good baseball players: J.C. Watts, who had been an all-American quarterback at Oklahoma; Steve Largent, who was in the NFL Hall of Fame; Chip Pickering; Zach Wamp—really good players. So we won 10 or 11 games in a row against the Democrats, and Mike enjoyed being the winner. So as those guys began to retire, Mike decided that it might be time to turn it over.

I have right here the last trophy that the Republicans won. It is true that we actually used to win baseball games. We have lost six in a row. But when Mike was the manager, we won, I think, 10 or 11 in a row. The trophy is in my office. There is Mike Oxley, the manager, and JOE BARTON, who is the assistant coach, the last trophy that the Republicans won.

He was a great manager, he was a great player, and he was a great guy.

Now I want to switch over from his baseball career to his legislative career. He is remembered as the chairman of what we now call the Financial Services Committee. Before that, Mike was on the Energy and Commerce Committee. When the Republicans took the majority in 1995, Tom Bliley became the chairman. Mike Oxley became one of his subcommittee chairmen, one of the Energy and Commerce subcommittee chairmen. I served on Energy and Commerce with Mike Oxley.

He was an excellent subcommittee chairman. He did his homework. As has been pointed out, he was very bipartisan. He worked with the others, the Democrats, on the other side of the aisle.

After Tom Bliley retired, we term-limited our chairmen to three terms or 6 years. So in 2001, we had to pick a new chairman for Energy and Commerce. Billy Tauzin had been on the committee as a Democrat. He had switched parties and was a Republican. So the top two contenders to be chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee were Mike Oxley of Ohio, longtime Republican, excellent legislator, and Billy Tauzin of Louisiana, who had been a Democrat and then became a Republican.

It was a pretty hotly contested race. It divided the committee. It divided the House. I was on the steering committee at the time representing Texas. It was a close vote. Billy Tauzin was picked to be chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee; but because of the esteem and respect that Mike Oxley was held in—he had served on what was called the Banking Committee, but he had never been a subcommittee chairman—he was elevated to be chairman of the Banking Committee and given the securities jurisdiction that had long been at Energy and Commerce, renamed the committee the Financial Services Committee, and he became the chairman of the Financial Services Committee and did just an outstanding job there. Sarbanes-Oxley is probably the most notable legislative achievement in his tenure as chairman.

He was a great person and a good friend. I never saw him down or unhappy. He was great on the floor, he was great in committee, and he was a super guy on the baseball field.

After he retired, he continued to frequently come by and visit when we were practicing. When he became ill, he kept a very, very upbeat demeanor. The last time I talked to him on the telephone was right before he passed, and by that time he couldn't speak—or he couldn't speak very well. He could just whisper.

He said: I appreciate you calling.

I told him I loved him.

I really respect Mike Oxley. He helped me a lot as a young Congressman. We had a lot of fun on the baseball team. He was a great legislator. His family should be very proud of him. He will be missed. We will also honor him.

Hopefully this summer, if he is looking down from Heaven, he will watch us beat the Democrats, and we will finally begin the Oxley winning tradition again in the charity baseball game.

Mr. CHABOT. I thank the gentleman very much for his remarks.

There are so many Members that have had an opportunity to speak here this evening. We only had an hour, unfortunately, and we would like to go on a lot longer, but our hour is nearly up.

So let me just conclude by saying to Mike's family—his wife, Pat; his son, Elvis; and to his grandson, Max, whom he loved so much; and to all his family, including Jim Conzelman, his chief of staff, who was actually, let's face it, family, and to all the other family members—I think you all know by the testimony, the reflections, and the personal stories that you heard here this evening that Mike really was a beloved figure in this House, the people's House. He will be missed. He will be long remembered. We know that you all love him very dearly, and we loved him too.

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

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues from Ohio and across the nation in paying tribute to former Congressman Michael G. Oxley, who passed away at the beginning of the year after a long battle against lung cancer. I thank my colleague from Cincinnati, Mr. CHABOT, for putting together this special order in Mike's honor on what would have been his 72nd birthday.

Mike was a friend, mentor, and one of the finest and most respected public servants Ohio has ever known. He was tireless in his promotion of his hometown of Findlay and all of Ohio's Fourth Congressional Districts—its people, businesses, and institutions. His work on behalf of Lima's Joint Systems Manufacturing Center (commonly known as the Lima Army Tank Plant during most of Mike's time in office) helped preserve that vital facility and its skilled workforce throughout the 1980s and 1990s, ensuring that it remains open today to make the armaments that our armed forces need to keep our nation safe.

I am grateful to my colleagues who have already spoken about some of Mike's many accomplishments. I want to share something perhaps lesser known about him: his longtime connection to Buckeye Boys State, a weeklong educational exercise for high school boys hosted by the American Legion Department of Ohio. Mike attended this program as a young man and always said that it helped prepare him for a career in public service. From 1986 through 2006, he was the keynote speaker at the annual Boys State graduation ceremony—an event that he often said was one of his favorites of the year. In these speeches, he encouraged Boys Staters to develop a clear vision, set high goals, work hard, and act with integrity at all times. These life lessons no doubt inspired the many thousands of young men who attended Boys State during that time.

Mike took great pride in being inducted into the Buckeye Boys State Hall of Fame—an honor shared by a select few, among them Neil Armstrong. Of course, the titles he held most dear were those of husband, father, and grandfather. Our continued prayers go out to Mike's wife, Pat; their son, Chadd; daughter-in-law, Jennifer; and grandson, Max. We offer them our sincerest condolences at this difficult time.

Mr. Speaker, we remain grateful that decent men like Mike Oxley are willing to commit their lives to public service and to inspire others to do so.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the life and legacy of former Congressman Mike Oxley from Ohio.

I had the pleasure of serving with Congressman Oxley on the House Financial Services Committee. Under his leadership as Chairman, the Committee pursued a pro-growth economic agenda, protected American consumers, and conducted robust oversight of Washington's regulatory agencies.

Congressman Oxley was a true American patriot that dedicated his life to public service and helping his constituents in Ohio. His passion for America was profound. This legislative body and the institution of Congress became a better place because of his service and legacy.

I ask my colleagues to join me in sending our thoughts and prayers to the Oxley family. May God Bless the Oxley's and may God continue to bless the United States of America.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and in remembrance of former Representative Mike Oxley.

As a valued member of this Chamber, Representative Oxley represented Ohio's Fourth District for over twenty-five years and served as Chairman of the Financial Services committee. As only a freshman Member of Congress on his committee, Chairman Oxley met with me and helped me pass the Life Insurance Fairness for Travelers (LIFT) Act, which prohibited discrimination by life insurance companies based on travel to Israel and other countries without an actuarial analysis of risk. It was one of the first bills I passed in Congress, and his respect and inclusion of the minority Members of our committee taught me that things could indeed get done across the aisle. It is a lesson I have not forgotten.

Many remember Representative Oxley for his tireless efforts in passing the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002. This law was and continues to ensure our confidence in public corporations and financial reporting in the private sector.

However, more than his legislative accomplishments, I remember him for his involvement in the Congressional Baseball Game—an annual tradition that brings Members of both parties together for a good cause.

No matter what he was involved in, Chairman Oxley was a fair and decent man who ensured all Members felt respected. As a cancer survivor, his loss to cancer is even more heartbreaking and makes me more determined to fight to defeat this deadly disease. Mike Oxley's work, integrity and passion for public service bettered both the Congress and our nation.

It is with great pleasure that I honor Representative Oxley.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Congressman Mike Oxley, who dedicated his career to protecting average citizens from special interests.

During his 25 year tenure in the House of Representatives, and as Chairman of the Financial Services Committee, he tirelessly led investigations of major corporations like Enron. Congressman Oxley's 2002 Sarbanes-Oxley Act reformed corporate oversight in this country.

Congressman Oxley also worked on telecomm issues in Congress; helping usher in policies that support our current mobile economy. He helped sponsor legislation to authorize the first ever spectrum auctions, an issue that continues to drive innovation today.

Congressman Oxley also dedicated his life to our country by serving as a FBI agent before being elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.

Most of all, Congressman Oxley was a wonderful colleague working hard with both parties to represent his constituents in the best way possible. He will be greatly missed.

On a personal note, Mike and Pat and Bob and I were personal friends. We got to know each other "back in the day" when members of Congress saw each other socially.

Even though we came from different parties, it didn't make a difference when it came to friendship. At that time I was a Congressional spouse, so Pat and I got to know each other well and participated actively in Congressional spouse activities. Our sons also got to know each other when we took bipartisan trips to places like New York.

In fact, I remember one funny incident when the two families were together on a Congressional Arts Caucus trip to New York City. As we were riding around, touring on a bus, our sons Brian and Elvis, 10 years old at the time and dressed in their blue blazers, hopped off the bus and started walking down the street. Bob and Mike, alarmed, jumped off the bus and ran after them. They finally caught up with them and asked them what they were doing. The boys calmly replied and said that "they were all dressed up and ready to see the town!" We had such a laugh recalling those days in subsequent conversations.

When I think of Mike Oxley, I think of family and the joy he had with Pat and Elvis. We will all miss him.

VOTING RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, before I start, let me extend my condolences to those who are mourning the death of our former Congressman. That was 60 minutes' worth of very, very nice tribute.

As I am sure all of my colleagues are aware, we are now in primary election season. This year the American people will elect a new President of the United States. Unfortunately, there is a great possibility that hundreds of thousands of Americans will be barred from casting their vote because of this body's failure to act.

In 2012, I watched, horrified, as voters were forced to stand in outrageous lines at their polling places. Meanwhile, States across the country have set up new barriers to voting, cutting back on early voting hours, and adding difficult new identification hurdles that limit young people and communities of color more than anyone else—and this as we call ourselves the model of democracy for the whole world to follow.

Instead of embracing every possible opportunity to improve and facilitate one of the cornerstones of our democracy, we are allowing it to crumble. There is quite a bit to fix, yet Congress isn't willing to do anything about it.

Mr. Speaker, our States have wildly different voting systems. Early voting is allowed some places but not others, same-day registration is offered in one State but not in the next. I can think of few better tasks for Congress to take on than to set standards for Federal elections, at a minimum, and to provide the biggest possible opportunity for our constituents to pick the people that represent them.

We have Americans that have made mistakes in their pasts but have completed their sentences for nonviolent convictions. They have put in their effort to change and have come back to society as tax-paying, law-abiding citizens. Unfortunately, we ban millions of these Americans from the ballot box despite their rehabilitation. It seems to me that Congress should get involved in offering individuals like those one of the most fundamental rights that we have as Americans—but we are not.

Mr. Speaker, there is also a conversation for this body to have about technology. Smartphones and other mobile devices have fingerprint sensors. I can wave a key fob over a terminal and pay for lunch without swiping a credit card or even signing my name. I acknowledge that there are very real challenges we face in bringing technology to the ballot box, but we should be talking about how we can use digital advances to expand access instead of trying to manufacture excuses to limit access.

Right there alone, there are three steps we could take on voting rights in our Nation.

Unfortunately, we can't even begin these discussions because we seem to have traveled back to a dark place in our Nation's history when it was both legal and common to limit access to polling places. Despite so many opportunities to move forward, we are rolling backward.

Since 2010, 22 States have passed laws that make it more difficult for Americans to vote, most commonly in the form of voter ID laws that disproportionately impact communities of color, women, seniors, students, and low-income individuals.

Unfortunately, the Voting Rights Act, which had previously curtailed these dangerous restrictions, was gutted in 2013 by the Supreme Court. In the so-called first-in-the-nation primary held this week in New Hampshire, voters encountered new ID laws for the first time, a law that allowed poll workers to vouch for voters without approved IDs and gives them the leeway to discriminate against some voters while validating others. Laws like the one in New Hampshire were passed to protect elections from voting fraud—a specter that Republicans have used time and again to scare Americans into thinking that some dark figure is hijacking their election, a notion that has been discredited and disproved time and again.

Between 2002 and 2005, the Department of Justice made prosecuting voter fraud a top priority. In that timeframe, hundreds of millions of votes were cast; yet only 38 cases were brought to trial, and then only one involved impersonation fraud, which is what photo ID laws protect against.

More recently, a professor at the Loyola University Law School has tracked every allegation of voter fraud since 2000 and has found just 31 cases—just 31 cases—of impersonation. That is 31 ballots out of more than 1 billion that have been cast. The fact of the matter is the kind of intentional shady voter fraud these laws were based on simply did not exist.

Mr. Speaker, of the many tasks this body has, protecting the right to vote, the foundation that built our democracy, the right for which countless Americans have fought over the course of a more than 200-year history, protecting, expanding, and strengthening that right seems like it should be one of our greatest priorities.

I hope that my colleagues can begin to see that also and to join me and many of my colleagues on the Democratic Caucus in taking action that will facilitate, expand, and provide opportunities for every eligible person who can vote to be able to vote.

I yield back the balance of my time.

VOTING RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I am delighted to follow the gentlewoman from New Jersey, focusing on the Congressional Progressive Caucus' commitment to ensuring every American can vote.

Might I add that we have worked together with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, we have worked together with the Congressional Black Caucus, and we have worked together with the Democratic Caucus.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to encourage the entire House to be committed to the very values of this Nation. This should not be a Republican or Democratic issue, of which it has become. We stand here as Democrats arguing for the empowerment of voters all over the Nation, yet legislative initiatives have been introduced by members of the Judiciary Committee and others. I have joined a number of those legislative initiatives, and these initiatives cannot be heard and cannot be voted on.

The American people need to know that. There is no other reason than the Republican majority does not want to have empowered voters.

This is unlike what we did in years past. I have had the privilege of being on the House Judiciary Committee for a number of years, and the most powerful and moving experience was—and there have been many experiences on the House Judiciary Committee—when all of us came together to help write the restoration or reauthorization of the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

□ 1815

It was a very emotional and tearful moment. It was a moment of great extensiveness—15,000 pages of testimony; many, many, many witnesses; individuals explaining how precious it is to vote; but, more importantly, how not having protection for the vote can, therefore, disallow them to vote.

I guess the most provocative experience was a Republican President being joined by Republican and Democratic Members on a joyful sunny day signing the legislation that reauthorized the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Mind you, Mr. Speaker, that bill exhibits, if you will, the pain and suffering of so many who marched and marched and marched and marched. Not only did they march, they died, like Jimmie Lee Jackson. Or our own colleague from Georgia, JOHN LEWIS, who reminds us every day of the fear and feeling of being beaten near to death in his march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama.

He also reminds us how precious the right to vote is. When Dr. Martin Luther King, who refused to give up or give out or give in, marched again, and they made it—with so many people from all backgrounds and all over the Nation—to Montgomery, Alabama, on that fateful trip back, everyone was celebrating that they had marched for the Voting Rights Act, that they had gotten through without violence—attributable, of course, to a Texas President by the name of Lyndon Baines Johnson.

When a wonderful, wonderful lady—whose children I had the privilege of meeting—was driving back some foot soldiers, whom we will honor shortly at the leadership of TERRI SEWELL, when they were driving back and Viola Liuzzo was behind the wheel, lo and behold, somebody violently took a gun and killed her.

Voting has never been easy. Voting rights has never been easy. A lot of blood was shed.

It baffles me why we are faced with a situation where the United States Supreme Court eliminated section 5—not an illegal provision, but a provision that somebody disliked because, I believe, it empowered voters.

What the Congress was tasked to do by the Court, which I think incorrectly and wrongly ignored 15,000 pages of testimony, ignored tens upon tens of witnesses in a meticulous rewriting of the Voting Rights Act to prove that it was still necessary, in a skewed deliberation, the Supreme Court decided to reject it, indicating that it was long passe.

And, of course, some brilliant legislators used the example: because we have eliminated polio because of the vaccination, is it appropriate to get rid of the vaccination?

No, it is not, Mr. Speaker.

So with that skewed and, if I might use the term, weird reasoning, we are left holding the bag and the door is open to the kinds of laws, such as voter ID laws, that spread across America like a contagious disease because we did not have the protection of section 5, which the idea of section 5 was a preclearance for men and women of goodwill to look and determine whether or not a procedure was going to block individuals from voting.

Of course, the voter ID law from Texas sprung up. You will soon hear from the gentleman from Texas (Mr. VEASEY), my dear friend and colleague, because he was, in fact, the leader on the lawsuit.

Let me say that that terrible law blocked a lot of people from voting.

I want to remind people that the day of August 6, 1965, in the presence of such luminaries as the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Roy Wilkins of the NAACP, Whitney Young of the National Urban League, James Forman of the Congress of Racial Equality, A. Philip Randolph, JOHN LEWIS, Robert Kennedy, Hubert Humphrey, and Everett Dirksen—mind you, a lady was missing, but, in the event, many women were foot soldiers.

The point was made on the Voting Rights Act:

> The vote is the most powerful instrument ever devised by man for breaking down injustice and destroying the terrible walls which imprison men because they are different from other men.

In this instance, I would modify it and say ''women.''

When the voting ID law—because of the misgivings of the State of Texas and its legislature—was put in place, there were 80 counties at least in Texas that did not have a Department of Public Safety office for individuals to be able to register or to be able to get an ID. That is a tragedy. Each moment there is something coming out of Texas that wants to, in essence, put down the rights of individuals to vote.

One case that should be brought to our attention is a case before the Supreme Court that indicates a group of petitioners who don't like the fact that you represent a population of people. So they want to characterize and get a definition of what a person means, and they want to make that person be an eligible voter.

So, in essence, a sick person laying in a bed who needs health care and needs to be represented is not an eligible voter. Or a senior citizen that has gotten so old and feeble that they may not have been registered because of their illness and their feebleness, but they need to be represented. Or it may be a child—Hispanic, African American, Anglo, or Asian—who is not at the age of voting and they are not an eligible voter. Or, as I know they are focusing on, is hardworking individuals who happen to be immigrants and they are not yet eligible to vote.

And this case is brought primarily to make sure that those people who need to be represented to the extent that they are taxpayers but are not yet status, they will not be counted.

This case is not anything to do with voter fraud. These people are not trying to vote. They are just trying to survive. But you are telling me that they are human beings, and this case is suggesting that they cannot be represented.

This is the devastating impact of not having voter protection in section 5.

So I rise today to ensure that it is heard throughout the land: We can pass voter restoration, voter advancement. We can pass fixing the Voting Rights Act and restoring section 5.

There are many people in this Congress who previously were here when we stood with President Bush, a Republican, and Republicans and Democrats 98–1, 98–2 in the Senate, massive support in the House, to restore the Voting Rights Act.

Let me ask the question, Mr. Speaker: Why now? Why are we struggling in this Presidential year not to allow people to vote?

Let me close my remarks because we could go on with—how should I say it—the irony and, as well, the wrongness of not passing legislation. But let me say this in closing:

Redistricting is a result of the Voting Rights Act. Those of us in Texas are still in litigation—for 20 years some of us—on the question of redistricting and making fair districts where all people are represented.

And the gerrymandering that has been done, that disallows and disenfranchises whole chunks of minorities, disallowing them from voting for the person of their choice, do you know what it brings about? It brings about this House in the majority—good friends of mine—having the sheer gall to deny the President's representative of the Office of Management and Budget to present the President's budget. In its 41-year history, that has never happened.

But because we have these districts that are drawn, not representing the vast numbers of people who should be able to hear the President's statement about his budget, by having his representative, the OMB Director, come before Congress and speak about what the President is trying to do: reducing the deficit, providing for education, protecting health care, job creation, economic security, universal access to child care, education for all, year-long Pell Grants, all of that, and a national security for peace—we can't hear from the OMB Director because of the skewed redistricting that allows for the majority to be so overwhelmingly in charge that they would deny the normal processes of government.

The Voting Rights Act and the empowerment of voters is crucial and a

fair redrawing of lines to let all of the people be heard and all of the voters be able to speak. That is why I am on the floor today.

I am looking forward to reasonable people coming together and fostering legislation that answers the constitutional call that we all are created equal with certain unalienable rights—the rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—which is embodied in the vote of the American people.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. SHEILA JACKSON LEE. I am pleased to join my colleagues of the Congressional Progressive Caucus in this important Special Order on voting rights protection and expansion for every American.

I would like to thank Congresswoman BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN for convening this evening's Special Order and for her dedicated leadership on critical issues impacting children and families, including this evening's topic of voting rights.

Fifty-one years ago, President Lyndon Johnson signed into law the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and because of that law, I stand before you as Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE, the first African American woman Ranking Member of the U.S. House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations.

We are here today not just to commemorate the landmark achievement of 51 years ago but to redouble and rededicate our efforts to the work that remains to be done to protect the right of all Americans to vote free from discrimination and the injustices that prevent them from exercising this most fundamental right of citizenship.

On August 6, 1965, in the Rotunda of the Capitol and in the presence of such luminaries as the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; Roy Wilkins of the NAACP; Whitney Young of the National Urban League; James Foreman of the Congress of Racial Equality; A. Philip Randolph of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters; JOHN LEWIS of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee; Senators Robert Kennedy, Hubert Humphrey, and Everett Dirksen; President Johnson said before signing the Voting Rights Act, in: ''The vote is the most powerful instrument ever devised by man for breaking down injustice and destroying the terrible walls which imprison men because they are different from other men.''

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was critical to preventing brazen voter discrimination violations that historically left millions of African Americans disenfranchised.

In 1940, for example, there were less than 30,000 African Americans registered to vote in Texas and only about 3% of African Americans living in the South were registered to vote.

Poll taxes, literacy tests, and threats of violence were the major causes of these racially discriminatory results.

After passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965, which prohibited these discriminatory practices, registration and electoral participation steadily increased to the point that by 2012, more than 1.2 million African Americans living in Texas were registered to vote.

In 1964, the year before the Voting Rights Act became law, there were approximately 300 African-Americans in public office, including just three in Congress.

Few, if any, black elected officials were elected anywhere in the South.

Because of the Voting Rights Act, as of 2013 there are more than 9,100 black elected officials, including 43 members of Congress, the largest number ever.

The Voting Rights Act opened the political process for many of the approximately 6,000 Latino public officials that have been elected and appointed nationwide, including 263 at the state or federal level, 27 of whom serve in Congress.

Native Americans, Asians and others who have historically encountered harsh barriers to full political participation also have benefited greatly.

The crown jewel of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 is Section 5, which requires that states and localities with a chronic record of discrimination in voting practices secure federal approval before making any changes to voting processes.

Section 5 protects minority voting rights where voter discrimination has historically been the worst.

Since 1982, Section 5 has stopped more than 1,000 discriminatory voting changes in their tracks, including 107 discriminatory changes right here in Texas.

And it is a source of eternal pride to all of us in Houston, that in pursuit of extending the full measure of citizenship to all Americans that in 1975, Congresswoman Barbara Jordan, who also represented this historic 18th Congressional District of Texas, introduced, and the Congress adopted, what are now Sections 4(f)(3) and 4(f)(4) of the Voting Rights Act, which extended the protections of Section 4(a) and Section 5 to language minorities.

Barbara Jordan championed this reform because as she stated during the floor debate on the 1975 reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act: ''There are Mexican-American people in the State of Texas who have been denied the right to vote; who have been impeded in their efforts to register and vote; who have not had encouragement from those election officials because they are brown people[.] ''So, the state of Texas, if we approve [the Jordan language included in the bill], would be brought within the coverage of this Act for the first time.''

We must remain ever vigilant and oppose all schemes that will abridge or dilute the precious right to vote.

And we are here today to remind the nation that the right to vote—that ''powerful instrument that can break down the walls of injustice''—is facing grave threats.

The threat stems from the decision issued in June 2013 by the Supreme Court in Shelby County v. Holder, 570 U.S. 193 (2013), which invalidated Section 4(b) of the VRA, and paralyzed the application of the VRA's Section 5 preclearance requirements.

Earlier this week, the Maryland Senate voted to override Governor Larry Hogan's veto of a bill that allows formerly incarcerated individuals to register to vote after they are released from prison.

Also, the Iowa Supreme Court will also be considering amending laws to grant the right to vote those who have been incarcerated in the past.

Amending this legislation is important for the population because it will help in the reintegration of these individuals, and secure their right to vote.

In light of this, there is still progress in the fight to restore the right to vote.

According to the Supreme Court majority, the reason for striking down Section 4(b): ''Times change.''

Now, the Court was right; times have changed. But what the Court did not fully appreciate is that the positive changes it cited are due almost entirely to the existence and vigorous enforcement of the Voting Rights Act.

And that is why the Voting Rights Act is still needed.

Let me put it this way: in the same way that the vaccine invented by Dr. Jonas Salk in 1953 eradicated the crippling effects but did not eliminate the cause of polio, the Voting Rights Act succeeded in stymieing the practices that resulted in the wholesale disenfranchisement of African Americans and language minorities but did eliminate them entirely.

The Voting Rights Act is needed as much today to prevent another epidemic of voting disenfranchisement as Dr. Salk's vaccine is still needed to prevent another polio epidemic.

However, officials in some states, notably Texas and North Carolina, seemed to regard the Shelby decision as a green light and rushed to implement election laws, policies, and practices that could never pass muster under the Section 5 preclearance regime.

We all remember the Voter ID law passed in Texas in 2011, which required every registered voter to present a valid government-issued photo ID on the day of polling in order to vote.

The Justice Department blocked the law in March of 2012, and it was Section 5 that prohibited it from going into effect.

At least it did until the Shelby decision because on the very same day that Shelby County v. Holder was decided officials in Texas announced they would immediately implement the Photo ID law, and other election laws, policies, and practices that could never pass muster under the Section 5 preclearance regime.

The Texas Photo ID law was challenged in federal court and thankfully, just yesterday, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit upheld the decision of U.S. District Court Judge Nelva Gonzales Ramos that Texas' strict voter identification law discriminated against blacks and Hispanics and violated the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

To take another example, last year, Councilwoman Pat Van Houte, who serves on the Pasadena, Texas City Council was forcibly ejected by armed officers at the direction of Pasadena Mayor Johnny Isbell at a council meeting to consider a controversial redistricting plan.

The Pasadena redistricting plan is one of the first to be implemented in the aftermath of the Shelby v. Holder decision.

Pushed through by Mayor Isbell and narrowly passed by the voters, the redistricting plan switches two of the city's eight council seats from single member district to at-large.

Thus, the effect of the plan is to dilute the voting power of the poorer, predominantly Hispanic residents of the Pasadena's north side who opposed the change, and to increase the voting power of residents in the wealthier, whiter south side who supported it.

This shameful episode is a reminder that the Voting Rights Act protected not only right to vote in federal elections but also applied to state and local jurisdictions as well.

For example, Section 5 subjected to preclearance and could have blocked the Texas Education Administration (TEA) from closing the North Forest Independent School District (NFISD) and disbanding its locally elected school board comprised of 7 African American members.

Once freed by the Shelby County decision from having to pass muster under Section 5, however, TEA directed the annexation of the NFISD by HISD and dissolved the school board, thus diluting the ability of the African American and Hispanic community residents served by NFISD to influence the decisions affecting the education opportunities of their children.

Protecting voting rights and combating voter suppression schemes are two of the critical challenges facing our great democracy.

Without safeguards to ensure that all citizens have equal access to the polls, more injustices are likely to occur and the voices of millions silenced.

Those of us who cherish the right to vote justifiably are skeptical of Voter ID laws because we understand how these laws, like poll taxes and literacy tests, can be used to impede or negate the ability of seniors, racial and language minorities, and young people to cast their votes.

Consider the demographic groups who lack a government issued ID: African Americans: 25%; Asian Americans: 20%; Hispanic Americans: 19%; Young people, aged 18–24: 18%; Persons with incomes less than $35,000: 15%.

Voter ID laws are just one of the means that can be used to abridge or suppress the right to vote. Others include:

1. Curtailing or Eliminating Early Voting
2. Ending Same-Day Registration
3. Not counting provisional ballots cast in the wrong precinct on Election Day will not count.
4. Eliminating Teenage Pre-Registration
5. Shortened Poll Hours
6. Lessening the standards governing voter challenges to vigilantes like the King Street Patriots to cause trouble at the polls.

Today, I call upon House Speaker RYAN to bring legislation intended to protect the right to vote of all Americans to the floor for debate and vote.

Specifically, I call for the passage of the bipartisan Voting Rights Amendments Act, (H.R. 3899 and H.R. 885) of which I am an original co-sponsor, which repairs the damage done to the Voting Rights Act by the Supreme Court decision.

This legislation replaces the old 'static' coverage formula with a new dynamic coverage formula, or 'rolling trigger,' which effectively gives the legislation nationwide reach because any state and any jurisdiction in any state potentially is subject to being covered if the requisite number of violations are found to have been committed.

Alternatively, I call upon the Speaker to let the House debate and vote on the Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2015 (H.R. 2867), a bill that provides even greater federal oversight of jurisdictions which have a history of voter suppression and protects vulnerable communities from discriminatory voting practices.

Second, I call for the passage of H.R. 12, the Voter Empower Act of 2015, legislation I have co-sponsored that protects voters from suppression, deception, and other forms of disenfranchisement by modernizing voter registration, promoting access to voting for individuals with disabilities, and protecting the ability of individuals to exercise the right to vote in elections for federal office.

Before concluding there is one other point I would like to stress.

In his address to the nation before signing the Voting Rights Act of 1965, President Johnson said: "Presidents and Congresses, laws and lawsuits can open the doors to the polling places and open the doors to the wondrous rewards which await the wise use of the ballot.

"But only the individual Negro, and all others who have been denied the right to vote, can really walk through those doors, and can use that right, and can transform the vote into an instrument of justice and fulfillment."

In other words, political power—and the justice, opportunity, inclusion, and fulfillment it provides—comes not from the right to vote but in the exercise of that right.

And that means it is the civic obligation of every citizen to both register and vote in every election, state and local as well as federal.

Because if we can register and vote, but fail to do so, we are guilty of voluntary voter suppression, the most effective method of disenfranchisement ever devised.

And in recent years, we have not been doing a very good job of exercising our civic responsibility to register, vote, and make our voices heard.

In the last two mayoral elections in Houston, barely 10 percent of city residents bothered to cast ballots (12% in 2011 and 13% in 2013); in many district-level elections, turnout rates were less than 10 percent.

For millions of Americans, the right to vote protected by the Voting Rights Act of 1965 is sacred treasure, earned by the sweat and toil and tears and blood of ordinary Americans who showed the world it was possible to accomplish extraordinary things.

As we are approaching the 51st anniversary of that landmark law, let us rededicate ourselves to honoring those who won for us this precious right by remaining vigilant and fighting against both the efforts of others to abridge or suppress the right to vote and our own apathy in exercising this sacred right.

VOTING RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. VEASEY) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), who represents the Houston and Harris County area, who does such a great job of speaking out on these issues.

Representative JACKSON LEE and really the entire delegation down there—Representatives GENE GREEN and AL GREEN, along with Representative JACKSON LEE—do a great job of keeping this on the forefront of Texans' minds and on the United States' mind.

Texas is such a large State that oftentimes, legislation that is passed out of Texas has an impact on the rest of the Nation. It does seem that much of the discriminatory laws regarding redistricting and regarding voter suppression, like the voter ID bill, sadly, has emanated from our State.

Mr. Speaker, let me tell you just how bad it is in our State. This is going to be really hard for some people to believe. But in the State of Texas, if a young person on a college campus were to find themselves their freshman year lost on the campus, or if they were to find themselves in a little bit of trouble on campus, they would be able to show their student ID to the proper law enforcement official, who is a police officer recognized by the State of Texas, on the campus to identify themselves. That ID works for them to be able to legally identify themselves.

In the State of Texas today, that same young person would not be able to show that same student ID at the voting place, at the voting booth, to be able to cast a vote. If you bring your concealed handgun license in, then you can cast a vote. The student will be given a provisional ballot that wouldn't count, and the person with a concealed handgun license would be able to cast a legal ballot.

Who is that really going to hurt? You have so many young people, particularly young people that don't come from wealthy families, whose parents really struggle to send them to college. They don't have cars in college, so they don't have their driver's license. They really rely on their student identification for everything that they do.

In the State of Texas, they absolutely cannot use that ID.

There are many things about the Texas voter ID law, to be honest with you, I really don't like. I became a plaintiff in the suit to try to scale back what I consider a very egregious act against voters in the State of Texas.

I was very delighted that back in July, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit actually upheld a lower court's decision that the Texas voter ID law had a discriminatory effect on minority voters and violated section 2 of the Voting Rights Act.

I hope this means that the proper action will be taken to do something to scale back this law and the impact that it is having on people that simply want to exercise their suffrage, people that simply want to be able to vote. We take it for granted that you can simply vote. But this Texas voter ID law, and many laws from my time in the State legislature that were proposed—luckily, some of them advanced—would really roll back the clock on individuals that want to exercise their right to vote.

I will tell you what I have done in the meantime is joined as an original cosponsor of the Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2015 that restores the right and advances the voting rights that were provided to us in 1965 by providing a modern day coverage test which will protect our communities from these types of discriminatory practices.

I will tell you, I am very proud to join with TERRI SEWELL, with Representative JUDY CHU, with Representative LINDA SÁNCHEZ, and, of course, with Representative JOHN LEWIS, who understands probably more than anyone in this body what discriminatory laws can do to affect a community.

□ 1830

This bill, Mr. Speaker, provides coverage for 13 States upon enactment: Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, Louisiana, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, Arkansas, Arizona, California, New York, and Virginia. I am a very proud Texan—I love everything about our State—but, unfortunately, we have been at the forefront of discrimination against voters, and Texas is included in this legislation as well. This new geographic formula is based on current conditions and on a 25-year look-back provision.

I hope that we will be able to work together in a bipartisan manner to protect not just some of our voters but to protect every single voter in the United States who would like to cast a ballot. It doesn't matter if a voter is poor and was not able to go and renew his driver's license so that his driver's license may be 61 days expired. It doesn't matter if it is a student whose parents are just putting every little bit of money that they have to get him through college, and, because of that, his only ID is his student identification card, and he would like to use that. We need to be able to make it easier for individuals to vote in our State.

Everybody wants people to be able to lawfully vote, too. We ought to be able to work together in order to pass strong voting rights laws that protect all of our citizens, because we certainly don't want to discourage anyone from voting, and we certainly don't want to look like we are going backwards from where we once were, back in the 1960s.

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

IN HONOR OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE ON ITS 107TH ANNIVERSARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PALMER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) for 30 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to be here tonight as a proud member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, known as the NAACP.

I am a member, and I am a life member, and I believe that the NAACP has had a profound impact upon my life. Hence, tonight, I am going to talk about the NAACP as I am also the person who is the sponsor of the original NAACP resolution for 2016. In doing this, I want to praise the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the NAACP, on this, its 107th anniversary.

This resolution has 24 cosponsors. I thank all of them. I also thank the whip for allowing us this time to talk about the NAACP and to extoll many of its virtues. I thank all of the leadership for the opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, this is the 11th time that we have introduced a resolution to honor the NAACP. It is the oldest civil rights organization in the United States of America. We introduced it first in 2006, and it was passed in the House by a voice vote and in the Senate by unanimous consent. When it passed in the House in 2006, it did not do so because of our help alone—''our help'' meaning the Congressional Black Caucus. I want you to know, Mr. Speaker, that Mr. JAMES SENSENBRENNER, who was the chairperson of the Judiciary Committee at the time, was there to help us get this amendment passed. I have talked on the floor about the White side of Black history. Mr. SENSENBRENNER would be a part of that history because, if not for his presence, I assure you we would not have passed this resolution in 2006.

We went on to pass it in 2007, and it passed in the House with a vote of 410–0. In 2008, it passed in the House of Representatives by 403–0; in 2009, by 424–0; in 2010, by 421–0. In 2010, of course, and thereafter, we stopped passing resolutions on the floor of the House; although, we may still present them and talk about them on the floor of the House. So, tonight, this is what we will do.

I would like to mention the mission of the NAACP, which is to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of all persons—not just of Black people, not just of people of color, but of all people. The NAACP also desires to eliminate racial hatred and racial discrimination. These are lofty and noble goals because we understand that we have had much racial hatred and much racial discrimination in this country, and the NAACP took it upon itself to eliminate as much of it as possible. It has done a good job, I might add.

Let's look at a little bit of the history of the NAACP.

Back on February 12, 1909, a group of people decided that it was going to do something about the lynchings that were taking place in this country. Literally, in this country, between 1889 and 1918, thousands of African Americans were lynched—thousands. Lynching was done with mob violence. People were taken to trees, and they were lynched. It was done, a good many times, with impunity. No one was ever prosecuted. It was a grave injustice, and there were people in this country who decided that they were going to do something about this injustice. Among the people who met initially were Mary White Ovington, Oswald Garrison Villard, William English Walling, and Ida Wells-Barnett. These persons met and issued a clarion call. Some 60 persons answered that call. Hence, the NAACP was born.

The NAACP did not have its first African American as an executive secretary until 1920. It is important for us to note that many of the Founders of the NAACP—in fact, most of them—were not of African ancestry. The first executive secretaries of the organization were all persons who were of European ancestry. In fact, the first five executive secretaries were White. They were not Black. In 1934, the NAACP had its first Black board chairperson—Louis T. Wright. Dr. Wright became chairperson after the NAACP had had a good number of White chairpersons. So the NAACP has never been and is not now an organization for Blacks only. The NAACP has always stood for an integrated society and has been an integrated organization since its inception.

In 1954, the NAACP, under the leadership and counsel of the Honorable Thurgood Marshall, who became a Justice of the Supreme Court, won the lawsuit of Brown v. Board of Education. This was a giant leap forward for us because this lawsuit integrated, to a certain extent, schools throughout the country. The word that was appropriately used at the time was ''desegregated.'' These schools were ordered to be desegregated with all deliberate speed, and all deliberate speed can sometimes take a lot longer than one might expect. A good many years later, there are still those who would contend that we have not fully integrated our school systems across the length and breadth of the country.

In 1955, an NAACP member, the Honorable Rosa Parks, an African American lady, decided that she was going to take a stand, and she took that stand by taking a seat. She took a seat on a bus. In so doing, she ignited a spark that started a civil rights movement. By the way, there are many people who contend that she did this because she was tired. Well, she may have been tired, but she did it because she wanted to take a stand. She was tired of society's relegating her to the back of the bus, and she took a stand against it. Hence, we had the Montgomery Bus Boycott, which lasted more than a year. At the end of that boycott, the bus line—the transportation system—was integrated in Alabama and, of course, later on throughout the country.

An interesting note on this point about the integration and desegregation of bus lines. There was a three-judge panel that actually heard the litigation associated with this transportation issue. On that three-judge panel, there were judges who had a

great debate about this; but there was one Frank M. Johnson, a Federal district court judge, who took the position that we could apply the Brown decision to public transportation. This was the very first time it was done was under the leadership of that three-judge panel and by the Honorable Frank M. Johnson.

Again, I point these things out because it is important to note that there were others who were there with the NAACP to help us along the way. Frank M. Johnson, by the way, was a Republican appointee who was appointed by President Eisenhower, and he went on to help us to integrate schools throughout the South and integrate the Department of Public Safety. He went on to help us with the facilitation of voting rights acts and with the implementation of laws that prohibited persons from discriminating against persons in workplace environments. He really played a significant role as did many other persons who were associated with the NAACP in a vicarious way, because I don't have evidence of his having been a member.

I want to move forward, if I may next, to 2008. I move forward to 2008 because this is when the NAACP supported the passage of the Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act of 2007. There are many unsolved cases in the history of this country with reference to things that happened to African Americans. The NAACP pushed for and supported legislation such that we can have the opportunity to bring some of the dastards to justice who have caused great harm to people who were doing no harm to anyone. The NAACP has fought for this.

In 2009, the NAACP celebrated its centennial anniversary, and the theme at that time was ''Bold Dreams and Big Victories''—obviously, a good theme because the NAACP has won many big victories.

In 2012, the NAACP supported the Smart and Safe campaign, which brought attention to the overpopulated prisons and mass incarceration in this country. People who study these issues are well aware that, in this country, we have an overpopulation of persons who are incarcerated. Much of this has to do with mandatory sentencing laws. Much of it has to do with laws that allow persons who are convicted of one type of offense, with drugs, to receive a harsher penalty—cocaine, for example. Then, if you have crack cocaine, you will get a stiffer penalty as opposed to its being some other type of cocaine.

The point is that these harsh sentencing laws have caused a good many people to be incarcerated who, quite frankly, should not be incarcerated for as long as they are incarcerated. Some of these ''three strikes and you are out'' laws have also caused persons to go to prison for a minor offense because it happened to be the third offense; so the NAACP is fighting against this.

The NAACP wants a just society. The NAACP believes that people who commit crimes ought to be punished, but that they ought to be punished in a fair and just way. Hence, the NAACP has supported trying to do what it can to help us with the overpopulation in prisons due to unjust laws.

The NAACP joined the lawsuit challenging the Texas strict voter ID law. In Texas—and you heard colleagues earlier tonight talk about this—we have one of the most draconian photo ID laws in the country. It is one that requires people who have been voting all of their lives—who have a history of voting, where a person at the polling place knows who you are if you show up to vote—to present a photo ID. The interesting thing about it is, if you vote by mail, you don't have to do this, and most of the fraud that takes place probably takes place by mail because you don't have the same identification process. I find it onerous that we, in Texas, would be subjected to this type of law, and, of course, we are doing what we can to get it properly disposed of. The NAACP is part of the effort to make sure this is done.

□ 1845

In 2014, the NAACP was a leader in the effort to strengthen the Voting Rights Act. The Voting Rights Act, as has been explained by colleagues prior to my taking the podium, has had section 4 eviscerated and, as a result, section 5 has been emasculated.

Section 4 was the section of the Voting Rights Act that brought certain places in the country under the purview of the Voting Rights Act. Section 5 is the section, then, that imposes the standards that have to be adhered to. Well, you can't have a strong section 5 if you don't have a section 4 to outline, to specify, to delineate the actual areas that are to be covered by the Voting Rights Act.

The NAACP is still working with us to help us get a strong Voting Rights Act so that people who have been disenfranchised, people who have been discriminated against will have the right to vote in this, the United States of America.

In 2015, the NAACP, after the death of Trayvon Martin, advocated for the arrest of his killer. The NAACP never said that he had to go to jail, but the belief was that, under the circumstances that existed at the time, the perpetrator should be prosecuted. There should, at least, be a trial. There should be an opportunity for the world to understand what happened to Trayvon Martin.

As a result, there was a trial. There was a finding. The NAACP was at the forefront, a part of the avant guard, if you will, to make sure that Trayvon Martin received justice. A trial is what ultimately occurred. I would daresay that, but for the NAACP and many other persons of goodwill, this would not have taken place.

Finally, I want to point out that the NAACP has also ventured into what is happening in Flint, Michigan. This is some serious business that we have to take care of in Michigan. In Flint, Michigan, we have a circumstance wherein children, among others, but children have been poisoned. This was not at the hands of some major corporation that was doing something that was inappropriate. It was not at the hands of a civilian, some person who just decided he was going to do something ugly. It was not at the hands of some person associated with some sort of terrorist organization.

This was done by the government, at the hands of the government. Children have been poisoned at the hands of the government. That is an important point for us to digest because one does not expect that one would be poisoned by consuming the elixir of life, water, in this country. Especially, one would not assume this given that this country has some of the best technology and filtration systems in the world. In fact, there are none better than ours.

One would not expect that in a city wherein the water was fine before the hand of the government was imposed upon citizens, such that they couldn't make the choice themselves as to how they were going to regulate their water. A special person was put in charge at the hands of the State government, the Governor having the authority to appoint a person who literally took control of the city and, in so doing, caused great harm to befall young people, children, if you will.

When this happens, we have a duty, a responsibility, and an obligation to take immediate action to not only bring people to justice who would do this, but also to impose a just system such that persons who had been harmed can be made whole to the extent that people can be made whole. I say this because, truth be told, you cannot make these persons completely whole. All of the intelligence that we are receiving indicates that once you receive lead poisoning, you don't recover totally and completely. There will be some residue, and this can go on for years and years and years.

So the NAACP went there immediately and made it clear that it expected action and had a 15-point plan. I will say more about the 15-point plan as time permits because I want to honor my colleague, the Honorable CHAKA FATTAH, if he is available at this time. Given that he is on his way, I will continue.

The 15-point plan has 15 priorities that are listed, and I will go through these priorities rather quickly. They are, one, the emergency financial manager law must be repealed. This is the law that I spoke of earlier that allowed for the Governor to impose upon the citizens of Flint, Michigan, this emergency financial manager.

Much of this was done unfortunately under the auspices of saving money—some persons have said that we are talking about $100 a day—saving some small amount of money so that some person who holds public office could

stand before the public and say: I saved you money. I saved you money. Look at what I have done.

Well, look at what you have done: You have changed the lives of innocent people forever in an effort to save a little bit of money and hold yourself out as a person who is cutting the budget, who is saving money for the taxpayers.

There are times when tax dollars are used effectively and efficaciously, and what they were doing with the water prior to this cut was a pretty good example of how things that are doing well can be corrected such that harm is placed upon people. I regret that it happened, but I am proud however that the NAACP is there to help us with this process of making people whole.

The second part of the plan would require water distribution that is currently being done by the National Guard to be done by local people. The National Guard does a good job, and I salute the National Guard for what they are doing. The truth is that local people need work, and this would provide them the opportunity to work and to be a part of the water distribution process. There is all of the good sense in the world in working out a system so that we can pay people who need work to help themselves by distributing water in their communities.

The third point is access to fresh fruits, vegetables, and other food items. Because to a certain extent, this is a food desert area in some parts of Flint, Michigan. As a result, there is a desire to make sure that all persons can have access to fresh fruits and fresh vegetables—good, clean, wholesome food.

Number four, all Flint citizens must be provided free home inspections. There are many homes that have not been properly inspected. The water source that leads into the home has to be inspected, the lines, and this should be done at no cost to all citizens. The NAACP stands for this. My belief is that this will happen, but I am proud that the NAACP voiced a concern that it should happen.

I mentioned the Honorable CHAKA FATTAH from Pennsylvania's Second Congressional District.

I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FATTAH) with the notion that I will reclaim time that he may not utilize.

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from the Lone Star State. He is a good friend, and I know that we have had an occasion to work together on water systems in Texas in my role as a member of the Appropriations Committee. We were able to work successfully on aiding communities that needed access to clean, safe water.

We had a hearing yesterday on the Hill on Flint in which we heard from the mayor and a host of other people. It is a circumstance in which, I think, we should have the utmost urgency and that the Army Corps should move aggressively. I would even hope that the President would take action, if necessary, to nationalize the Guard to make sure that people in Flint get water.

I am rising today in honor of the birth of the NAACP. This is the most loved, most hated, the largest, the oldest, the boldest civil rights organization ever created. It has been at the forefront of efforts to have our Nation become the more perfect Union that the Founders had envisioned.

At every point, it has agitated, both in the streets and in the suites, to make changes. Here on the Hill, there is not an organization that has more consistently let their voice be heard on a whole range of issues. So I rise to thank those who have been a part thereof and who will continue to be.

The local NAACP in Philadelphia had an antiviolence march all the way across a major thoroughfare in our city, 52nd Street. It was great to see an organization that obviously has a lot of sophistication, but it also has the touch at the neighborhood level to reach out to people and to have people understand that individual responsibility to make communities safer is as important as public policy initiatives that might be generated in halls of the legislature like here.

So I want to thank the NAACP for all it has done. We hosted the National Convention in Philadelphia. I had a chance to open up the convention and to fly in with the President when he came to address our criminal justice reform.

We have so much to do in our country. And we have the understanding that in order to do complicated work, we need organizations to do it. It is difficult for individuals themselves to achieve a lot, but when working together, we can achieve almost anything.

We are in a range of dates here of import. Just the other day, we acknowledged the announcement date in which President Barack Obama announced he was going to run for President. Yesterday was the day that Nelson Mandela walked free from a prison cell in Robben Island for over two decades.

So February 12th is when people of different ethnic backgrounds, different racial backgrounds got together—people like Ida B. Wells and W.E.B. DuBois got together and said that there was going to be an effort to put together a membership-based organization, rooted in neighborhoods, rooted in individuals who would come together in their local communities and who would fight on a variety of levels—on the policy level, in the courts, and also work in neighborhoods at a neighborhood level to improve the lives of people of our country, particularly people who had been disproportionately ill-served by government institutions and people of color in our country who had to work for years, in fact, centuries without a paycheck and who were prohibited by law to do basic things like marry, or own a home, or own land, who had to bear the brunt of a criminal justice system that, even to this day, is yet to be perfected.

So we have a history, but it is made better because of the NAACP. So I wanted to come and thank my colleague for holding this Special Order here on the House floor. I don't usually speak in Special Orders. I think, over my 20 years, it is a very unusual thing, but I came today because the NAACP has laid the foundation under which so much of the progress we have made as a country has been made possible.

I look forward to an opportunity to continue to work with him on issues of importance to his State, to our country, and to this world.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. I thank the gentleman especially for taking to the floor tonight and sharing his views on the NAACP. I also especially thank him for the good work that he has done in the Congress of the United States of America. He has served his constituents well, and he should be saluted.

Mr. Speaker, it has been said that if we did not have the NAACP, we would have to create it. That is just how vital it is to the American system of justice. It is not an official arm of the American system of justice, but it is an aid to justice in this country such that people expect the NAACP to be there under certain circumstances and in certain places.

This gets us back to Flint. People expected the NAACP to be there, and the NAACP was there. As I continue, Mr. Speaker, permit me to ask how much time is remaining?

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

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in consuming this time, let me continue to point out some of the things that the NAACP has within its 15-point priority plan.

□ 1900

Number five is that all Flint residents must be provided federally funded replacements for their damaged systems and appliances. What they are saying and what the NAACP is saying is simply this: There are some appliances that have been so damaged that they cannot continue to use these appliances. As a result, they have to be replaced. These are people not of great means, and any help that they can get to maintain a good quality of life should be afforded them.

The NAACP has indicated that fairness and justice must be examined in rate hikes and in continued billing for poisonous water.

I heard Mr. CUMMINGS make this point at a hearing. He made the point that people are still paying water bills for water that they can't drink. That was at the hearing. I am not sure what the situation is now. My understanding is that persons are still getting water in bottles, but are they still paying their water bills?

The NAACP believes that fairness and justice must be examined in terms of the rate hikes that have taken place

and the continued billing of persons for water that they cannot use because the State made a mistake.

The NAACP believes that pro bono legal advice should be made available to all. With this, I think that we can expect and hope that the various bar associations would step up to the plate and help persons who are in need of legal advice. This is something that lawyers do eleemosynary quite often. I would hope that lawyers would move in and help persons, but if they don't move in and help persons, I think we have got a responsibility—we have done this in the past with funds that have gone to legal aid societies—to do something so that people who need some legal advice and some legal assistance can receive that advice and that assistance.

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

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I will just say this: Thank you for the time. I want to always celebrate the NAACP and all of its great victories.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to celebrate the 107th anniversary of the NAACP, an organization dedicated to eradicating racism and injustice in the United States. Since its founding in 1909, the NAACP has been a constant voice in the fight for civil rights. But, unlike other organizations, its original battlefield was the courtroom.

The founders of the NAACP were smart. They understood that in order to combat ignorance, you must first change the laws that foster it.

One of their first actions was to lobby against Jim Crow lynching laws. Though their efforts were unsuccessful, they turned the nation's attention to the ongoing mistreatment of Blacks in the 1920s and '30s.

In 1954, the NAACP played a pivotal role in the historic landmark case, Brown v. Board of Education. A team of NAACP lawyers joined Thurgood Marshall in a series of legal battles that would lead to segregation in public education being ruled unconstitutional.

The organization was then instrumental in the passage of the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts of 1965.

Since its inception, the NAACP has been our champion, and its expertise is now needed more than ever.

We are at a critical point in our nation's history, where strategic, collaborative efforts are best to move our country forward. Like the NAACP, we must be catalysts for change, not the cause of division.

The anniversary of the NAACP's founding reminds us what can be done when we work together. We all must play a role in the advancement of our communities.

To quote NAACP member Ms. Rosa Parks, "Racism is still with us. But it is up to us to prepare our children for what they have to meet, and, hopefully, we shall overcome." As a nation, we must reject discrimination in any form and give all children a chance to succeed in the land of the free and the home of the brave.

To the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the NAACP, my sincerest gratitude for all you have done to shape American history and ensure all of us have an opportunity to fully participate in the American dream. Thank you for being there in the streets, on college campuses, and at the courthouse. Our communities are indebted to you for the vision in 1909, and the 107 years dedicated to righting the wrongs of our nation's past. Thank you for persevering and changing the face of America.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. HUDSON (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today and for the balance of the week on account of illness.

Ms. BONAMICI (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and February 12 on account of official business in district.

Mr. PALLONE (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and February 12 on account of responsibilities related to the passing of father.

BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on February 10, 2016, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill:

H.R. 3033. 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.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 2 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, February 12, 2016, at 9 a.m.

EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

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

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]

HOUSE COMMITTEES

Please Note: If there were no expenditures during the calendar quarter noted above, please check the box at right to so indicate and return. ☒

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.

[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. K. MICHAEL CONAWAY, Chairman, Jan. 28, 2016.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Hon. Robert B. Aderholt	10/10	10/11	Spain		356.48		(3)				
	10/11	10/13	France		963.60		(3)				
	10/13	10/16	United Kingdom		1,488.72		(3)				
	10/16	10/17	Norway		197.56		(3)				
Jennifer Hing	10/13	10/15	Spain		756.73						
	10/15	10/17	Germany		611.29						
Commercial airfare							2,856.70				
Rental Cars							258.24				
Staffdel Costs									222.91		
Megan Milam	10/13	10/15	Spain		756.73						
	10/15	10/17	Germany		611.29						
Commercial airfare							2,457.40				
Taxi							94.16				
Rental Cars							258.24				
Staffdel Costs									222.91		

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015—Continued

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Cornell Teague	10/13	10/15	Spain		524.99						
	10/15	10/17	Germany		611.29						
Commercial airfare							2,379.40				
Taxi							62.17				
Rental Cars							258.24				
Staffdel Costs									222.91		
Collin Lee	10/13	10/15	Spain		756.73						
	10/15	10/17	Germany		611.29						
Commercial airfare							2,652.40				
Taxi							46.94				
Rental Cars							258.24				
Staffdel Costs									222.91		
Hon. C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger	10/12	10/14	Europe		975.00						
	10/14	10/15	Europe		228.34						
	10/15	10/17	Europe		219.28						
Commercial airfare							10,461.00				
Delegation Costs									71.93		
Hon. Rodney P. Frelinghuysen	12/12	12/13	Jordan		355.41						
	12/13	12/14	Germany		255.58						
Commercial airfare							744.35				
BG Wright	12/12	12/13	Jordan		355.41						
	12/13	12/14	Germany		255.58						
Commercial airfare							744.35				
Hon. David G. Valadao	12/23	12/25	Kuwait		210.00						
	12/25	12/25	Iraq								
Commercial airfare							14,205.20				
Hon. Kay Granger	12/29	12/30	Costa Rica		237.20				3,637.75		
Commercial airfare							1,549.82				
Hon. Henry Cuellar	12/29	12/30	Costa Rica		237.20				3,637.75		
Commercial airfare							781.42				
Clelia Alvarado	12/29	12/30	Costa Rica		477.00				3,637.75		
Commercial airfare							778.59				
Committee total					12,052.70		40,846.86		11,876.82		64,776.38

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

HON. HAROLD ROGERS, Chairman, Jan. 29, 2016.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
CODEL—Goodlatte											
Hon. Frederica Wilson	10/24	10/25	Haiti		261.00		394.10				655.10
Committee total					261.00		394.10				655.10

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

HON. JOHN KLINE, Chairman, Jan. 27, 2016.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Hon. Billy Long	10/10	10/11	Spain		380.50		(3)				380.50
	10/11	10/13	France		1,183.00						1,183.00
	10/13	10/16	England		1,377.60						1,377.60
	10/16	10/17	Norway		275.40						275.40
Hon. David McKinley	10/12	10/14	China		947.66		17,757.03		6,597.72		25,302.41
	10/15	10/18	India		738.36				2,423.23		3,161.59
Mary Neumayr	10/12	10/14	China		947.66		17,757.03				18,704.69
	10/15	10/18	India		738.36						738.36
David Redl	10/17	10/20	Ireland		791.20		2,223.40				3,014.60
Charlotte Savercool	10/17	10/20	Ireland		791.20		2,223.40				3,014.60
David Goldman	10/17	10/20	Ireland		791.20		2,223.40				3,014.60
Ben Lieberman	11/1	11/5	United Arab Emirates		2,459.80		7,718.20		5.60		10,183.60
Hon. Marsha Blackburn	11/5	11/7	Brazil		518.00		11,621.76		1,937.00		14,076.76
	11/8	11/9	Argentina		566.41				842.43		1,408.84
	11/10	11/11	Chile		295.36				1,965.04		2,260.40
Hon. Tony Cárdenas	11/5	11/7	Brazil		518.00		11,289.76				11,807.76
	11/8	11/9	Argentina		566.41						566.41
	11/10	11/11	Chile		295.36						295.36
Hon. Jerry McNerney	11/5	11/7	Brazil		518.00		12,229.46				12,747.46
	11/8	11/9	Argentina		566.41						566.41
	11/10	11/11	Chile		295.36						295.36
Paul Nagle	11/5	11/7	Brazil		518.00		11,750.26				12,268.26
	11/8	11/9	Argentina		566.41						566.41
	11/10	11/11	Chile		295.36						295.36
Hon. Robert Latta	11/5	11/7	Brazil		361.00		12,539.76				12,900.76
	11/8	11/9	Argentina		324.41						324.41
	11/10	11/11	Chile		179.36						179.36
Hon. Bill Flores	11/19	11/20	Egypt		267.00		17,128.05				17,395.05
	11/21	11/22	Afghanistan		24.00		(3)				24.00
	11/23	11/25	Saudi Arabia		459.33						459.33
Tom Hassenboehler	12/5	12/14	France		2,684.00		1,157.90		2,973.00		6,814.90
Mary Neumayr	12/5	12/5	France		4,688.00		1,121.90				5,809.90
Peter Spencer	12/5	12/14	France		4,688.00		1,121.90				5,809.90
Tiffany Guarascio	12/3	12/13	France		3,221.00		1,121.70				4,342.70
Eric Kessler	12/5	12/13	France		4,151.00		1,121.70				5,272.70

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015—Continued

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Committee total					37,988.12		132,106.61		16,744.02		186,838.75

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

HON. FRED UPTON, Chairman, Jan. 29, 2016.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Hon. Jeb Hensarling	10/10	10/11	Germany		191.49		(3)		1,500.00		1,691.49
	10/11	10/14	Switzerland		1,452.73		(3)		23,665.00		25,117.73
	10/14	10/17	England		1,885.11		(3)		29,084.00		30,969.11
Hon. Randy Neugebauer	10/10	10/11	Germany		191.48		(3)				191.48
	10/11	10/14	Switzerland		1,272.73		(3)				1,272.73
	10/14	10/17	England		1,743.13		(3)				1,743.13
Hon. Blaine Luetkemeyer	10/10	10/11	Germany		191.49		(3)				191.49
	10/11	10/14	Switzerland		1,322.73		(3)				1,322.73
	10/14	10/17	England		1,841.26		(3)				1,841.26
Hon. Bill Huizenga	10/10	10/11	Germany		217.00		(3)				217.00
	10/11	10/14	Switzerland		1,442.00		(3)				1,442.00
	10/14	10/17	England		2,005.00		(3)				2,005.00
Hon. Sean Duffy	10/10	10/11	Germany		221.49		(3)				221.49
	10/11	10/14	Switzerland		1,427.73		(3)				1,427.73
	10/14	10/17	England		2,035.07		(3)				2,035.07
Hon. Emanuel Cleaver	10/10	10/11	Germany		237.00		(3)				237.00
	10/11	10/14	Switzerland		1,530.00		(3)				1,530.00
	10/14	10/17	England		2,085.00		(3)				2,085.00
Hon. John Delaney	10/13	10/14	Switzerland		452.35		(3)				452.35
	10/14	10/17	England		1,778.56		(3)				1,778.56
Kirsten Mork	10/10	10/11	Germany		201.48		(3)				201.48
	10/11	10/14	Switzerland		1,521.00		(3)				1,521.00
	10/14	10/17	England		1,991.86		(3)				1,991.86
Kevin Edgar	10/10	10/11	Germany		156.48		(3)				156.48
	10/11	10/14	Switzerland		1,417.72		(3)				1,417.72
	10/14	10/17	England		1,910.54		(3)				1,910.54
Brian Johnson	10/10	10/11	Germany		146.48		(3)				146.48
	10/11	10/14	Switzerland		1,312.72		(3)				1,312.72
	10/14	10/17	England		1,820.40		(3)				1,820.40
David Popp	10/10	10/11	Germany		146.48		(3)				146.48
	10/11	10/14	Switzerland		1,312.72		(3)				1,312.72
	10/14	10/17	England		1,789.13		(3)				1,789.13
Rosemary Keech	10/10	10/11	Germany		166.48		(3)				166.48
	10/11	10/14	Switzerland		1,500.22		(3)				1,500.22
	10/14	10/17	England		1,929.07		(3)				1,929.07
Kristofor Erickson	10/10	10/11	Germany		161.48		(3)				161.48
	10/11	10/14	Switzerland		1,437.72		(3)				1,437.72
	10/14	10/17	England		1,918.93		(3)				1,918.93
Hon. Maxine Waters	10/19	10/19	Haiti				1,158.98				1,158.98
Hon. French Hill	11/6	11/7	UAE		332.00						332.00
	11/7	11/9	Afghanistan								
	11/9	11/11	UAE		798.00		14,204.94				15,002.94
Joseph Pinder	11/8	11/10	Japan		659.00						659.00
	11/10	11/13	Korea		1,032.00		1,445.40				2,477.40
Hon. Robert Pittenger	11/20	11/21	Egypt		267.00						267.00
	11/21	11/23	Afghanistan		12.00						12.00
	11/23	11/24	Saudi Arabia		368.00		17,128.05				17,496.05
Committee total					47,832.26		33,937.37		54,249.00		136,018.63

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

HON. JEB HENSARLING, Chairman, Jan. 29, 2016.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Hon. Dana Rohrabacher	11/20	11/21	France		473.36		20,763.80				21,237.16
	11/21	11/23	Egypt		534.00						534.00
	11/23	11/24	United Arab Emirates		500.48				310.39		810.87
	11/24	11/25	Japan		251.90						251.90
Hon. Tulsi Gabbard	11/20	11/21	France		473.36		10,372.50				10,845.86
	11/21	11/23	Egypt		534.00						534.00
	11/23	11/24	United Arab Emirates		500.48						500.48
	11/24	11/25	Japan		251.90						251.90
Paul Behrends	11/20	11/21	France		473.36		25,565.80				26,039.16
	11/21	11/23	Egypt		534.00						534.00
	11/23	11/24	United Arab Emirates		500.48						500.48
	11/24	11/25	Japan		251.90						251.90
Philip Bednarczyk	11/20	11/21	France		480.00		5,912.80				6,392.80
	11/21	11/23	Egypt		442.00						442.00
Hon. Eliot Engel	11/6	11/7	Bosnia-Herzegovina		169.28		12,633.10				12,802.38
	11/7	11/9	Germany		563.44						563.44
	11/9	11/10	Austria		332.65						332.65
Kyle Parker	11/6	11/7	Bosnia-Herzegovina		169.28		3,966.00				4,135.28
	11/7	11/9	Germany		563.44						563.44
	11/9	11/10	Austria		332.65						332.65
Hon. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen	11/6	11/7	United Arab Emirates		400.00		8,694.20		2,167.00		11,261.20
	11/7	11/9	Afghanistan				(3)				
	11/9	11/11	United Arab Emirates		706.00						706.00

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015—Continued

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Hon. Theodore Yoho	11/6	11/7	United Arab Emirates		402.00		13,085.20				13,487.20
	11/7	11/9	Afghanistan								
	11/9	11/11	United Arab Emirates		754.00						754.00
Edward Acevedo	11/6	11/7	United Arab Emirates		424.00		8,694.20				9,118.20
	11/7	11/9	Afghanistan								
	11/9	11/11	United Arab Emirates		782.00						782.00
Casey Kustin	11/6	11/7	United Arab Emirates		452.00		8,694.20				9,146.20
	11/7	11/9	Afghanistan								
	11/9	11/11	United Arab Emirates		854.00						854.00
Kristen Marquardt	10/10	10/12	Saudi Arabia		943.50		4,167.90				5,111.40
	10/12	10/13	Jordan		360.00						360.00
	10/13	10/16	Lebanon		213.00						213.00
Mark Iozzi	10/10	10/12	Saudi Arabia		945.00		4,541.60				5,486.00
	10/12	10/13	Jordan		350.00						350.00
	10/13	10/16	Lebanon		215.00						215.00
	10/11	10/13	Jordan		610.82		3,717.20				4,328.02
	10/13	10/16	Lebanon		75.00						75.00
Joan Condon	10/11	10/13	Jordan		610.82		3,632.90				4,243.72
	10/13	10/16	Lebanon		225.00						225.00
Matthew Zweig	11/8	11/10	Japan		657.93		1,298.50				1,956.43
	11/10	11/13	South Korea		1,032.26						1,032.26
Edmund Rice	11/8	11/10	Japan		657.93		1,445.50				2,103.43
	11/10	11/13	South Korea		1,032.26						1,032.26
Hunter Strupp	11/8	11/10	Japan		647.90		1,298.50				1,946.40
	11/10	11/13	South Korea		1,022.26						1,022.26
Scott Cullinane	10/12	10/14	Austria		656.18		2,225.00				2,881.18
	10/14	10/17	Germany		844.21						844.21
Philip Bednarczyk	10/12	10/14	Austria		676.18		2,498.10				3,174.28
	10/14	10/17	Germany		859.21						859.21
Kristen Marquardt	10/30	11/1	Bahrain		792.00		10,542.26				11,334.26
Hon. Reid Ribble	10/30	10/31	Guatemala		302.79		(3)				302.79
	10/31	11/1	Honduras		180.86		(3)				180.86
Edward Acevedo	10/11	10/14	Israel		2,025.00		4,598.26				6,623.26
	10/15	10/17	Switzerland		906.00						906.00
Golan Rodgers	10/11	10/14	Israel		2,072.00		3,378.26				5,450.26
	10/15	10/17	Switzerland		934.00						934.00
Piero Tozzi	10/11	10/14	Israel		2,022.29		4,598.26				6,620.55
	10/15	10/17	Switzerland		924.00						924.00
Sadaf Khan	10/11	10/14	Israel		2,065.00		4,598.46				6,663.46
	10/15	10/17	Switzerland		926.00						926.00
Amy Chang	11/7	11/9	Burma		683.00		8,059.10				8,742.10
Nilmini Rubin	11/8	11/13	Brazil		967.48		4,842.52				5,810.00
Hon. Dana Rohrabacher	11/6	11/8	Turkey		1,155.85		11,466.00				12,621.85
	11/8	11/10	Germany		401.86				1,063.24		1,465.10
	11/7	11/7	Iraq				(3)				
Paul Behrends	11/6	11/8	Turkey		1,155.85		10,910.00				12,065.85
	11/8	11/10	Germany		401.86						401.86
	11/7	11/7	Iraq				(3)				
Worku Gachou	11/9	11/10	Germany		219.00		7,513.72				7,732.72
	11/11	11/13	Djbouti		534.95						534.95
Lesley Warner	11/9	11/10	Germany		229.00		7,478.72				7,708.51
	11/11	11/13	Djbouti		559.27						559.27
Amy Porter	11/7	11/10	Malaysia		704.48		11,517.18				12,221.66
	11/10	11/12	Burma		666.00						666.00
Janice Kaguyutan	11/6	11/9	Burma		999.00		13,869.70				14,868.70
	11/9	11/10	Malaysia		227.00						227.00
	11/10	11/12	Burma		671.00						671.00
Peter Freeman	11/7	11/10	Malaysia		684.48		11,517.18				12,201.66
	11/10	11/12	Burma		651.00						651.00
Douglas Anderson	11/7	11/10	Malaysia		693.73		11,517.18				12,210.91
	11/10	11/12	Burma		648.00						648.00
Brian Skretny	12/6	12/13	France		3,632.40		1,529.80				5,162.20
Hon. Lee Zeldin	12/23	12/25	Kuwait		724.47		14,176.20				14,900.67
	12/25	12/25	Iraq								
Hon. David Cicilline	12/23	12/25	Kuwait								
	12/25	12/25	Iraq		724.47		14,176.20				14,900.67
Committee total					56,225.10		299,496.00		3,540.63		359,261.73

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

HON. EDWARD R. ROYCE, Chairman, Feb. 1, 2016.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
B. Shields	11/9	11/10	Croatia		279.00		9,339.50*				9,618.50
	11/10	11/12	Serbia		567.00						567.00
	11/12	11/14	Germany		561.00						561.00
M. Taylor	11/8	11/9	Bulgaria		252.42		12,597.90*				12,850.32
	11/9	11/10	Croatia		279.00						279.00
	11/10	11/12	Serbia		527.00						527.00
	11/12	11/14	Germany		561.00						561.00
A. Northrop	11/8	11/9	Bulgaria		252.42		12,597.90*				12,850.32
	11/9	11/10	Croatia		279.00						279.00
	11/10	11/12	Serbia		527.00						527.00
	11/12	11/14	Germany		561.00						561.00
Committee total					4,645.84		34,535.30				39,181.14

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
* Airfare inclusive of multiple legs of trip.

HON. MICHAEL T. McCAUL, Chairman, Jan. 20, 2016.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
HOUSE COMMITTEES											
Please Note: If there were no expenditures during the calendar quarter noted above, please check the box at right to so indicate and return.☒											

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

HON. CANDICE S. MILLER, Chairman, Jan. 14, 2016.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Hon. Steve Chabot	11/11	11/12	Brazil		393.00		893.21				
	11/12	11/13	Panama		272.00						
	11/13	11/14	Ecuador		297.00						
	11/14	11/15	Peru		353.00						
	11/10	11/15					10,632.30				
Kevin Fitzpatrick	11/11	11/12	Brazil		393.00		893.21				
	11/12	11/13	Panama		272.00						
	11/13	11/14	Ecuador		297.00						
	11/14	11/15	Peru		353.00						
	11/10	11/15					10,102.70				
Committee total					2,630.00		22,521.42				25,151.42

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

HON. STEVE CHABOT, Chairman, Jan. 28, 2016.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
HOUSE COMMITTEES											
Please Note: If there were no expenditures during the calendar quarter noted above, please check the box at right to so indicate and return.☒											

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

HON. JEFF MILLER, Chairman, Feb. 1, 2016.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Michael Ellis	10/15	10/17	Africa		230.00						230.00
Commercial airfare							27,379.60				27,379.60
Damon Nelson	10/15	10/17	Africa		230.00						230.00
Commercial airfare							27,379.60				27,379.60
Hon. Adam Schiff	10/11	10/13	Asia		651.50						651.50
	10/14	10/16	Asia		715.75				70.95		786.70
Commercial airfare							21,988.60				21,988.60
Michael Bahar	10/11	10/13	Asia		651.50						651.50
	10/14	10/16	Asia		715.75				70.95		786.70
Commercial airfare							12,960.20				12,960.20
Timothy Bergreen	10/11	10/13	Asia		651.50						651.50
	10/14	10/16	Asia		715.75				70.95		786.70
Commercial airfare							16,824.40				16,824.40
Hon. Eric Swalwell	10/12	10/14	Europe		975.00				19.00		994.00
	10/14	10/15	Europe		228.33				11.38		239.71
	10/15	10/17	Europe		219.28				41.55		260.83
Commercial airfare							12,344.10				12,344.10
Linda Cohen	10/12	10/14	Europe		975.00				19.00		994.00
	10/14	10/15	Europe		228.33				11.38		239.71
	10/15	10/17	Europe		219.28				41.55		260.83
Commercial airfare							17,541.10				17,541.10
Hon. Michael Pompeo	11/7	11/11	Asia		300.00				8,430.48		8.730.48
	11/11	11/14	Asia		2,040.00				6,868.39		8,908.39
Commercial airfare							19,069.42				19,069.42
Geoffrey Kahn	11/7	11/11	Asia		300.00				8,430.49		8.730.49
	11/11	11/12	Asia		1,043.00				6,868.39		7,911.39
Commercial airfare							19,417.42				19,417.42
Hon. Michael Quigley	11/9	11/11	Europe		679.48						679.48
	11/12	11/12	Europe		253.00						253.00
	11/12	11/13	Europe		324.48		210.60				535.08
Commercial airfare							24,455.50				24,455.50
Rheanne Wirkkala	11/9	11/11	Europe		551.13						551.13
	11/12	11/12	Europe		253.00						253.00
	11/12	11/13	Europe		324.48		210.60				535.08
Commercial airfare							18,152.90				18,152.90
Lisa Major	11/9	11/11	Europe		551.13						551.13
	11/12	11/12	Europe		253.00						253.00
	11/12	11/13	Europe		324.49		210.60				535.09
Commercial airfare							22,228.70				22,228.70
Diane Rinaldo	11/9	11/11	South America		716.00						716.00
	11/12	11/12	South America		350.50		1,029.09				1,379.59
	11/12	11/13	North America		242.00				472.00		714.00
Commercial airfare							4,637.59				4,637.59
Andrew House	11/9	11/11	South America		716.00						716.00

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015—Continued

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
	11/12	11/12	South America		350.50		1,029.09				1,379.59
	11/12	11/13	North America		242.00				472.00		714.00
Commercial airfare							4,622.59				4,622.59
Jeffrey Shockey	11/10	11/11	Europe		131.00						131.00
	11/11	11/13	Asia		710.82						710.82
Commercial airfare							13,800.40				13,800.40
Chelsey Campbell	11/10	11/11	Europe		131.00						131.00
	11/11	11/13	Asia		710.82						710.82
Commercial airfare							13,800.40				13,800.40
Damon Nelson	11/10	11/11	Europe		131.00						131.00
	11/11	11/13	Asia		710.82						710.82
Commercial airfare							13,800.40				13,800.40
Jacob Crisp	11/10	11/11	Europe		131.00						131.00
	11/11	11/13	Asia		710.82						710.82
Commercial airfare							13,800.40				13,800.40
Timothy Bergreen	11/10	11/11	Europe		131.00						131.00
	11/11	11/13	Asia		710.82						710.82
Commercial airfare							13,800.40				13,800.40
Hon. Devin Nunes	12/12	12/13	Asia		355.41		744.35				1,099.76
	12/13	12/14	Europe		255.58						255.58
							(3)				
Douglas Presley	12/12	12/13	Asia		355.41		744.35				1,099.76
	12/13	12/14	Europe		255.58						255.58
							(3)				
Wells Bennett	12/20	12/21	Asia		476.00				32.76		508.76
	12/21	12/23	Asia		610.00				513.66		1,123.66
Commercial airfare							15,358.10				15,358.10
Committee total				23,738.24			337,540.50		32,444.88		393,723.62

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
* In accordance with title 22, United States Code, Section 1754(b)(2), information as would identify the foreign countries in which Committee Members and staff have traveled is omitted.
[3] Military air transportation.

HON. DEVIN NUNES, Chairman, Jan. 29, 2016.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE EVENTS SURROUNDING THE 2012 TERRORIST ATTACK IN BENGHAZI, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Hon. Lynn A. Westmoreland	11/20	11/22	Germany		653.76		12,680.10				13,333.86
	11/23	11/24	Italy		977.28				290.63		1,267.91
J. Mac Tolar	11/20	11/22	Germany		653.76		12,057.30				12,711.06
	11/23	11/24	Italy		977.28						977.28
Committee total					3,262,08		24,737.40		290.63		28,290.11

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

HON. TREY GOWDY, Chairman, Jan. 28, 2016.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Erika Schlager	9/20	10/4	Poland	Zloty	4,036.00		2,484.00				6,520.00
			Austria	Euro							
Mischa Thompson	9/27	10/3	Poland	Zloty	1,719.00		3,749.00				5,468.00
			Brussels	Euro							
	11/15	11/20	Austria	Euro	2,256.00		1,360.90				3,616.90
Paul Massaro	10/16	10/24	Israel	Shekel	2,086.00		2,731.96				4,817.96
			Jordan	Dinar							
Orest Deychakiwsky	10/7	10/13	Belarus	Ruble	855.00		3,681.90				4,536.90
Shelly Han	10/27	11/4	Azerbaijan	Manat	2,052.00		3,917.40				5,969.40
Janice Helwig	10/1	12/31	Austria	Euro	29,484.00		7,886.70				37,370.70
	10/29	11/2	Turkey	Lira	1,552.00		1,249.20				2,801.20
	11/30	12/4	Serbia	Dinar	1,740.00		997.80				2,737.80
Nathaniel Hurd	12/4	12/13	Italy	Euro	931.79		1,816.30				2,748.09
Jonas Wechsler	11/30	12/4	Serbia	Dinar	1,020.00		3,100.00				4,120.00
Committee total					47,731.79		32,975.16				80,706.95

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

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, Chairman, Feb. 1, 2016.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

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

4309. 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-2015-3140; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-063-AD; Amendment 39-18385; AD 2016-02-05] (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.

4310. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bell Helicopter Textron Canada Limited [Docket No.: FAA-2016-2068; Directorate

Identifier 2016-SW-002-AD; Amendment 39-18387; AD 2016-02-06] (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.

4311. 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-2016-2069; Directorate Identifier 2015-SW-070-AD; Amendment 39-18386; AD 2015-22-51] (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.

4312. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; MD Helicopters Inc. [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1998; Directorate Identifier 2014-SW-035-AD; Amendment 39-18379; AD 2016-01-19] (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.

4313. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH (Previously Eurocopter Deutschland GmbH) Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2015-0669; Directorate Identifier 2013-SW-038-AD; Amendment 39-18373; AD 2016-01-14] (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.

4314. 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-2015-1935; Directorate Identifier 2014-SW-008-AD; Amendment 39-18374; AD 2016-01-15] (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.

4315. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH (Previously Eurocopter Deutschland GmbH) (Airbus Helicopters) [Docket No.: FAA-2014-0577; Directorate Identifier 2013-SW-042-AD; Amendment 39-18375; AD 2015-12-09 R1] (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.

4316. 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-2015-1987; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-240-AD; Amendment 39-18377; AD 2016-01-17] (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.

4317. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; General Electric Company Turbofan Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2015-6823; Directorate Identifier 2015-NE-38-AD; Amendment 39-18360; AD 2015-27-01] (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.

4318. 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-2015-0824; Directorate Identifier 2013-NM-191-AD; Amendment 39-18378; AD 2016-01-18] (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.

4319. 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-2015-1281; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-241-AD; Amendment 39-18346; AD 2015-25-08] (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.

4320. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class D Airspace; Denver, CO [Docket No.: FAA-2015-6753; Airspace Docket No.: 15-ANM-29] 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.

4321. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of United States Area Navigation (RNAV) Route Q-35, Western United States [Docket No.: FAA-2013-6001; Airspace Docket No.: 15-ANM-10] (RIN: 2120-AA66) 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.

4322. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Boise, ID [Docket No.: FAA-2015-3674; Airspace Docket No.: 15-ANM-18] 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.

4323. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; El Paso, TX [Docket No.: FAA-2014-1074; Airspace Docket No.: 14-ASW-10] 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.

4324. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class D and Class E Airspace; Revocation of Class E Airspace; Chico, CA [Docket No.: FAA-2015-3899; Airspace Docket No.: 15-AWP-14] 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.

4325. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace for the following New York Towns; Elmira, NY; Ithaca, NY; Poughkeepsie, NY [Docket No.: FAA-2015-4514; Airspace Docket No.: 15-AEA-9] 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.

4326. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Revocation and Establishment of Class E Airspace; Bowman, ND [Docket No.: FAA-2015-1834; Airspace Docket No.: 15-AGL-8] 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.

4327. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Modification of VOR Federal Airway V-443; North Central United States [Docket No.: FAA-2015-7611; Airspace Docket No.: 15-AGL-20] (RIN: 2120-AA66) 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.

4328. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 31056; Amdt. No.: 3678] 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.

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. GOODLATTE (for himself, Mr. KLINE, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. HURT of Virginia, Mr. GRIFFITH, and Mr. PETERSON):

H.R. 4532. A bill to provide for a safe harbor for reports to potential employers by current or former employers of violent behavior or threats thereof by employees; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CUMMINGS (for himself and Mr. HINOJOSA):

H.R. 4533. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to make technical improvements to the Net Price Calculator system so that prospective students may have a more accurate understanding of the true cost of college; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. GIBSON (for himself, Mr. TURNER, Mr. WALZ, Mr. NUGENT, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. RUSSELL, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. O'ROURKE, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. ASHFORD, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. ZELDIN, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. ZINKE, and Mr. MOULTON):

H.R. 4534. A bill to recognize the importance of the land forces of the United States Armed Forces and to revise the fiscal year 2016 end-strength levels for these Land Forces and specify new permanent active duty end strength minimum levels, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. HUFFMAN (for himself, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. HONDA, Ms. LEE, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms.

NORTON, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. DESAULNIER, and Mr. GRIJALVA):

H.R. 4535. A bill to prohibit drilling in the outer Continental Shelf, to prohibit coal leases on Federal land, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. TIBERI (for himself, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. TURNER, Mr. LATTA, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. WENSTRUP, and Mr. CHABOT):

H.R. 4536. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit the unlawful disposal of fetal remains, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CARTER of Texas (for himself, Mrs. ROBY, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. BABIN, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. MEADOWS, Ms. GRANGER, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. BARTON, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. COOK, Mr. BOST, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. MCCAUL, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. FORBES, Mr. PALMER, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. MARINO, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. DONOVAN, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. COLE, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. OLSON, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. NUGENT, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. FLORES, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. POSEY, and Mr. PALAZZO):

H.R. 4537. A bill to prohibit the use of military installations to house aliens who do not have a lawful immigration status or are undergoing removal proceedings in the United States; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. SINEMA (for herself, Mr. POLIQUIN, Mr. MULVANEY, and Mr. MURPHY of Florida):

H.R. 4538. A bill to provide immunity from suit for certain individuals who disclose potential examples of financial exploitation of senior citizens, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. SCOTT of Virginia (for himself, Mr. RIGELL, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. FORBES, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. BEYER, Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. NORTON, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. LEE, Mr. FATTAH, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. BASS, Ms. FUDGE, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. EDWARDS, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. DOGGETT, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. MOORE, Mr. RUSH, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. HONDA, and Ms. MCCOLLUM):

H.R. 4539. A bill to establish the 400 Years of African-American History Commission, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. ADERHOLT:

H.R. 4540. A bill to provide clarity regarding States' ability to manage the supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP) and to provide States with funding to treat drug addiction in the SNAP population; to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, and 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 Mr. BEYER:

H.R. 4541. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow individuals providing adult education the same above-the-line deduction as is allowed for expenses of elementary and secondary school teachers; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. FUDGE (for herself, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. KILDEE, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, and Ms. KAPTUR):

H.R. 4542. A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to establish a low-income sewer and water assistance pilot program; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4543. A bill to establish the Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Commission; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. PERRY:

H.R. 4544. A bill to repeal section 115 of the Clean Air Act; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.R. 4545. A bill to expand the Big Laurel Branch Wilderness and Sampson Mountain Wilderness in the Cherokee National Forest in the State of Tennessee, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, 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. ROSS (for himself and Ms. CASTOR of Florida):

H.R. 4546. A bill to require the Commissioner of Social Security to issue uniform standards for the method for truncation of Social Security account numbers in order to protect such numbers from being used in the perpetration of fraud or identity theft and to provide for a prohibition on the display to the general public on the Internet of Social Security account numbers by State and local governments and private entities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SCHWEIKERT (for himself, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. ROUZER, and Mr. BURGESS):

H.R. 4547. A bill to amend the Illegal Immigration and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to complete the required 700-mile southwest border fencing by December 31, 2017, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey:

H.R. 4548. A bill to amend the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 to clarify that employees of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China are to be treated as covered employees for purposes of such Act; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. WALDEN (for himself, Mr. HURD of Texas, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. DEFAZIO, and Mr. KILMER):

H.R. 4549. A bill to require the Transportation Security Administration to conduct security screening at certain airports, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. WEBER of Texas (for himself, Mr. YOHO, Mr. BABIN, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. PALMER, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. RUSSELL, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. OLSON, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. ROHRABACHER, and Mr. BARTON):

H.R. 4550. A bill to permit qualified law enforcement officers, qualified retired law enforcement officers, and persons not prohibited by State law from carrying a concealed firearm to carry a firearm, and to discharge a firearm in defense of self or others, in a school zone; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. TAKAI (for himself and Ms. GABBARD):

H. Con. Res. 115. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for an event to celebrate the birthday of King Kamehameha I; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. HUFFMAN (for himself, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. HONDA, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. POCAN):

H. Res. 612. A resolution expressing support for designation of February 12, 2016 as ''National No One Eats Alone Day''; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS (for herself, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. MESSER, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. BARR, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. ROSS, Mr. STEWART, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. PALMER, Mr. BUCK, Mr. HILL, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. HARDY, Mr. LAHOOD, and Mr. MULLIN):

H. Res. 613. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding the restoration of authority of the American people and the separation of powers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PERLMUTTER (for himself, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. POLIS, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. BUCK, Mr. LAMBORN, and Mr. COFFMAN):

H. Res. 614. A resolution honoring the Denver Broncos on their victory in Super Bowl 50; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

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. GOODLATTE:

H.R. 4532.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3, of the Constitution, which grants Congress the power to provide for uniform laws that remove barriers to trade and facilitate commerce nationwide; and Article I, Section 8, Clause 9;

Article III, Section 1, Clause 1; and Article III, Section 2, Clause 2 of the Constitution, which grant Congress authority over federal courts.

By Mr. CUMMINGS:

H.R. 4533.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. GIBSON:

H.R. 4534.

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

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress ''to provide for the common Defence'', ''to raise and support Armies'', and ''to make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces'' as enumerated in Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. HUFFMAN:

H.R. 4535.

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

Article 4, Section 3, Clause 2: The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belinging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any particular State.

By Mr. TIBERI:

H.R. 4536.

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

the Supreme Court's Commerce Clause precedents and under the Constitution's grants of powers to Congress under the Equal Protection, Due Process, and Enforcement Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment.

By Mr. CARTER of Texas:

H.R. 4537.

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

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 ''provide for the common Defense''

By Ms. SINEMA:

H.R. 4538.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3; Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. SCOTT of Virginia:

H.R. 4539.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. ADERHOLT:

H.R. 4540.

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

Article I, Section 9, Clause 7

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. BEYER:

H.R. 4541.

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

Amendment XVI to the Constitution of the United States: The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration.

By Ms. FUDGE:

H.R. 4542.

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

Artile I, section 8, clause 3, the Commerce Clause.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4543.

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

clause 18 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. PERRY:

H.R. 4544.

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

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.R. 4545.

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

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2: The Congress shall have power to dispose of and make all needfull rules and regulations respecting the terrority or other property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be construed as to prejudice any claims of the United States, or of any particular state.

By Mr. ROSS:

H.R. 4546.

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

Article I, Section 8: 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;

By Mr. SCHWEIKERT:

H.R. 4547.

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

Article 1. Section 8.

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey:

H.R. 4548.

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

Article 1, Section 8, particularly Clause 18.

By Mr. WALDEN:

H.R. 4549.

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

Clause 3 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution, ''To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.''

By Mr. WEBER of Texas:

H.R. 4550.

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

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under the Second Amendment of the Constitution.

''A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.''

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

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

H.R. 27: Mr. GOWDY, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. MEADOWS, and Mr. SIMPSON.

H.R. 169: Mr. ROUZER.

H.R. 244: Mr. BABIN.

H.R. 267: Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 430: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 472: Mr. ABRAHAM.

H.R. 581: Mr. MCKINLEY.

H.R. 664: Mr. DELANEY and Mr. AMASH.

H.R. 699: Mr. GRAYSON.

H.R. 711: Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, and Mr. SMITH of Missouri.

H.R. 799: Mr. GIBSON and Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.

H.R. 836: Mr. COLLINS of New York.

H.R. 865: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 911: Mr. ABRAHAM.

H.R. 953: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. KATKO, and Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H.R. 969: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.

H.R. 1089: Mr. KILDEE.

H.R. 1095: Mr. FARR, Mr. MARINO, and Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1197: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York and Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H.R. 1215: Mr. NOLAN.

H.R. 1221: Mr. FATTAH.

H.R. 1258: Mr. COFFMAN.

H.R. 1399: Mr. FARR.

H.R. 1538: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 1545: Mr. VELA, Mr. DUFFY, and Mr. ABRAHAM.

H.R. 1559: Mr. RICE of South Carolina.

H.R. 1632: Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. DENHAM, and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 1666: Mr. DESJARLAIS.

H.R. 1671: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia and Mr. LATTA.

H.R. 1854: Mr. DOLD.

H.R. 2058: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. GROTHMAN, and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 2367: Mr. TAKANO and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.

H.R. 2403: Mr. FITZPATRICK.

H.R. 2404: Mr. NORCROSS.

H.R. 2515: Mr. GOWDY.

H.R. 2646: Mr. POLIQUIN.

H.R. 2858: Mr. COFFMAN.

H.R. 2957: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.

H.R. 2962: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.

H.R. 3071: Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. KEATING, and Mrs. DINGELL.

H.R. 3084: Mr. CURBELO of Florida.

H.R. 3209: Mr. KIND.

H.R. 3223: Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. LAHOOD, and Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 3225: Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 3235: Mr. LANGEVIN.

H.R. 3299: Mr. WALDEN.

H.R. 3326: Mr. KATKO.

H.R. 3515: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.

H.R. 3516: Mr. WEBSTER of Florida.

H.R. 3520: Mr. LANCE.

H.R. 3565: Mr. COSTA and Mr. MCNERNEY.

H.R. 3619: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 3652: Mr. NORCROSS.

H.R. 3706: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan and Ms. CASTOR of Florida.

H.R. 3742: Mr. BRAT, Mr. JOLLY, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. RUSH, and Mr. GROTHMAN.

H.R. 3765: Mr. AMODEI.

H.R. 3779: Mr. HONDA and Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.

H.R. 3861: Mr. HURT of Virginia and Mr. TIPTON.

H.R. 3886: Mr. DESAULNIER and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 3915: Mr. WALDEN.

H.R. 3919: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 3926: Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 4007: Mr. DESJARLAIS.

H.R. 4019: Mr. BEYER.

H.R. 4057: Mr. LAMBORN.

H.R. 4087: Mr. KELLY of Mississippi.

H.R. 4177: Mr. WALBERG.

H.R. 4213: Mr. CROWLEY.

H.R. 4219: Mr. COSTA.

H.R. 4220: Mr. COFFMAN.

H.R. 4230: Mr. BLUMENAUER and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 4247: Mr. HECK of Nevada and Mrs. BLACK.

H.R. 4248: Mr. MULVANEY.

H.R. 4262: Mr. BABIN.

H.R. 4264: Mr. HECK of Nevada.

H.R. 4335: Mr. BRIDENSTINE.

H.R. 4371: Mr. CARTER of Georgia and Mr. GOWDY.

H.R. 4376: Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 4377: Mr. SENSENBRENNER.

H.R. 4381: Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 4390: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 4399: Mr. FARR, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts and Mr. ENGEL.

H.R. 4400: Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.

H.R. 4405: Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 4415: Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. SWALWELL of California, and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.
H.R. 4420: Mr. LATTA, Mr. GIBBS, and Mr. LYNCH.
H.R. 4428: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.
H.R. 4431: Ms. BONAMICI.
H.R. 4434: Ms. CLARKE of New York.
H.R. 4436: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 4454: Mrs. RADEWAGEN.
H.R. 4456: Mr. COLE.
H.R. 4469: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 4477: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 4479: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. DELANEY, and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.
H.R. 4480: Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. POCAN, and Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 4481: Ms. MOORE and Mr. HASTINGS.
H.R. 4486: Mr. CHABOT, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. GIBBS, and Mr. CRAMER.
H.R. 4490: Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 4498: Mr. CURBELO of Florida.
H.R. 4505: Mr. LAHOOD.
H.R. 4513: Mr. GIBSON, Mr. KING of New York, and Mr. ISRAEL.
H.R. 4521: Mr. ELLISON, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. JONES, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. RUSH, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, and Mr. HANNA.
H.J. Res. 22: Mr. KIND.
H.J. Res. 55: Mr. MARINO, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. SALMON, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. BUCK, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. BLUM, Mr. STIVERS, and Mr. DESJARLAIS.
H. Con. Res. 19: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H. Con. Res. 75: Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. ALLEN, and Mr. BUCSHON.
H. Res. 148: Mr. CONNOLLY and Mr. CLAWSON of Florida.
H. Res. 445: Mr. RIGELL.
H. Res. 469: Mr. KLINE.
H. Res. 564: Mr. BOST.
H. Res. 571: Mr. POLIQUIN.
H. Res. 591: Mr. ASHFORD, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. CARNEY, Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. BYRNE, and Mr. COURTNEY.
H. Res. 600: Mr. DELANEY, Mr. BUCSHON, and Miss RICE of New York.

DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

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

H. Res. 571: Ms. Granger.

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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 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, our helper, we sing Your praises and will not keep silent. You clothe us with gladness, and Your favor is for a lifetime.

Bless our lawmakers and hear them when they pray. As our Senators lift their fervent prayers, empower them to meet the challenges of our time. May they always seek You while You may be found, calling upon You while You are near. Lord, when great waters overflow them, protect and preserve them with Your great strength. Be for them a hiding place, and surround them with songs of deliverance.

We pray in Your mighty Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HELLER). The majority leader is recognized.

INTERNET TAX FREEDOM FOREVER ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the Internet is a resource used daily by Americans of all ages all across our country. Students use it to research school projects and papers. Entrepreneurs use it to help run their businesses and come up with new ideas. Families use it to manage their busy schedules and stay in touch with their relatives. It is important that they be able to do this without the worry that their Internet access is being taxed.

Congress first voted to ban taxes on Internet access back in 1998, but it was only a temporary ban. Congress has since held that vote eight additional times—eight extensions of the Internet tax moratorium over these years. Today we have an opportunity to make it permanent.

The Internet Tax Freedom Act is a commonsense, bipartisan piece of legislation with 51 cosponsors. I appreciate the diligent work by the Republican Senator from South Dakota and the Democratic Senator from Oregon and, of course, the many efforts of our colleague from Utah to move this legislation. I look forward to supporting it today.

WAR ON TERROR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday the Senate joined together to overwhelmingly pass bipartisan legislation that will further isolate North Korea in response to its policy of aggression. It was necessary because our Nation faces a daunting array of threats and challenges from all across the globe. Our next Commander in Chief, regardless of political party, will face similar challenges upon taking office.

We see terrorist threats from the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, from Al Qaeda, and from both of their respective affiliates. For example, the terrorist group that grew from Al Qaeda in Iraq, ISIL, is now not only capable of launching infantry assaults, suicide bomber attacks, and raids initiated by the detonation of IEDs, it is also working hard to radicalize individuals over the Internet and is determined to keep attacking Westerners right here where they live.

We see threats to stability in Afghanistan from Taliban forces and the Haqqani Network. For example, just this week we learned that additional U.S. forces will be needed to reinforce the Afghan National Security Forces in Helmand Province. We have a determined partner in President Ghani, and General Campbell has testified that we need to maintain a sufficient force posture to both train and advise them and also conduct counterterrorism operations.

We see challenges from countries looking to aggressively expand their influence, such as China and Russia and Iran, while, of course, diminishing our influence. For example, Russia is rebuilding its conventional and nuclear forces while launching cyber attacks, conducting espionage, and propping up paramilitary forces like we see in Ukraine. China is rebuilding and modernizing its conventional and nuclear forces, as it masters the tactics of low-intensity conflict designed to coerce our allies without provoking an overwhelming response from us.

The challenges we face today are very great. They are likely to be even greater tomorrow. All of this comes at a time when America must rebuild both its conventional and nuclear forces.

Clearly, the next Commander in Chief is going to take office confronting a complex and varied array of threats. After 7 years of the Obama administration delaying action in the War on Terror, the next administration will need to return to the fight and to restore our role in the world. We want to work with our next President, regardless of party, to do the things we know are needed to help protect our country, but that incoming leader also needs our help now, and we should take action now in this year of transition.

The Secretary of Defense last week announced two aspects of this—first, a defense budget request that emphasizes the weapons systems needed to balance

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

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against China's anti-access and area denial weapons and plans and a regional security initiative designed to resist Russian encroachment in Eastern Europe.

General Dunford has talked about the acute threat represented by ISIL in Libya and the need to take action against this group. Other defense officials have recently focused on the need to rebuild the nuclear triad too.

It is clear what needs to be done. For instance, we know that our nuclear forces must be modernized to deter countries such as Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea. We know that our conventional forces must be modernized to both balance against and contain their regional aspirations. We know that our Special Operations and Marine expeditionary units must be maintained and equipped to conduct counterterrorism and regional response. That means providing sufficient sealift and naval platforms and carrier air wings to keep amphibious-ready groups and carrier battle groups on station rather than withdrawing our presence at the very moment allies are questioning our commitment to traditional alliances. It means that our regional combatant commanders need sufficient force levels to protect our interests.

We know the commander of Central Command must have the assets needed to assure our moderate Sunni allies, the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia, and help them resist Iran's efforts to intimidate neighbors.

In the Pacific, we know we must undertake a sustained buildup of naval air and expeditionary capabilities and work closely with Japan, South Korea, and other regional partners if we want to lead within the region and deter China's belligerent policies.

We know that the authorities our intelligence and counterterror forces need to defeat ISIL must also be renewed and restored.

We know that we must return to capturing, interrogating, and targeting the enemy in a way that allows us to defeat terrorist networks.

It is clear that the Obama administration has failed to lead in sustaining the force and in meeting these strategic objectives. We have seen that the administration's efforts to employ Special Operations Forces to train and equip units in Yemen, Syria, and Iraq have proven insufficient to generate the combat power that is needed to defeat the enemy.

The economy of force strategy set forth in the President's West Point speech has failed. National security policies that were for too long focused on campaign promises made back in 2008, such as the effort to close Guantanamo, to withdraw from Iraq and Afghanistan based on arbitrary deadlines, and to end the War on Terror and take away the CIA's detention and interrogation capabilities and remake it into a Cold War clandestine service, are finally giving way to geopolitical reality today.

The fact that current members of the Obama administration are now recognizing the threat and the need to rebuild the force should inspire all of us to get started now—this year, not next year. I think we should be doing all we can today to ready the force for the challenges ahead and to lay the groundwork for the next President regardless of party. Passing the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act yesterday was a positive step, but we must also ensure that the United States does not withdraw from our alliance and forward presence.

With sustained bipartisan cooperation, we can pass a national defense authorization act at levels that will allow us to modernize the force and execute current operations against ISIL and in Afghanistan while meeting our commitments to keep the force ready. With sustained bipartisan cooperation, we can pass Defense appropriations at adequate levels to train and equip and sustain the best military in the world. Doing what is required will necessitate a sustained effort, but we can begin now, if colleagues are willing to work with us in this year of transition. Let's work together to keep our country safe.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

CUSTOMS BILL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Customs bill is another in a series of missed opportunities and half-measures that have characterized this Congress. The legislation we are going to vote on today, the conference report on Customs, misses the opportunity to take strong action against currency manipulation. The bill we sent out of here had strong currency manipulation language in it; it is not there anymore.

It throws up unnecessary hurdles to agreements on climate change. It basically says that any agreements the United States makes cannot take climate into consideration—on any of those agreements.

No one that I know of opposes the legislation that is stuck inside this Customs conference report dealing with taxation on the Internet. We all support that. But the sad part about this is the manipulation to get it in this bill. It did not start in either House; it was just airdropped into the conference report. The reason it was done that way is everyone knew that if this matter was brought up—the Internet Tax Fairness Act—as part of it, we always had marketplace fairness. That was part of the deal. They went together. But the manipulation took place.

This most important piece of legislation dealing with helping States—States are struggling. It does not matter which States they are, they are struggling. What we have are the brick-and-mortar places that can't compete with online merchandising. Someone who has a brick-and-mortar store—someone will walk in, see something they like, and then they will walk out, go to the computer, and buy it online. They pay no taxes. That is unfair to the brick-and-mortar stores and small businesses across America. It would help States remarkably if people who buy on the Internet would have to pay the same taxes as someone who buys in a brick-and-mortar store.

But in an effort to protect a number of Senators—one in particular—this matter was stuck in this bill. We have just a few States that don't have a sales tax. One of those Senators is up for reelection. She has a very tough election, and anyone who understands politics a little bit understands that this was done as a result of trying to protect her.

But as Senator DURBIN, the person who has pushed this marketplace fairness more than anyone else—except perhaps for Senator ENZI and LAMAR ALEXANDER—knows, what has been done is unfair. But they have been told this matter will be brought up before the end of the year. So I don't know what solace that should give the Senator who is worried about the marketplace fairness passing because it would seem to me that the vote we had here earlier was 69 votes, and it will pass again. The Speaker has told me that he is going to bring up marketplace fairness on the House side. So we are going to vote on it before the end of the year. It is going to be the law anyway.

It is too bad small businesses have to wait again for 6 months or 8 months to get this done.

The Customs bill does not do enough to enforce our trade agreements or protect American workers, and I will oppose it.

BUDGET AND DEFENSE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I wish to make a few comments on the statements of the Republican leader, my friend. It is obvious that he has been reading the press and perhaps talking to some people on the House side. These people have created so many problems.

This right, right, rightwing in the House of Representatives is now saying that what we did, having a 2-year budget, they want to change. They want to take money away from the middle class and give it to defense.

I supported the North Korea sanctions. It is a good piece of legislation. I supported what we did in December. It was good legislation. But we decided that the military, as strong as it is, should remain strong but that we should give some equal footing to the middle class, and we did that.

Now my friend the Republican leader is obviously trying to pave the way to increase defense funding and go against the middle class.

I am pleased he said some nice things about the Secretary of Defense, but it is very clear in his statement that he wants—obviously, he didn't say so, but it is pretty clear to anyone listening to him—ground troops. The Special Forces are not enough. He wants more, and the American people don't want more ground troops.

He also said it is too bad—I am paraphrasing what he said—that we are going to take away the ability to have enhanced interrogation. That is waterboarding and all that other stuff that doesn't work.

JOHN MCCAIN was on the floor yesterday. Now if there is anyone in the world who should have some understanding about torture, he should. He was tortured not once but multiple times when he was a prisoner of war in Vietnam. He came yesterday—I have heard him before—and said: Torture doesn't work. We do better without torture.

But again, that is what the Republican leader is talking about.

I would remind those listening that President Obama has done a great deal to keep America safe and secure. There is no better example of that—there was a lot of talk previously about Osama bin Laden—than that Osama bin Laden is dead. It was done on President Obama's watch, at his direction.

FAIR DAY IN COURT FOR KIDS ACT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, for the last 2 years our great country has faced a humanitarian crisis arising from Central America. Thousands and thousands of migrants, mainly women and children, have fled to our border and to other countries in the region to escape the growing violence in the region.

Most of these women and children come from the so-called Northern Triangle countries—El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras—where crime and lawlessness have overrun the people. And that is an understatement.

El Salvador is the murder capital of the world. There isn't a close second. There are more murders per capita than in any nation on the planet. El Salvador's murder rate is 26 times higher than the United States.

Among El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala, El Salvador beats them all for a murder rate, but the other two countries, Honduras and Guatemala, are third and seventh. In these countries, the rates for female homicide are unbelievably high. Again, El Salvador ranks No. 1 for female homicides. As I have indicated, we have Honduras, which is third, and Guatemala is seventh.

That is why you see these women and children fleeing—fleeing for their lives. It is not just murder that these desperate people are trying to escape. People in these countries are imperiled by high rates of human trafficking, drug trafficking, sexual assaults, and widespread corruption.

It is an understatement to say that these places aren't safe to live. These refugees in our hemisphere are seeking protection. They are escaping to neighborhood countries, desperate to find someplace to go to hide, someplace to find sanctuary. Many make the trek through Mexico to our southern border, and it is a long ways. What they do to get to our border is really quite unbelievable.

What do they do when they get to our border? They don't sneak in; they don't try to find a boat to go across the Rio Grande. These little kids throw up their arms and say in the best way they can: I am here; do something to help me.

That is how desperate they feel—desperate to feel safe, to feel some protection. They are refugees in every sense of the word.

In January the State Department announced that it would start a refugee program in El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala after ''concluding that the epidemic of violence by international criminal gangs in the three countries had reached crisis proportions and required a broader, regional response.''

I applaud Secretary Kerry and his team for making this humane and principled decision. It is a good first step, and it will help people apply for refugee status at home so they don't have to make a trip through Mexico and other extremely dangerous places.

But for those who have already reached our border seeking asylum, we must ensure that they are treated fairly, with respect. These refugees should have help in making their asylum request. That means they should have some legal representation.

Under current U.S. law, there is no right to appointed counsel in noncriminal immigration removal proceedings, even if the person in question is a baby, a child. Think about that. These children who don't speak English and are in a new country are unreasonably expected to represent themselves in a tribunal.

Approximately 70 percent of women and children and 50 percent of unaccompanied children who enter the United States don't have a lawyer when standing before a judge in deportation proceedings. It sounds hard to be true, but it is.

There is an organization called Kids in Need of Defense, or KIND. It is a wonderful organization. I admire it. It is incredible. This nonprofit organization is trying to help these children. Their executive director watched as a 5-year-old girl was brought before an immigration judge.

The little girl was clutching a doll. She was so short she could barely see over the table to the microphone. She sat there before a robed immigration judge, with a trial attorney from the Department of Homeland Security on the other side of the chamber, in effect, saying: Send her back.

She was unable to answer any questions that the judge asked her except for the name of her doll: ''Baby Baby Doll.'' That was the name of her doll. But this is the worst part. This small child was expected to make a case of why she should be granted asylum under U.S. immigration laws.

KIND matched her with an attorney from a major law firm who successfully helped her win her case. KIND is doing a wonderful job, but they are so shorthanded.

Immigration law is a complex area of law, and it should not be a place where toddlers are placed in this situation. Children without attorneys are much more vulnerable than adults. So 9 out of 10 children without attorneys are ordered deported.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, a majority of recently arrived unaccompanied children are eligible for legal protection that would allow them to lawfully remain in the United States, but they can't access these protections because they don't have anyone to tell them what the protections are. They can't access these protections without an attorney to represent them in court or even to ensure they receive proper notice of their hearings. Children with attorneys are five times more likely to be granted protection.

Picture this little girl. This little girl represents thousands of children who have been abused in many different ways. They have seen their parents murdered, humiliated, and hurt. Her name is Angela. This little kid is 9 years old—a sweet little thing, 9 years old. She arrived at our southern border fleeing from the murder capital of the world, El Salvador.

She is one of the fortunate kids. Kids in Need of Defense, the nonprofit group I mentioned, provided her with legal representation. She was granted legal immigration status.

So look at this picture. I have looked at it many, many times. I took this home with me last night.

Think of all the children, kids her age and younger—she is 9 years old—all who don't have representation. Think of a child like this standing alone in a court of law with a language barrier on top of it. This isn't how we should treat refugees. It is certainly not how we should treat children fleeing violence.

Today I am introducing the Fair Day in Court for Kids Act. That is the name of my legislation. My legislation would mandate that the government appoint a counsel, a lawyer, to help these kids, unaccompanied children, and other vulnerable individuals such as those who are victims of abuse, torture, and violence. My legislation would also require the Department of Homeland Security to make legal orientation programs available to all detention centers so people know their rights and responsibilities.

Deportation means death to some of these people, and I am not being overly dramatic. A study documents 83 people who had been deported from this Northern Triangle who were subsequently murdered—83. Given the life-

and-death consequences of deportation in this region, we must ensure that we are not putting asylum-seeking women and children in harm's way. We can do this by making sure that these desperate women and children have a lawyer.

The humanitarian crisis at our doorstep demands that we, as Americans, affirm our fundamental values of protection and due process, especially for children. The Fair Day in Court for Kids Act will uphold these most basic American virtues and values which we hold dear.

Protecting children—children like Angela—isn't a partisan issue. This is something I hope we can all agree on.

So I urge my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans, to support this legislation.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

TRADE FACILITATION AND TRADE ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2015—CONFERENCE REPORT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 644, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Conference report to accompany H.R. 644, a bill to reauthorize trade facilitation and trade enforcement functions and activities, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 10:30 a.m. will be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, today the Senate is poised to take a major step forward in advancing a robust agenda for international trade that better reflects the realities of the 21st century global economy. It provides real benefits for our country.

Later today, the Senate will vote on and hopefully pass the conference report for H.R. 644, the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015, legislation that we originally passed last May.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator WYDEN follow my remarks in this matter.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HATCH. I am coauthor of this legislation, and many of the provisions in this conference report have been in the works for several years. I also chaired the conference committee that was charged with reconciling the differences between the Senate-passed and House-passed versions of this bill.

In my view, the committee was a huge success. I believe our report represents a strong bipartisan, bicameral agreement to address a number of trade policy priorities.

I want to talk about some of the specifics of this legislation, which most of us generally refer to as the ''Customs bill.'' Once this bill is signed into law—and I hope it will be in short order—it will enact policies designed to achieve three main goals.

The first goal is to facilitate and streamline the flow of legitimate trade into and out of the United States. The bill makes a number of changes to reduce bureaucracy and improve consultation among executive agencies, Congress, and the private sector. These changes will facilitate trade and improve our competitiveness by reducing unnecessary burdens and delays created by our overly bureaucratic system, which, in turn, will help create jobs and grow our economy.

The second major goal of the Customs bill is to improve enforcement of our trade laws. It does so in a number of ways. For example, the bill establishes a new, improved process at CBP for dealing with evasion of our antidumping and countervailing duties laws and provides clear direction and robust rules for identifying and addressing currency manipulation on the part of our trading partners. It also includes dramatic improvements to better protect U.S. intellectual property rights. This has been a high priority for me, as most of my colleagues know, and it is a high priority for my people in the State of Utah, whose economy is highly dependent on strong intellectual property rights. Combined, these enforcement provisions will provide greater protection for American workers and consumers and help ensure 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. For example, the bill clearly and strongly reaffirms that trade agreements should not include—and TPA procedures should not be used dealing with respect to—immigration policy or greenhouse gas emissions. It also creates a new negotiating objective to remove barriers facing American fishermen who export into foreign markets, and it provides important procedures related to the reporting of human trafficking.

While this Customs bill was specifically designed to address these three policy goals, it goes further to address other priorities as well. 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. And it provides trade preferences for Nepal in order to provide economic recovery in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake last year.

Before I conclude, I do want to note that a number of my colleagues, as well as businesses and job creators around the country, were hoping that the conference report on the Customs bill would include a reauthorization of the miscellaneous tariff bills, or MTBs. I want to make clear that I support MTBs and want to get them passed. That is why they were included in the original Senate-passed version of the Customs bill. There are, of course, some procedural concerns that complicate the MTBs, particularly over in the House, which have made it difficult to reach a workable compromise. 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.

I also want to reaffirm my personal commitment as chairman of the Senate Finance Committee to work with my colleagues to find a path forward on MTBs that will work for those on both sides of the Capitol. Needless to say, I am very pleased with how this conference report turned out.

I have many people I want to thank, and I will thank them once the bill gets done. 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 passage of this conference report. It is a pleasure to work with Senator WYDEN, and we have very much been able to work in a bipartisan way as we worked on this committee together.

Last spring, Republicans and Democrats on the Finance Committee came together to draft and report four major pieces of legislation, three of which have already been signed into law. That, of course, included our TPA bill, a bill to renew important trade preferences programs, and another bill to reauthorize the Trade Adjustment Assistance program. The fourth was our Customs bill, the one we will hopefully pass today.

These four bills represented the priorities of Members throughout the Senate and on both sides of the aisle. Collectively, they will shape the policy landscape on trade—not just here in the United States but around the world as well—for years to come. Perhaps more importantly, they also represent what is possible when Members of both parties work together to achieve common goals.

Of those four bills, the Customs bill is the only one that hasn't been enacted into law. I am cautiously optimistic that we will rectify that later today. I am hoping that, just like the three other trade bills, the Customs bill will pass with broad, bipartisan support.

I urge all of my colleagues to vote later today to advance the Customs bill

to the President's desk and to put in place these much-needed reforms.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a list of supporters of the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015.

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

TRADE FACILITATION AND TRADE ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2015

LIST OF SUPPORTERS

Airforwarders Association, Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking, Aluminum Extruders Council (AEC), American Apparel & Footwear Association, American Association of Exporters and Importers, American Cable Association, American Chemistry Council, American Commitment, American Consumer Institute, American Honey Producers Association, American Iron and Steel Institute (AISI), American Petroleum Institute, American Trucking Association, American Wire Producers Association, Americans for Tax Reform, Association of Global Automakers, BACM, California Fresh Garlic Producers Association, Canadian/American Border Trade Alliance, Cargo Airline Association, Christopher Ranch, Center for Freedom and Prosperity, Center for Individual Freedom, Citizens Against Government Waste, Coalition to Enforce Antidumping & Countervailing Duty Orders, Coalition of Services Industries, Committee to Support U.S. Trade Laws, Competitive Carriers Association, Competitive Enterprise Institute.

COMPTEL, Computing Technology Industry Association, Consumer Action, Copper & Brass Fabricators Council, Council for Citizens Against Government Waste, Crawfish Processors Alliance, CTIA—The Wireless Association, Digital Liberty, Discovery Institute, Etsy, Express Delivery and Logistics Association, Fashion Accessories Shippers Association, Footwear Distributors & Retailers of America, Foreign Trade Association, Freedom Works, The Garlic Company, Garment Association Nepal, Gemini Shippers Association, Global Automakers, Heartland Institute, Hispanic Heritage Foundation, Hispanic Leadership Fund, Hispanic Technology & Telecommunications Council, Independent Women's Forum, Independent Women's Voice, Information Technology & Innovation Foundation, Institute for Policy Innovation, Institute of Makers of Explosives, International Trade Surety Association, The Internet Association.

ITTA—The Voice of Mid-Size Communications Companies, Jeffersonian Project, Latino Coalition, Leggett & Platt Inc., LessGovernment.org, LULAC, Madery Bridge Associates, Media Freedom, Monterey Mushrooms, Inc., Multicultural Media, Telecom and Internet Council, Municipal Castings Association, National Association of Black County Officials, National Association of Chemical Distributors, National Association of Foreign-Trade Zones, National Association of Manufacturers, National Association of Neighborhoods, National Black Caucus of State Legislators, National Black Chamber of Commerce, National Cable & Telecommunications Association, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, National Caucus of the Black Aged, National Coalition for Black Civic Participation, National Customs Brokers and Forwarders Association of America, National Foreign Trade Council, National Hispanic Council on Aging, National Industrial Transportation League, National Organization of Black County Officials, National Puerto Rican Coalition, National Retail Federation, National Tank Truck Carriers, National Taxpayers Union.

NOBEL Women, Nucor Corporation, Outdoor Industry Association, R Street Institute, Reusable Industrial Packaging Association, Semiconductor Industry Association, SER—Jobs for Progress, Sioux Honey Association, Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council, Spice World, Inc./Valley Garlic, Taxpayers Protection Alliance, TechFreedom, Technology Councils of North America, Travel Goods Association, United Spinal Association, U.S. Black Chamber, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, U.S. Fashion Industry Association, U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, U.S. Hispanic Leadership Institute, U.S. Internet Service Provider Association, United States Council for International Business, United States Telecom Association, University of British Columbia Fisheries Centre, UPS, Vessey & Company, Women Impacting Public Policy.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I yield the floor to the distinguished Senator from Oregon.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASSIDY). The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I thank Chairman HATCH for his good work and his very gracious comments.

I note our colleagues have been very patient, so I ask unanimous consent that following my remarks, Senator ALEXANDER be recognized for 7 minutes and, immediately after Senator ALEXANDER, Senator STABENOW be recognized for up to 10 minutes.

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

Mr. WYDEN. Colleagues, this bill is about coming down hard on the trade cheats who are ripping off American jobs.

The truth is, past trade policies were often too old, too slow, or too weak for our country to fight back. This legislation says those days are over. The legislation ushers in a new day and a fresh, modern approach—a tougher approach—to enforcing trade laws that start moving our Nation to a policy that I call getting trade done right. It is about creating tough trade enforcement policies, seeing them through, and standing up to anybody who tries to get around them. No matter how a Senator chooses to vote on a particular new trade agreement, I hope that stronger trade enforcement and fighting back against the trade cheats would be a priority for every Senator.

The reality is, the amount of cheating that is going on is staggering. It takes your breath away. We saw it a couple of years ago when we set up a sting operation and in effect invited the cheaters to have at it. We were deluged with those who wanted to skirt the laws, use shell games, sophisticated schemes, and fraudulent records to evade duties. You would smile at some of the inventiveness involved if we didn't see how painful it was for the American companies getting ripped off this way.

One of the most common schemes—one of the biggest loopholes involves something called merchandise laundering. In effect, when a company gets busted for violating the trade laws, the countervailing duty laws, in effect they go to another country and slap a label on it and are able to skirt the laws. Because his companies that make honey were victims of this, at one point Senator SCHUMER, my colleague on the Finance Committee, said: What is going on is honey laundering, but it is not very sweet for the people who are getting ripped off. That is what we seek to change.

I could thank a lot of colleagues of both political parties for their good work here, but I just want to single out a few on our side. I know Senator HATCH is going to say more about colleagues on his side.

I particularly want to praise Senator BROWN. Senator BROWN led the fight repeatedly to close outlandish loopholes that allow products made with slave and child labor to be imported into the United States. What the old law basically says is that economics trumped human rights—that if there was an economic reason for using slave and child labor, you could do it. We have closed that loophole. There was bipartisan support for it, and I commend Senator BROWN for this.

Senator STABENOW made a successful effort to have a more coordinated approach so that the left hand and the right hand would know what was being done in terms of trade enforcement. We now have a trade enforcement center that is going to do that.

Senator CANTWELL worked to ensure that we have an important new trust fund—a trust fund for trade enforcement. It ought to be a priority to lock in all of the funds necessary to help protect our workers and businesses.

Senator SHAHEEN led the fight in order to ensure that smaller businesses had a bigger seat at the table in terms of the effort to reach new markets. I commend her for it.

Senator BENNET in particular did very good work with respect to trade enforcement in the environmental area. The package directs the trade negotiators to act against illegal fishing and the trade of stolen timber—something the Senator from Arkansas and I know a great deal about. I am also very pleased because Senator BENNET and others worked hard to ensure that this legislation goes further than ever before to fight the currency manipulators and stop them from undercutting our workers and our businesses.

At the end of the day, Democrats and Republicans came together. There were spirited debates about trade agreements and whether to pass new ones. What this is all about is just the opposite—just the opposite—of a new trade agreement. This is about making sure we get tough and enforce the laws on the books for what we already have. There shouldn't be any dispute about that, and, certainly in the Finance Committee, Democrats and Republicans were united.

Finally, I want to make one last point. I am glad the distinguished Senator from Tennessee is on the floor. I am very pleased that there has been an agreement with the majority leader,

the Senator from Tennessee, and the senior Senator from Illinois so that the ideas Senator ALEXANDER wants are going to get heard on the floor of the Senate. His interests are going to be heard and discussed fully. I want to assure him that there aren't going to be any kind of procedural delays and objections when that is done. He is going to have a chance to have his concerns heard and a vote on them, based on what I have been told about the agreement with the majority leader.

In this bill, there is a chance for the Congress to finish the job of something I think is also important, and that is to say on a permanent basis—a permanent basis—we are not going to have regressive taxes on Internet access and discrimination, particularly against working families for whom, if there were regressive taxes on working families who rely on Internet access to get information about education and employment opportunities, we would harm those families at a time when they are already walking on an economic tightrope, balancing their food bill against their fuel bills and rent bill against energy costs. We shouldn't have regressive taxes on Internet access. With this legislation, we can ensure that will not happen. It has been a bipartisan effort for nearly 20 years, and with this we can say no to those regressive taxes as a result of the work that was done. As I noted, the concerns Senator ALEXANDER wishes to raise are going to be heard in the future as well.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Oregon for his courtesy this morning. I appreciate the senator's remarks on allowing our different points of view to come to the floor and let's vote on it. He is speaking, of course, about the Marketplace Fairness Act, which is a 12-page bill which represents a two-word issue: States' rights.

The Majority Leader has said we'll have the ability to vote on that sometime before the end of the year. It is a bipartisan bill. It passed the Senate 2 years ago with 69 votes. It recognizes that States have the right to decide for themselves whether to collect their State sales taxes from all of the people who owe the taxes or some of the people who owe the taxes. It would allow States to do that if they simplify tax administration and exempt small online sellers from collection requirements. It would create a pathway for States and localities across the country to begin collecting an estimated $23 billion annually in uncollected taxes—taxes that are already owed. They can then use that money to balance their budget, to reduce other taxes, to pay for vital services.

I don't think Tennessee or any other State should have to play ''Mother, may I?'' with the Federal Government when deciding whether to collect, or not collect, a State tax that is already owed.

I can say to our friends on both sides of the aisle, the States are not going to put up with this for very much longer. If Congress continues to be an obstacle to States making their own decisions about their tax structures, governors are going to be suing companies around the country and say, if you are going to sell in our State, you are going to collect the tax that everybody owes. At that point, all those businesses are going to run to us and say: Please pass the Marketplace Fairness Act.

I don't think we get any wiser about flying to Washington—one hour in my case—every week than the Governor and the legislature about what our tax structure ought to be. We don't like an income tax in Tennessee, so we have a sales tax. We don't need any incentives from Washington to force us to pass an income tax in Tennessee.

Let me say a word about the vote today. I ask the chair, since I noticed the Senator from Michigan is on the floor, to please let me know when all but 30 seconds has expired.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator will be so notified.

Mr. ALEXANDER. As far as the vote today goes, this distinguished body seems to have developed a case of amnesia. We seem to have forgotten what happened in 1994. 300 Republicans stood on the steps of the Capitol with the Contract with America and said: If we break our contract, throw us out.

One goal of that contract was to stop Washington from imposing unfunded mandates on States. One of my most vivid memories is Senator Bob Dole running around the country with a copy of the Constitution and reading the Tenth Amendment to Governors. The Tenth Amendment says: ''The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States. . . . ''

He said that. I was there. We were both running for President at the time. The Tenth Amendment was the heart and soul of the Contract with America. Senator Dole was good to his word. The first bill in the Senate after the Republican Revolution in 1994 was a bill prohibiting unfunded mandates. Republicans opposed unfunded mandates then. They should oppose them today. According to the Republican conference rules, ''The Senate Republican Conference believes that Congress should not create new federal unfunded mandates on state and local governments.''

However, today the vote we are about to cast breaks that promise. The Customs bill has a provision that permanently extends the so-called Internet Tax Freedom Act. It prohibits State and local governments from taxing access to the Internet. It tells seven States that are currently collecting a tax that they can't continue to collect. These seven States will lose $100 million in 2020 and several hundred million each year after that.

This was not even considered by the House or the Senate when they passed the bill. It was airdropped in violation of rule XXVIII, so the vote we are casting today, a ''yes'' vote, violates the Contract with America, violates the Senate Republican rules, and violates the Senate's rules.

I will agree there may be a Federal interest in not taxing Internet access. I agreed with that in the 1990s. Maybe for the first three years there should have been a moratorium when the Internet came along, but where will it end? If you tell States they can't tax access to the Internet, you can also tell them they can't tax access to telephones or food or gas because all of those are important to interstate commerce. It is wrong for Washington to be telling States what their tax structure ought to be. We are not any wiser than the Governor of Tennessee. We're not any wiser than the State legislature in Tennessee. We should leave those decisions to them.

That is my objection to the bill today. Instead of voting to oppose another unfunded mandate that tells States what not to do, Congress should consider passing the Marketplace Fairness Act later this year. We should not fall into this bad habit that existed before the Republican revolution of 1994, of assuming that just because we were elected to come to Washington, suddenly we are wiser than all the Governors and all of the legislatures. They are not quite as wise, we are saying. We ought not to be telling them what to do about their tax structure. We ought to leave that to them as the Senate Republican rules say, as the Contract with America said, and as the Tenth Amendment to the Constitution says. Let States do their job, and let us do our job.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Michigan.

FLINT, MICHIGAN, WATER CRISIS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, first, I commend my friend and colleague from Tennessee and share his feelings about passing the Marketplace Fairness Act. I hope we are going to see that happen as soon as possible.

I am joined on the floor by my dear friend and colleague from Michigan. We are united in speaking out about the urgent crisis in Flint.

If you will let me know when I have consumed 6 minutes, please.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator will be so notified.

Ms. STABENOW. Over the last couple of weeks, we have been negotiating and negotiating with the chair of the Energy Committee, the ranking member, and with other colleagues on the other side of the isle. I want to particularly thank our ranking member who has stood with us day after day in the effort to make sure we can get some help for the children and the families of Flint. I thank our colleagues on this side of the aisle for standing with us as well.

We have been looking for an opportunity, a way to come together to help

a group of Americans. That is what we do in the Senate. When someone has a crisis, we work together, State by State, to step up and be able to provide some assistance as Americans.

I have had the honor and pleasure to negotiate a number of bipartisan agreements while I have been here almost 16 years, working with colleagues to pass a very complicated farm bill, working on many different issues together across the aisle. I know that when you want to get things done, you can. It is just a matter of having the will to do it. When you don't want to get things done, you come to the floor and attack the people you are supposed to be negotiating with and you negotiate in the press. Unfortunately, that is what we have seen in recent days. That is why we are so deeply concerned about the fact that there is not the resolve to come together to be able to help the children of Flint, the families of Flint, and then move on with the Energy bill that there is bipartisan interest in passing.

Every time we have thought we had an agreement, we changed things to reflect a proposal, a structure from the majority on the Energy Committee, and every time we think we have something, the rug has been pulled out from under us after hours and hours of work. Frankly, I feel like Charlie Brown when Lucy is pulling the football away time after time. That is exactly what has been happening.

We have had one exception though. I want to give a real thank-you and shout-out to Senator INHOFE because we spent all last weekend putting together a bipartisan, fully paid-for proposal that not only will help the families and children of Flint but create the opportunity for colleagues across the country to get help with water infrastructure projects.

There are multiple areas. We have them in Michigan, other areas outside of Flint. They are not devastated like Flint is with their entire system corroded, the children poisoned, and the water system shut down, but there are multiple issues around water. We joined together with the distinguished chair of the EPW and have come together in good faith with a proposal we can't get a vote on, unfortunately. We cannot get the willingness to put before us where we could vote together on something that would address Flint but also help others.

I thank Senator INHOFE, and we are going to continue to work with him to get that proposal or some other comprehensive proposal in front of us.

It has also been extremely disappointing, though, to see Republican leadership come to the floor, colleagues who have had millions, in fact, billions of dollars funneled to their States for various emergencies over the years, come and tell us that what is happening on lead poisoning for these children, what is happening in Flint where you can't drink the water today, yesterday, the day before, 18 months and longer now, tomorrow, the next day, where you have to bathe these babies in bottled water, brush your teeth in bottled water, try to figure out how to take a shower in bottled water, that this is a local issue.

Right now we have a fully funded Federal Disaster Relief Fund that we passed last year in the omnibus—fully funded, billions of dollars. Over the years it has paid for a water main break in Boston, a chemical spill in West Virginia, a fertilizer plant explosion in West Texas.

Local issue? State issue? I am not sure why that was Federal, necessarily. Right now there is somewhere between $6 billion and $7 billion sitting in an account to respond to disasters, and we are only asking for a very small amount of those funds, to see and recognize and respect and care about the children and families of Flint, MI, a small withdrawal from that account to help children who have been poisoned by lead—9,000 children under the age of 6. Some parts of the city lead exposure is so high. It is higher than a toxic waste dump. How would we feel if this were our children, our grandchildren? I know how I would feel.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has consumed 6 minutes.

Ms. STABENOW. I thank the Presiding Officer.

I am going to take 1 additional minute to emphasize the fact that yesterday our colleague from Texas said we are too optimistic trying to get help, while at the same time the President was signing a Federal disaster declaration allowing additional Federal aid for 25 counties in Texas.

Since 2005, we have sent $9.75 billion to Texas, including $1 billion that I got in the farm bill on livestock disaster assistance, which is not a major issue in the State of Michigan, but it is for other colleagues, and $1 billion has gone to someone who said: We, as a group, should not care about Flint, MI.

Let me just say, I think the folks in Flint deserve their money back. They have been paying to help Americans across this country, and now they don't have the dignity or respect to be able to have some small assistance to stop the poisoning and to create some dignity and respect for these families and help for these children.

This child is an American too. We are not going to stop. We will negotiate in good faith. We will continue to do that, but we are not going to stop until we recognize, support, and help the families of Flint.

Mr. President, I would like to yield the remainder of my time to my friend from Michigan, Senator PETERS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Michigan.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Pesident, I wish to thank Senator STABENOW for her leadership on this issue and I share her frustration. We have been together, standing up, fighting to bring resources to Flint to deal with this absolutely catastrophic situation in Flint, MI. We have reached out to our Republican colleagues. We have had some very positive conversations, but as we have those positive conversations, as the Senator said in her comments, it seems as if it unravels right when we are very close to making it a reality. As a new Member of this body, I am completely at a loss for understanding why that is. Why is it that Members of the Senate can't step up for all Americans who are suffering?

As you mentioned in the disaster fund, we have a disaster fund that is designed specifically for events like we have seen in Flint. You mentioned the West Texas explosion. We have had water main breaks in Massachusetts, a Caribbean oil corporation refinery explosion in Puerto Rico, a bridge collapse in Minneapolis, a chemical spill in West Virginia. The list goes on and on. When we have had some sort of tragedy around this country, the U.S. Senate steps up and says: We are compassionate. This is not a Democratic or Republican issue. This is about the American people.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time for debate has expired.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 2 more minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, we need to do that as well. We have pay-fors for the disaster fund. We identified and came forward with a pay-for that would end a tax loophole—a tax benefit—for golf courses where wealthy individuals can give an easement to a golf course and donate land. If we eliminate that—in fact, some Republicans have argued for the very elimination of this tax deduction—it will help to pay for the infrastructure and it will help to pay for the children of Flint.

I know some of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle want to protect those wealthy donors and their golf courses, but I believe the children of Flint are more important. I believe the people of Flint are more important. The fact that they have been poisoned by lead—something that creates irreparable damage to their brains—is something that will impact their lives forever.

How can you look into the face of the children of Flint knowing they have this brain damage as a result of this catastrophic situation and yet say no to a disaster fund to pay for it, say no to closing a tax break for wealthy folks who are giving land to golf courses? How can you put golf course easements ahead of the children of Flint? We need to stand up as a body and understand that this is a crisis of unimaginable proportions, and we can do better. The United States can do better. The Congress can do better.

The fact that we are not coming together to do this is why people have such disdain for this body—the Senate and the House—because they think

that in times of crisis, we pick and choose whom we help. Let's not pick and choose whom we help. Let's help everybody. Let's help the people of Flint. Let's help the children of Flint and show that we are a compassionate country and that we do not pick and choose. Everybody should get our support.

I hope we can come together and compromise. We need to take some of these pay-fors and do what is necessary to address this issue.

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

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, will the Senator yield for a question?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, if the Senator will yield for a question, I wish to ask the Senators from Michigan whether they were aware that the Governor has made a request of the Michigan Legislature for at least $195 million to help the families and the community of Flint?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time for debate has expired.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 2 more minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I just want to ask the Senators from Michigan whether they are aware of the request that the Governor has made to address the crisis that they have identified in Flint and whether they feel like that money, the $195 million, would be applied to the same problem they have identified.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, if I may respond to that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. The Governor of Michigan sent a letter to the President asking for close to $800 million in disaster assistance to deal with all of the issues we are talking about. What we have been working to do is ask for Federal help for about 25 percent of that, with the balance of it being paid for by the State of Michigan.

The State of Michigan certainly has incredible culpability related to this matter. We understand they are addressing this issue, and it is about time that they did that. It does not take the place of our helping the people of Flint and helping to solve this issue as much as any other issue we have talked about today.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I know all time has expired. I yield the floor, and we will continue this discussion at some other time.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the conference report to accompany H.R. 644, an act to reauthorize trade facilitation and trade enforcement functions and activities, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, David Perdue, Pat Roberts, Roy Blunt, Chuck Grassley, Shelley Moore Capito, Richard Burr, Mike Crapo, Thad Cochran, John Thune, John Hoeven, Tim Scott, Lisa Murkowski, Rob Portman, Kelly Ayotte, Tom Cotton, Orrin G. Hatch.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the conference report to accompany H.R. 644, an act to reauthorize trade facilitation and trade enforcement functions and activities, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 73, nays 22, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 21 Leg.]

YEAS—73

Ayotte	Feinstein	Murphy
Barrasso	Fischer	Murray
Bennet	Flake	Nelson
Blumenthal	Gardner	Paul
Blunt	Grassley	Perdue
Booker	Hatch	Peters
Boozman	Heitkamp	Portman
Burr	Heller	Risch
Cantwell	Hoeven	Roberts
Capito	Inhofe	Sasse
Cardin	Isakson	Scott
Carper	Johnson	Sessions
Casey	Kaine	Shaheen
Cassidy	King	Shelby
Coats	Kirk	Stabenow
Cochran	Klobuchar	Tester
Collins	Lankford	Thune
Coons	Leahy	Tillis
Corker	Lee	Toomey
Cornyn	Manchin	Vitter
Cotton	McCain	Warner
Crapo	McConnell	Wicker
Daines	Merkley	Wyden
Donnelly	Moran	
Ernst	Murkowski	

NAYS—22

Alexander	Heinrich	Rounds
Baldwin	Hirono	Schatz
Boxer	Markey	Schumer
Brown	McCaskill	Udall
Durbin	Menendez	Warren
Enzi	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Franken	Reed	
Gillibrand	Reid	

NOT VOTING—5

Cruz	Rubio	Sullivan
Graham	Sanders	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 73, the nays are 22.

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

The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I would like to announce for our colleagues that we expect the Chair to put the question to the body on adoption of the conference report once we are finished with speakers, which will be around noon; then there will be another vote at 1:45 p.m. this afternoon on an Iowa district judge before leaving for the recess.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL. Thank you, Madam President, for your recognition.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 365; that the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on the nomination and, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. On behalf of Senator RUBIO, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. UDALL. Madam President, this is about the nomination of Roberta Jacobson to be Ambassador to Mexico. This is one of the critical positions with one of our Nation's largest trading partners. It has now been vacant for over half a year.

Important work is left undone. We also have in this individual, Roberta Jacobson, a highly qualified career nominee. She is ready to serve. She has solid support on both sides of the aisle. There is no doubt in this Senator's mind—and I think many Senators' minds—that we need a strong Ambassador in Mexico City to represent our interests.

Mexico is working with us to stop those who cross our southern border illegally. Mexico is our third largest trading partner. One million American citizens live in Mexico. It is our top tourist destination with millions of U.S. visitors going to Mexico every year. There is a lot of work to be done on combatting illegal drug trade, including the trafficking of illegal opioids, reforming the judiciary, and creating economic opportunities on both sides of the border. That is something we are working on together, and we are working together to address immigration issues while cracking down on deadly border violence.

In New Mexico, we know the importance of this position and this partnership with Mexico. My State shares a border with Mexico; we also share a cultural heritage and trade that grow with Mexico every year. Exports from New Mexico to Mexico have soared from over $70 million 15 years ago to $1.5 billion a year now. Over 36,000 jobs

in my State depend on U.S.-Mexico trade. Arizona, California, and Texas also share similar and deep relations with the Mexican people, and not confirming this nominee harms those States as well.

Let me just say a word about Roberta Jacobson. She is a dedicated public servant. The LA Times has called Roberta Jacobson ''among the most qualified people ever to be tapped to represent the U.S. in Mexico.'' Roberta has worked on the Merida Initiative to fight drug trafficking and organized crime in Mexico. She has served ably as Assistant Secretary for the Western Hemisphere Affairs at the State Department.

Last year the President reestablished diplomatic relations with Cuba. After over 50 years of a failed policy with Cuba, Roberta helped negotiate this historic shift, giving the United States an opportunity to engage with the Cuban people. Time and again she did her job and she did it very well. She was approved by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee with bipartisan support. This was weeks ago, and still we wait for this nomination to come to the floor and get a vote.

It is hard to explain to my constituents that we do not have an ambassador to Mexico because a few Senators disagree with the President's policy on Cuba. They don't understand it. The folks back home don't understand it, and neither do I. This is not just the President's team, this is our team. This is America's team working on trade, on security, moving our economy, and moving all of us forward.

We need an ambassador in Mexico City. Roberta Jacobson is more qualified to serve than anybody that has been put up in many, many years. I know we have an objective now, but I would urge my colleagues to sort this out and bring it to the floor, and I would ask the leadership to make this a priority.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I rise today in strong support of the conference report to accompany the Trade Facilitation and Trade Customs conference report on which we just had a cloture vote. I was very pleased to see 73 U.S. Senators vote in favor of proceeding to and getting a final vote on the conference report. It is important because this legislation represents the most significant update to our trade enforcement policies in over a decade, and its passage today and enactment into law will demonstrate yet again that this Congress is working in a bipartisan manner.

This bill is important for a lot of reasons. First and foremost, this legislation is about trade enforcement. This bill gives the U.S. Customs and Border Protection new tools to combat unfair trade practices, thus protecting American jobs and American workers. These enforcement provisions are important to a wide range of American manufacturers, which is why the National Association of Manufacturers and the American Iron and Steel Institute strongly support this bill. In fact, there are approximately 100 organizations and businesses that have expressed public support for this bill. For any Senator who has manufacturing in his or her State, supporting this conference report should be a no-brainer.

These enforcement provisions are important to many other sectors of the economy as well. Take honey producers, for example, who in my home State make South Dakota one of the top honey-producing States in the Nation. Back in 2011, I was the ranking member of the Trade Subcommittee of the Finance Committee, and Senator WYDEN was the chairman of that subcommittee. We held a hearing on the topic of how America can better enforce our trade laws, and we heard testimony from Richard Adee, a well-known honey producer in my home State of South Dakota about the problem of honey laundering. Simply put, honey laundering is the practice of unscrupulous honey producers in China using third-party countries to circumvent tariffs on dumped Chinese honey. Over the past decade this has been a major problem, costing U.S. honey producers hundreds of millions of dollars in lost revenue.

As one example of this practice, consider Malaysia, a nation with the capacity to produce about 45,000 pounds of honey annually. Get this: Malaysia has exported as much as 37 million pounds of honey to the United States in a year—well beyond its production capacity. Clearly this honey is not coming from Malaysia. It is Chinese honey being transshipped through that nation.

The legislation we are considering today is finally going to give customs the tools it needs to help crack down on this practice. This will not only benefit honey producers in my State, it will benefit farmers all across the country whose crops depend upon bees for pollination and will benefit American consumers who can buy American honey with confidence.

While this bill is about enforcing our trade laws, it is also about making it easier for American businesses to engage in trade. This is especially important to small businesses that may not always have the resources or the expertise to access foreign markets.

The conference report before us includes a provision that I authored with Ranking Member WYDEN that would update the so-called de minimis threshold for imports from $200 per product to $800 per product. The bill also includes an amendment that Senator BENNET and I offered at the Finance Committee, calling on our trading partners to follow our lead in this area. What this simply means is that if someone starts a small business selling goods on the Internet and he or she needs to import a component part in order to make a product, we are going to significantly reduce the paperwork and cost involved in doing so. This is the reason that online marketplaces such as Etsy and eBay, as well as express shippers like UPS and FedEx, are so supportive of this legislation. These companies understand what millions of American entrepreneurs understand: The Internet truly is the shipping lane of the 21st century.

This bill will empower more Americans to engage in global commerce both through the Internet and through more traditional means. This conference report will also help to ensure that access to the Internet, which is so important for global commerce, remains unencumbered.

This legislation includes a provision to make the existing ban on Internet access taxes permanent—something that Senator WYDEN and I have championed and a measure that has broad bipartisan support. The Internet Tax Freedom Act has been extended eight times since it was first enacted in 1998. As I mentioned earlier, the Internet is increasingly a gateway to economic opportunity, often in the form of accessing new markets abroad.

As the chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee, one of my top priorities is expanding access to high-speed Internet from our inner cities to our most rural communities, and keeping access to the Internet unburdened by new taxes is an important step in that direction.

This Internet tax freedom provision is strongly supported by a broad spectrum of technology, cable, and telecom companies. It is also something that will benefit America's manufacturers. As the National Association of Manufacturers wrote recently in an op-ed supporting this bill: ''The Internet has become a critical piece of infrastructure for manufacturers in the United States, and permanently extending the ban on state and local taxes on Internet access will continue to foster investment in broadband networks.''

I was especially pleased that we were able to include a provision in the conference report granting States that already apply taxes on Internet access more than 4 years to adjust to the new law. I am confident this will give Congress the time necessary to address other important issues relating to Internet taxation.

Enactment of the permanent ITFA provision in this bill will clear the path for consideration of legislation empowering States when it comes to collecting sales taxes that are owed. I intend to continue to support efforts to ensure that we have a level playing field when it comes to the taxation of Internet commerce—something that is very important in my home State of South Dakota.

Last but certainly not least, I want to point out that this conference report includes provisions strongly in support of our ally, the State of Israel. Unfortunately, we have seen a disturbing

trend in recent years where some nations are attempting to discriminate against Israeli-made goods for political reasons. This legislation creates a new principal trade-negotiating objective under trade promotion authority designed to discourage these unfair practices against Israel. Once this conference report becomes law, if a foreign nation proposes a new trade agreement with the United States, that nation will need to demonstrate that it does not have politically motivated discriminatory policies in place against our strongest ally in the Middle East.

I commend Senator CARDIN and others who worked diligently to update our trade laws with respect to harmful actions against the State of Israel. I am pleased that we are finally seeing these efforts come to fruition.

Enactment of this legislation into law will represent a win for American manufacturers and farmers, a win for American producers, who have been harmed by unfairly traded Chinese goods, a win for small business owners looking to engage in global commerce, a win for consumers who depend upon Internet access that is accessible and affordable, and a win for those of us who want to stand up and support the State of Israel when that nation is being unfairly targeted. But all of that will be at risk if we do not pass this conference report. The House of Representatives has been very clear that it will not take up this bill again. All the good things in this bill that I mentioned will die. They will not become law if we do not pass the conference report as it is. The House approved this conference report over a month and a half ago. It is past time that we do the same. Let's get this done today and send this bill to the President for his signature. Let's continue to work together on other issues that still need to be addressed.

I thank Finance Committee Chairman HATCH and Ranking Member WYDEN for all of their hard work in getting us to this point. I hope the Senate will go on record—and I urge my colleagues to support this important trade enforcement legislation—in what I hope will be a very big and decisive vote.

This legislation is good for America. It demonstrates once again that the Senate takes seriously its responsibility to get results and get things done for the American people. It is good for our economy, it is good for jobs, and it is good for the overall health and vitality of our country.

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. ENZI. 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. ENZI. Madam President, I rise today to express my concerns with the Customs conference report. While I support the Customs provisions in this conference report, as well as the Internet tax moratorium, I cannot support the way these issues were merged in conference.

I have said for years that the Internet Tax Freedom Act should be paired with e-fairness legislation because I think it is reasonable to tell the States that when we take away their ability to tax Internet access, we are giving them the ability to collect the State and local sales and use taxes already owed on remote sales. It is beyond time for Congress to give States that right. Congress's failure to act has created a burden on our States and local governments, which are losing billions in tax revenue that they need for local responsibilities.

As a former mayor and State legislator, I understand how important sales tax revenue is to State and local governments for maintaining schools, fixing roads, and supporting local law enforcement, fire departments, and emergency management crews.

Congress's inaction on e-fairness legislation implicitly blesses a situation in which States may be forced to raise other taxes, such as income or property taxes, to offset the growing loss of sales tax revenue. In December, in-store sales were about the same as the year before, but Internet sales grew by about 40 percent.

To be clear, we are talking about a substantial loss in revenue. In 2012, States missed out on an estimated $23 billion in uncollected but owed use taxes from all remote sales. About $61 million of that would have gone to my home State of Wyoming. Those numbers increase every year as online sales increase. States missed the opportunity to collect an estimated $26 billion in remote sales and use taxes in 2013. Wyoming lost an estimated $81.2 million, so $61 million to $81 million.

Congress's failure to act is also hurting our local stores, which hire local people who support local events and help out in the community. The same stores that are required to collect State and local sales and use taxes while their online and catalog competitors are not.

As a former small business owner, I believe it is important to level the playing field for all retailers—in-store, catalog, and online—so an outdated rule for sales tax collection does not adversely impact small businesses and Main Street retailers. I have given the example before of a friend in Sheridan who has a camera store. He has people come in and look at some very expensive cameras and get all of the instructions and find out about all of the accessories. Then they just take a little picture of the bar code on that and order it online. The difference in price? The sales tax. He provides the service, but loses the sale, and it is because the sales tax is not collected online. That is not fair. I used to have a shoe store. The same thing is true. They can get the fit they need, the adjustments they need, and know exactly the shoe they want. Check the bar code online. What is the difference? The sales tax. It really hurts if they order it in front of you. Televisions, bicycles—there are all kinds of examples of this same sort of thing happening.

This issue also affects online stores. More and more States are successfully implementing their own laws to ensure they can collect these remote sales and use taxes. They are doing it piecemeal. This will create a patchwork of complicated, uniquely tailored, and incongruent laws for all businesses to comply with.

For many years I have worked with all interested parties to find a mutually agreeable way to solve this problem. But instead of taking up legislation that prevents taxation of Internet access and also helps State and local governments and businesses, we have a conference report before us that includes the Internet Tax Freedom Act, which was just dropped in without any separate vote or debate. The Senate has not considered it in the committee nor on the floor.

Instead of considering this inserted issue now, we should have combined it with legislation that restores States' sovereign right to enforce State and local sales and use tax laws. What I am proposing is not a tax on the Internet. I am opposed to that. Rather, e-fairness legislation would give States the option to collect their sales and use taxes already due on all purchases.

Unlike this airdropped Internet Tax Freedom Act provision, the Senate has overwhelmingly voted in support of e-fairness with a bipartisan group of 69 Senators supporting the Marketplace Fairness Act in the last Congress, and we were not even able to get a vote on our amendment.

I thank my colleagues who have worked so hard on this issue, especially Senators DURBIN, ALEXANDER, and HEITKAMP. I thank the businesses, the trade groups, the State and local governments, and all of the other stakeholders who have helped us educate offices about this issue. I thank the leader for listening to our concerns about this conference report. But ultimately I oppose the conference report because, while Congress should pass the Customs bill and this provision this year, Congress should also pass e-fairness legislation this year that allows States to collect the sales and use taxes they are owed for remote sales already.

I yield the floor.

AMENDING 19 U.S.C., SECTION 1501

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, the bill we will be voting on shortly contains a provision amending 19 U.S.C., section 1501, which relates to the liquidation of entries into the U.S. The provision in the conference report amending section 1501 is intended to ensure in cases where liquidation occurs by operation of law, the 90-day timeframe for the voluntary reliquidation of an entry by Customs and Border

Protection begins on the date of the original liquidation.

I would ask my colleague, Senator WYDEN, the ranking member of the Finance Committee, if that is his understanding of this provision as well.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I agree with Senator HATCH. That is the intent of the provision amending 19 U.S.C., section 1501.

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I am pleased to have been one of the conferees to H.R. 644, the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015.

There are many important provisions in this legislation, some of which I helped to draft.

There is one such provision that I particularly want to highlight. Honey producers in my State of South Dakota as well as producers of honey, crawfish, garlic, and mushrooms around the country, have suffered for 15 years because of unfair dumping from China. Senator WYDEN and I have worked together for 5 years to ensure that the trade laws were enforced in these cases.

Unfortunately, the latest struggles have been more with U.S. Customs and Border Protection, CBP, than with Chinese dumpers.

Duties collected on dumped imports and all interest on those duties from 2000 and 2007 were to be paid to the injured domestic producers to allow them to reinvest and rebuild. For reasons that defy simple explanation, CBP ignored the direction of the statute to pay all interest to producers and instead deducted some types of interest from payments to producers.

In effect, this practice amounted to forcing South Dakota honey producers to pay for the delays caused by Chinese dumpers, the U.S. insurance companies that posted bond for the duties, and in some cases of CBP itself. This practice defies the plain language of the statute and cost domestic producers tens of millions of dollars over the years.

During the Finance Committee markup of this legislation, Senator GRASSLEY, Senator NELSON, and I offered an amendment which is included in this conference report that corrects CBP's misreading of the law. This is an important victory for honey, crawfish, garlic, and mushroom that have suffered from Chinese dumping and CBP's unfounded practice.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I wish to support the trade enforcement conference report—legislation that will level the playing field for American businesses and help them reach foreign markets.

This bill is aimed at supporting American businesses in an increasingly global economy. It makes sure our economic competitors play by the rules and helps our small businesses sell their products to new markets overseas.

This bill passed the Senate 78–20 last March, with every single Member of the Democratic Caucus supporting it.

While I recognize that there were changes made in the conference committee, this legislation still contains critical mechanisms to ensure fair trade for American businesses and workers.

I believe that the United States can out-compete and out-innovate any economy in the world, but to do that, we need a level playing field, and that means making sure our competitors are playing by the rules.

This legislation contains some of the strongest trade enforcement provisions that we have seen in decades. It gives Federal authorities the tools they need to enforce U.S. trade laws at the border and hold our trading partners accountable. It includes the ENFORCE Act, a critical measure to ensure that businesses and workers harmed by unfair trade can have their claims investigated and resolved quickly. And it strengthens the Treasury Department's ability to address currency manipulation.

This bill also contains language I authored that makes sure that our small businesses are able to take advantage of new trade opportunities and reach new markets. Even though 95 percent of the world's customers live overseas, less than 1 percent of small- and medium-sized businesses in the United States sell to global markets. By comparison, more than 40 percent of large businesses sell their products overseas.

The conference report includes my small business trade amendment, which would help narrow that gap by reauthorizing the successful State Trade and Export Promotion grant program, better known as the STEP program. STEP was created as a pilot program to help States work with small businesses to reach in the international marketplace, and just a few years in, it has been a great success. Already, the STEP Program has helped small businesses reach 85 country markets, resulting in over $1.1 billion in export sales for a return on Federal taxpayer investment of 19:1. In reauthorizing this program, we are giving small businesses a real chance to expand their markets, grow their businesses, and create new jobs.

I want to thank Senate Finance Committee Chairman HATCH and Ranking Member WYDEN for working with me to include my small business trade amendment in the final bill.

The conference report before us today will keep American companies competitive. It will help small businesses sell overseas. And it will help drive innovation online.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill and oppose efforts to prevent it from moving forward today.

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

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

• Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, as the final piece of the robust trade package that we completed last year, the Customs report that accompanies the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act allows authorities to aggressively enforce U.S. trade laws and provides enhanced authorities to protect obligations gained under international trade agreements and rights under U.S. intellectual property laws.

In my home State of Alaska, trade currently supports more than 90,000 jobs, which is more than one in five of all jobs in the State. Per capita, Alaska is one of the top exporters in the country. We are the top exporter of fish and seafood products in the Nation.

I worked hard to secure a provision in the Customs package that, for the first time, establishes a principal negotiating objective on fisheries that reduces or eliminates tariffs and nontariff barriers, eliminates subsidies that distort trade, and opens new markets for American fish, seafood, and shellfish products around the globe.

With the global marketplace becoming more competitive and increasingly challenging, it is vital that the United States focus its efforts on maximizing our ability to export our goods and services abroad in order to create more opportunity and good-paying jobs for all Americans.•

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

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

REMEMBERING PHILIP ROCK

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, this morning at Old St. Patrick's Church in downtown Chicago, there was a funeral service for an extraordinary public servant, the late senate president Phil Rock.

On January 29, Illinois lost one of its most principled leaders and one of its finest public servants. He was a good friend of mine and a good friend of my wife's as well.

Before retiring from politics in 1993, Phil Rock represented Chicago's Oak Park and parts of the West Side of the city of Chicago. He spent 14 of those years as the longest serving Illinois Senate president. During part of that time, I had the opportunity to be by his side and to work as his senate parliamentarian.

People used to say Phil Rock was born a Catholic, a Democrat, and a Chicago Cubs fan, but not necessarily in that order. Phil was also a dedicated public servant.

Before Phil Rock became a public servant, he almost became a priest. He was born and lived much of his life in the Midway Park section of the Austin part of Chicago. He attended Quigley Preparatory Seminary and went on to the University of St. Mary of the Lake in Mundelein, IL. But instead of becoming a priest, he became a lawyer.

After graduating from Loyola Law School—newly married to his wife Sheila—he took a different path than his colleagues. He decided not to join a big law firm. He chose to enter public service. He worked for Illinois State attorney general Bill Clark in 1965, and by 1967 Phil was the chief of the Illinois Consumer Fraud Division. He chose to enter public service at a difficult time—the turbulent 1960s. The country was torn over the Vietnam war and many social issues. The 1968 Democratic Convention was a painful reflection of our Nation's troubles.

Instead of turning away from public service, at that time Phil Rock decided to dive in and make a difference. In 1970 he was elected to the Illinois State Senate, where he ascended quickly in both the Democratic Party and the State senate as an institution. Within a year he was elected Democratic State committeeman for the Sixth District. A couple years later he became assistant senate minority leader. In 1979 Phil Rock was chosen by his colleagues to be the senate president. At the time, Illinois was facing tough times. Illinois was hard hit by the national recession and some of the highest urban unemployment rates in the country. Once again, Phil did not waver. Through his leadership, Phil helped guide the State through a storm of a recession.

Phil was a loyal and passionate Democrat, but he understood that compromise was always an important part of success. ''Bipartisanship'' wasn't a dirty word for Phil Rock; he worked with everybody. He just wanted to get things done for his constituents, as well as the people of the State. His word was his bond. When his allies made unreasonable demands, Phil was firm and said no.

When the day's legislative work was done, though, you could still find Phil presiding—usually over a barbecue pit near the State capitol. Legislators from both political parties came by; they wouldn't miss it. Phil would hand them a cold drink, and they would have a great evening together.

Hardly any of Phil's parties ended without Phil being requested to sing ''Danny Boy,'' which he did in a spirited fashion. On St. Patrick's Day, you could always count on Phil Rock and his fellow State senator Bob Egan being close to a piano, singing great Irish tunes. The events were always bipartisan, with Democrats and Republicans coming together. This is a lesson in friendship and cooperation which all of us should remember today.

Phil leaves a proud legacy. He had a wonderful sense of fairness and a strong voice for the most vulnerable in communities across the State. Phil exemplified what Hubert Humphrey called ''the moral test of government.'' He authored and passed more than 450 major pieces of legislation in his career. He earned dozens of awards from organizations across the State of Illinois, from Cairo to Zion.

Among his legislative accomplishments, Phil started Illinois's I-SEARCH Program for missing children, which provides State funding to provide information almost instantly to save those kids. He also championed laws for mandatory insurance for newborns and the State's original Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act. One of his proudest achievements was sponsoring legislation for the Nation's first school for the deaf and blind in Glen Ellyn, which today has been named after him, the Philip J. Rock Center and School.

Phil passed away last month at the age of 78. His legacy shines brightly from Oak Park to Springfield and across our State. My wife Loretta and I want to offer our condolences to Phil's wife of more than 50 years, Sheila; their four kids, Kathleen, Meghan, Colleen, and John; and, of course, the grandkids.

Phil Rock was a tireless advocate for the little guy, he was a giant in Illinois politics, and he will be missed.

Madam President, last year I joined a bipartisan majority in the Senate to pass a Customs reauthorization bill. It was strong, it was meaningful, and it really set out to modernize our Nation's customs system and strengthen the enforcement of U.S. trade laws.

One of the greatest concerns Americans have about trade and trade agreements is that when they are cheated on by other countries, we don't enforce them, and the losers are American businesses and employees. So I like that Customs bill. I like that version and the strong language on currency manipulation which has cost a lot of American jobs and hurt U.S. businesses. It strengthened our commitment to combat human trafficking around the world. It would allow us to safeguard our climate policies under future trade agreements.

The conference report that is back to us now and before the Senate at this moment is a much different bill. Let me say there are provisions of it that are good and important. I strongly support the ENFORCE Act. The provision would allow us to have a level playing field so that companies, such as Illinois companies, could ensure that other countries play by the same rules when it comes to trade. These strong anti-dumping rules are vital to prevent foreign companies from dumping cheap steel products and other goods that undercut domestic prices and put our companies out of business and employees out of work.

I recently had representatives of the steel industry come by my office, and they explained the dramatic increase in imports of steel product, particularly rebar from Turkey. They can't understand how Turkey can sell its rebar in the United States so cheaply, putting American businesses at a disadvantage. Turkey takes scrap metal from the United States and transports it across the ocean, transforms it there into rebar and steel, and ships it back to the United States—and they are still able to charge less.

The folks in the steel industry here say: We are ready for competition, but something else is going on here.

There is clearly a subsidy when it comes to Turkish steel. And the net result is that companies like Granite City Steel in Granite City, IL, and companies across the United States are being threatened.

Some countries are dumping their products in the United States. They are selling them for less than the cost of production to run American businesses out of business and to put our steelworkers out of work.

The ENFORCE Act puts some teeth into this process, and it is one of the sections in this bill I would wholeheartedly support if it were a separate piece of legislation. But that is not how bills are presented to us in the Senate. We are given an array of issues and topics in every bill, and we have to decide whether at the end of the day the bill is worth voting for even if there are provisions in it that we like and some that we hate.

The inclusion of this important legislation is not enough to overcome my concerns with the overall bill.

Unlike the Senate-passed bill, there was a provision airdropped into this bill at the last minute in conference that really creates a problem. It is called the Permanent Internet Tax Freedom Act. What it means is, with this legislation, we are by Federal law prohibiting State and local governments from imposing taxes on access to the Internet. Generically, I think that is a good thing to do, to encourage use of the Internet and not to create hardships on families, students, and individuals who use the Internet, but let's go into this conversation with our eyes wide open.

If you use a telephone to make a call to someone, you are likely going to face a tax from your State or local unit of government on telephone services. If, however, you do what my wife and I try to do every weekend and Skype your grandkids, you are using your computer for that conversation, and there is no tax on your use of that computer. Some people say, ''Good. I didn't want to pay the tax.'' But remember, local and State taxes go to sustain critical services in communities.

What we are doing with this bill is prohibiting States and localities from, in most cases, imposing taxes on Internet services. So we are closing the door to State and local units of government raising revenue that they might view as reasonable and fair to sustain police protection, fire protection, and all the demands they face. That is the reality of this provision.

What we had hoped to do was, at the same time, say that State and local units of government could collect sales tax on Internet sales. Let me explain. More and more Americans are turning to the Internet to buy things, our family included. You go to the usual vendors on the Internet, and in some cases, if they decide to, those Internet

retailers collect the local sales tax. So when I give my home address in Springfield, IL, they check the ZIP Code, and they decide that when I make the purchase, they will collect the sales tax on the Internet sale of a book, for example, and they will remit that amount to the treasury of the State of Illinois. But it is not required, and many Internet vendors do not collect the sales tax. So what happens? State and local units of government don't get the benefit of the sales tax from Internet purchases.

However, if I decided, instead of buying a book on the Internet, to buy it at a local bookstore in Chicago or Springfield, I would pay a sales tax. Well, people are learning this. As they learn this, they are changing their shopping habits.

A friend of mine, Chris Koos, is the mayor of Normal, IL. He is an extraordinary person beyond Normal, as far as I am concerned. He is also a businessman as well as mayor. He has a business that sells bicycles and running shoes. He tells me people will literally come into his store and say: I need size 11 New Balance shoes. What do you have?

They bring out the running shoes, and people try them on, stand in front of the mirror, and say: Thanks a lot, Chris. I appreciate it.

They will then write down the number for the New Balance running shoes, go home, buy them on the Internet, and not pay a sales tax. Well, Chris is the loser. Here he is with a good, solid business in Normal, IL, that not only provides good service and good products but collects—as required by law—the sales tax on transactions, the sales tax going to the State and to the community to sustain basic services. So when people use his store as a showroom and then buy on the Internet and not pay the taxes, of course the State and the community lose.

What we had hoped to do was to put these two things together and say that if we are going to prohibit State and local units of government from imposing taxes on access to the Internet, at the same time, we will require Internet sellers and retailers, to collect sales taxes for purchases. That would be remitted back to the State and local government so at least there was some balance. It isn't as if we are closing the doors to State and local units of government for what they might have otherwise collected.

Unfortunately, only half of what I just described is included in this bill. The prohibition against State and local governments collecting taxes on Internet service is included, but sales conducted over the Internet is not included. That is unfortunate.

Initially, I opposed this bill and said that this was brought into it at the last minute, that it has nothing to do with customs whatsoever, and that it should never have been included. It is the kind of thing that I think gives us a bad name sometimes when it comes to the way we write bills. I opposed it. I then ended up deciding to talk to Republican Leader Senator MCCONNELL. With his assurance that we will get a shot at calling the marketplace fairness or internet retail tax this year—either if it is sent from the House or if it originates in the Senate—I have dropped my opposition to the overall bill—although I will vote against it, I am not working against it—and the earlier rollcall indicated strong support.

With that in mind, I yield the floor and say that I will continue to oppose the Customs bill for the reasons stated, but I am happy that Senator MCCONNELL and I have been able to reach an agreement on the path forward toward marketplace fairness or efairness.

I yield the floor.

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, as we move toward final passage of the conference committee report on H.R. 644, the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act, I would like to take just a few minutes to reflect on how we got here and to thank the many individuals who made this moment possible.

This conference report concludes what has been an historic 13 months for trade legislation in the U.S. Senate. When I began my tenure as chairman of the Senate Finance Committee early last year, one of my foremost goals was to strengthen and modernize U.S. international trade institutions and policies. It was an audacious goal. After all, it is not like we had not tried before. Years of stagnation had enabled countless trade problems to accumulate, many of them crying for legislative resolution. Everyone agreed that something needed to be done, but again and again, our efforts were stopped. Well this Congress was different.

Working together in a bipartisan way, we were able to advance legislation to strengthen congressional oversight of trade negotiations through reauthorization of trade promotion authority, or TPA. I intend to vigorously employ TPA's new oversight tools in reviewing the Trans-Pacific Partnership that the Obama administration concluded in October and signed last week. While the verdict is still out on TPP, the efforts of the individuals who made that possible should not go unrecognized. So I would like to acknowledge the hard work of individuals such as Ambassador Mike Froman, former Deputy U.S. Trade Representative Wendy Cutler, and the Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Southeast Asia and the Pacific, Barbara Weisel. Their tireless commitment to advancing the interests of the United States abroad deserves to be recognized and applauded.

I also would like to thank my staff, who worked behind the scenes to help negotiate and craft legislation that will serve our Nation for many years to come. I believe that the Senate Finance Committee leadership team of Chris Campbell, Mark Prater, and Jay Khosla is among the finest that I have had the pleasure to work with in my many years of Senate service. Our trade team, consisting of chief trade counsel Everett Eissenstat, Shane Warren, Douglas Petersen, Rebecca Eubank, Andrew Rollo, Kevin Rosenbaum, Paul Delaney, Greg Kalbaugh, and Kenneth Schmidt consistently demonstrated that teamwork, motivation, and drive can produce great results; and this bill we are considering here is no exception. I also would like to thank our outstanding speech and communications team, consisting of Bryan Hickman, Julia Lawless, Aaron Fobes, Amelia Breinig, and Joshua Blume; and of course, our fine tax team, including Nick Wyatt, Eric Oman, Jim Lyons, and our chief economist, Jeff Wrase.

Bipartisanship was critical to all of our work over the past year, especially on trade. For their steadfast commitment and determination to our shared goal of producing strong, bipartisan legislation, I would like to recognize Senator WYDEN and his team: Josh Sheinkman, Mike Evans, Jayme White, Elissa Alben, Greta Peisch, Anderson Heiman, Tiffany Smith, and Todd Metcalf.

I also would like to thank Senator MCCONNELL and his staff: Sharon Soderstrom, Brendan Dunn, Terry Van Doren, and Hazen Marshall, who provided us with support and leadership throughout this process. Finally, let me thank my House colleagues, Speaker RYAN, Chairman Brady, and their staffs Austin Smythe, Joyce Meyer, Angela Ellard, Geoff Antell, Steve Claeys, Nasim Fussell, and Casey Higgins. On the Democratic staff, I would like to acknowledge the hard work and contributions of Ranking Member Sandy Levin and his staff, Jason Kearns, Beth Baltzan, Katherine Tai, and Keigan Mull.

Finally, this conference report would not have been possible without the excellent work done by Tom Barthold from the Joint Committee on Taxation, the Senate Legislative Counsel's office, especially Margaret Roth-Warren and Thomas Heywood, and the Congressional Budget Office, especially Teri Gullo, Ann Futrell, Susan Willie and Mark Grabowicz. The support of the legislative affairs staff at U.S. Customs and Border Protection also was essential for getting this conference report right, and I especially want to acknowledge John Pickel, Ned Leigh, and Kristin Isabelli.

I am proud of this conference report and pleased that we were able to pass it with a strong, bipartisan vote. It took many hands to bring us to this moment, and I am truly thankful for all of their hard work. This bill shows that, through persistence and hard work, we can accomplish great things.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I know of no further debate on the conference report.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate on the conference report?

Hearing none, the question occurs on agreeing to the conference report.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN).

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

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 75, nays 20, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 22 Leg.]

YEAS—75

Ayotte	Ernst	Moran
Baldwin	Feinstein	Murkowski
Barrasso	Fischer	Murphy
Bennet	Flake	Murray
Blumenthal	Gardner	Nelson
Blunt	Grassley	Paul
Booker	Hatch	Perdue
Boozman	Heitkamp	Peters
Burr	Heller	Portman
Cantwell	Hoeven	Risch
Capito	Inhofe	Roberts
Cardin	Isakson	Sasse
Carper	Johnson	Scott
Casey	Kaine	Sessions
Cassidy	King	Shaheen
Coats	Kirk	Shelby
Cochran	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Collins	Lankford	Tester
Coons	Leahy	Thune
Corker	Lee	Tillis
Cornyn	Manchin	Toomey
Cotton	McCain	Vitter
Crapo	McCaskill	Warner
Daines	McConnell	Wicker
Donnelly	Merkley	Wyden

NAYS—20

Alexander	Heinrich	Rounds
Boxer	Hirono	Schatz
Brown	Markey	Schumer
Durbin	Menendez	Udall
Enzi	Mikulski	Warren
Franken	Reed	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Reid	

NOT VOTING—5

Cruz	Rubio	Sullivan
Graham	Sanders	

The conference report was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that on Thursday, February 11—that is today—at 1:30 p.m., the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 361; that there be 15 minutes for debate on the nomination, equally divided in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate vote without intervening action or debate on the nomination; that, if confirmed, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

(The remarks of Mr. LEAHY and Ms. COLLINS pertaining to the introduction of S. 2544 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

CONGRATULATING THE DENVER BRONCOS ON THEIR SUPER BOWL CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, after the very weighty and serious discussion that just preceded me, I come maybe with a little bit more lighthearted message for the Presiding Officer and my colleague, the senior Senator from Colorado, Mr. BENNET.

I think everybody knows here—the folks up in the gallery may know—that Denver is home of the Super Bowl 50 winners, the Denver Broncos. The Presiding Officer and I attended the Super Bowl on Sunday, and I am sure he agrees it was quite a treat.

God blessed us with beautiful weather, and the people of Santa Clara really made us feel welcome and at home. They did an amazing job. The Super Bowl organizers are to be commended for their attention to detail and the superb work they did to make us feel welcome. It was a fantastic experience for me. So I can only imagine, with the Presiding Officer having the winning team, how much fun it was for him.

I think it is safe to say that there are thousands in Colorado on a Rocky Mountain high this week, and I will bet there are even more who are really happy that the Broncos won the Super Bowl.

The Denver Broncos played a great game, and they defeated my Carolina Panthers. Both defenses played extraordinarily well, and the Broncos' offense did just enough to get the job done.

So to the Presiding Officer and Senator BENNET, I come to the Senate Chamber today to fulfill my wager to humbly offer my congratulations to the Super Bowl champion, the Denver Broncos, and to all their fans in your great State and, I would argue, across the Nation.

But before I talk about the beloved Panthers, I want to thank you for not accepting some of my maybe exuberant or overexuberant offers that I made as a possible friendly wager. And for C–SPAN viewers at home, you may want to avert your eyes.

I really don't think I would have looked very good in an orange beard with Broncos earrings. With all due respect to the Presiding Officer, you looked a lot like Papa Smurf with a blue beard. So a simple speech of congratulations is what I have to offer.

The truth is, I am deeply disappointed about the Panthers' loss. But it is also true that, unless the Broncos are playing my Panthers or my childhood team, the Miami Dolphins, I am usually pulling for the Broncos. The Broncos' organization, starting with the Bowlen family and Coach Kubiak, are topnotch and well respected in the NFL. Former greats such as John Elway, Terrell Davis, Shannon Sharpe, Ed—how could he wear so few pads and still survive—McCaffrey, and so many other members have made this team so much fun to watch over the years.

But then there is this guy, Peyton Manning, or ''The Sheriff,'' as Coach Gruden nicknamed him back in 2009. I have been watching Peyton Manning since he was recruited to the University of Tennessee many years ago—a five-time NFL MVP and two-time Super Bowl winner on two different franchises. Next month, on March 24, he is going to be 40 years old, and he is playing at the top of his game. Peyton is an amazing athlete, but what really makes Peyton extraordinary is his character and his behavior on and off the field. He is a true gentleman, a great sport, and he is a scholar of the game.

I opted not to put up a graphic on the New England Patriots because anybody who knows me knows that I am not much of a fan of the New England Patriots, dating back to a December 1982 snowplow game.

But, in addition to all the other things Peyton Manning has done, he also led the Broncos to a victory over the Patriots in the AFC Championship, completely deflating Tom Brady's shot at another Super Bowl ring. That alone makes Peyton Manning a great American, in my book.

The Broncos and I do have something in common. We were both born in 1960. We are both 56 years old. They built a franchise that most fans expect to be in contention every year.

The Panthers, on the other hand, are young. They were born in 1995. They are 20 years old. They have already gone to the playoffs seven times. They have won two NFC Championships and been in the big game twice, and I believe that next year they have a good shot to be in contention.

So before I close, I thank owner Jerry Richardson, Coach Ron Rivera, and the Carolina Panthers. Mr. Richardson is a pillar of our community, and Coach Rivera has developed a Super Bowl-caliber team: Cam Newton, the league MVP; Luke Kuechly, our defensive standout; a total of 10 Pro Bowlers this year; and a 17-to-2 season. It was fun to watch. The Super Bowl was fun to watch.

You know, I did grow a playoff beard. After we ended the playoff season, I proudly displayed it for weeks on the Senate floor, back in North Carolina, and at Levi Stadium on Super Bowl night.

But on Monday morning I got misty-eyed as I shaved it off in San Francisco. So with all apologies to Tony Bennett, I penned a poem based on one of his songs about that same city. I called it ''I left my hair in San Francisco.''

I left my hair in San Francisco
After the game, it haunted me
I'm cleanly shaven, quite sad and bare
While Broncos fans dance like Fred Astaire
The loveliness of Santa Clara seems somehow sad today
The glory of my Panthers' season is of another day
But I'm looking forward to next year's season
Because I expect a Super Bowl repeat for many good reasons

To Senator BENNET and to the Presiding Officer, congratulations on a great Super Bowl win for the Denver Broncos, and I look forward to many more games that our two teams may play in the future.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I will be very brief. I have a longer set of remarks that I want to give next week celebrating the Broncos' victory, and I know our colleague from Wyoming is here.

But since the Presiding Officer is shackled to the desk and can't make remarks, I would say on his behalf how grateful the two of us are to the Senator from North Carolina for the graciousness of his remarks. I know how hard it must have been.

But to have the Senator not only make the remarks but provide original poetry at the end, is more than anybody could have expected. So through the Chair I thank the Senator for that.

I also want to say how proud we are of the Broncos and the Broncos organization, the Bowlen family, and the entire team for what they were able to pull off. I was able to watch it in my living room with my wife and daughters.

I congratulate, in particular, Von Miller, who is the MVP, and our defense, who played a game like no other defense I have ever seen.

Finally, I would simply say thank you to Peyton Manning for the example he has set for my children and for children all over our State—that what matters is not how good you are or how skilled you are or how you act in the minute, but what matters is the patient decades of hard work a person is willing to put in to perfect their craft. That is what Peyton Manning has demonstrated. That is what he has shown. That is the value he has lived. I think he has made a huge difference, as I say, to the next generation of Coloradans.

We learned last week, as well, that this game, just like any game, is not about any one individual; it is about a team. We saw a team—the weaknesses and strengths—come together and win a game over a very, very tough organization in the Carolina Panthers.

(Mr. BARRASSO assumed the Chair.)

With that, I see my colleague from Colorado is now on the floor.

I yield the floor by saying: Go Broncos.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Wyoming for providing relief and the Presiding Officer for allowing me to make remarks.

I thank my freshman colleague from the great State of North Carolina for those kind words. I can only imagine if the Senator from Colorado, Mr. BENNET, and I had to give the same remarks had the outcome been different, that we could only be so gracious. So thank you very much for the congratulations to the Denver Broncos and, obviously, the Carolina Panthers. It was an exciting game that they were able to be a part of, and there will be many more years of success to both franchises, undoubtedly.

For those of you in Colorado who were able to watch the game, what an exciting time it was. We can remember the great teams led by John Elway—whether they played the Packers or the Falcons for the two Super Bowl victories—and now this exciting victory at Santa Clara as well. Also, a million people showed up in downtown Denver, CO, just a few short days ago to express their outpouring of support for the Denver Broncos. This has truly been an exciting time for the people of Colorado.

I am very pleased that Senator BENNET and I didn't have to grow a beard. Thank you, Senator TILLIS, from the great State of North Carolina.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The Senator from Wyoming.

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, on Tuesday, President Obama released his budget for the next fiscal year. As usual, there was a lot of new spending the American people don't want and a lot of new taxes the American people can't afford.

It is interesting. Politico had a headline about the budget in Tuesday's paper. It says ''Obama launches liberal offensive in his final budget.'' A liberal offensive in his final budget. It called the budget ''aggressively liberal.'' Well, one of the big, ''aggressively liberal'' things the President put in his budget is an enormous tax increase on gasoline. This tax would add over $10 to the price of a barrel of oil. That equates to about 24 cents to a gallon of gasoline at the pump. This increase in tax would raise about $319 billion over 10 years.

President Obama knows his budget has zero chance of becoming law, not just because Republicans won't vote for it; Democrats won't vote for it. Last year his budget was defeated by a vote of 98 to 1. Only one Member of his own party voted for his budget last year, and now Democrats in Congress are running away from this gas tax as fast as they can.

The problem is, this tax is about more than just the budget; this is a sign that the Obama administration is still committed to continuing its assault on energy production in this country—red, white, and blue energy.

The American people understand there are enormous national security implications to what the President is proposing in his budget. Right now there is fierce competition in the global energy markets. The OPEC cartel has a strategy to win that competition in the oil market. It has been pumping out oil at a pace that is intended to drive U.S. shale oil producers out of business. Then once the competition is gone, they will raise prices.

The best way for us to protect American interests is to make it easier and cheaper for energy producers to operate here in America. The worst thing we could do is to add to the cost of American oil by imposing this new tax of $10 per barrel, 24 cents per gallon, but that is exactly what President Obama wants to do. He wants to raise taxes, and he wants to make it harder to produce American energy. President Obama's plan would actually help OPEC get what it wants. It would also put American energy producers at a competitive disadvantage with our adversaries in Iran and in Russia.

Just a few weeks ago, the Obama administration lifted economic sanctions on Iran's energy exports. This means that Iran can now export oil again. So how much oil are they going to export? According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, Iran right now has between 30 and 50 million barrels of oil sitting offshore in tankers today. Iran is planning to boost its oil exports to Europe and Asia by half a million barrels a day in the next few months. And it is not just oil; Iran is also the world's second largest producer of natural gas in terms of its resources. Right now, they are building a new export plant for liquefied natural gas that is about 40 percent complete, and they are ready to start shipping natural gas to Europe within 2 years.

Russia is also a huge exporter of natural gas. That is one of the reasons Vladimir Putin invaded Ukraine. It was to get control of the gas pipelines there. Now it appears that Gazprom is

prepared to start a natural gas price war with the United States. Gazprom is, of course, the Russian gas company that is mostly owned by the government and controlled by Vladimir Putin. A price war would help them maintain their grip as being the biggest gas supplier in Europe, and it would discourage U.S. liquefied natural gas projects from ever being built.

What has the Obama administration done? The Obama administration has a documented history of delaying permits to American businesses that want to export our liquefied natural gas. Needless bureaucratic delays just deter energy production and producers from wanting to start these projects in the United States because it is so hard to get them approved, and that just drives up the cost. The administration's approach plays right into Vladimir Putin's hands.

This is not the time to add cost to American energy production. That will only help our adversaries more, and it will make our allies more dependent on energy—not from us but from places such as Russia and Iran and, of course, from other OPEC countries. This is not the time to shut down the production of American energy.

There are a lot of far-left, extreme environmentalists out there who want to make sure American energy resources are never used but stay in the ground. There are also a lot of Washington Democrats who are eager to give these environmental extremists everything they want—everything.

Last week in New Hampshire, Hillary Clinton was caught on tape promising one of these extremist supporters that the end of fossil fuel development on public land, she said, is ''a done deal.'' The end of exploration of fossil fuels on public land is ''a done deal.'' Well, it may be a done deal in her mind. It is also unrealistic, unwise, and unworkable. Take a look at it. Forty-one percent of America's coal production right now comes from public land; 22 percent of our crude oil comes from public land; 16 percent of our natural gas comes from public land; and Hillary Clinton, in her speech and her comments last Thursday in New Hampshire, said, in terms of any of that production, it is ''a done deal.''

I remind my colleagues that energy is the master resource. America needs energy for our economy to grow. We need those jobs. Where are we supposed to get our energy if we don't get it from public lands? We can't power America's manufacturing on wind alone.

Instead of building new barriers to American energy production, we should be tearing down those barriers. The energy legislation we have been debating in this body actually includes ideas to help do that. One bipartisan idea in this legislation would help speed up the permitting process to export liquefied natural gas. It is bipartisan, with six Democratic cosponsors.

After all the environmental studies have been done, after everything has been approved, it then takes an average of another 7 months for this administration to say yes or no on the permits. That is after everything has already been approved. Why would it take 7 additional months to get a decision by the administration? The Energy Department should be able to say yes or no, and this legislation says they should be able to do it within 45 days. This is going to force Washington to do its job in an accountable and timely way. That will help make sure other countries have options for where to get their energy, other than the concerns we have about a dominance of Russia, a dominance of Iran, and a change of the balance of power internationally.

It is time for America's energy policies to help American energy producers compete and to help those jobs in our energy security at home. That is how we are going to build our economy, how we are going to create American jobs, and how we are going to strengthen our national security.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NELSON. 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. NELSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 7 minutes.

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

THE EL FARO

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, late last year a cargo container ship carrying 33 men and women left Florida from the Port of Jacksonville en route to Puerto Rico. It typically sailed back and forth, carrying cargo to and from San Juan, Puerto Rico, but this time it sailed directly into the path of a hurricane.

Two days later the crew sent what would be its final communication, reporting that the ship's engines were disabled and the vessel was left drifting and tilting, with no power, straight into the path of the storm.

Subsequent to that, despite an exhaustive search and rescue attempt by the Coast Guard in the days that followed, the El Faro and her crew were never heard from again. Only in one case, in desperately trying to do a search and rescue mission, did they find one decomposed body in a bodysuit, but they could not find anybody else.

Since then, the National Transportation Safety Board—the agency charged with investigating the incident—has been working tirelessly to understand what happened. Why would the ship leave port when they knew there was a storm brewing and it was going to cross the path of where the ship was supposed to go?

Working with the U.S. Navy and the Coast Guard, investigators eventually found the ship's wreckage scattered at the bottom of the ocean east of the Bahama Islands in waters 15,000 feet deep. But what they didn't find that day was the ship's voyage data recorder, or what we typically refer to as the ship's black box, not unlike the black box we look for in the case of an aircraft incident that records all of the data.

Since we have no survivors, this data recorder is a key piece to getting the information to understand this puzzle of why that ship would sail right into the hurricane. It records and it stores all of the ship's communications. Finding it could shed light on what really happened onboard in those final hours. Despite the search team's exhaustive efforts to locate the data recorder amongst the scattered wreckage, they couldn't find it, and eventually they had to call off the search.

Earlier this year, this Senator wrote to the Chairman of the NTSB and urged him to go back and search again because finding the ship's data recorder is important for us to understand how these 33 human beings who have families back at home were lost. I am here to report that at this very minute, the NTSB is announcing that they are going back to do the search again. At this moment, the NTSB is saying it will resume the search for the ship's black box. This time it will do it with the help of even more sophisticated equipment to help investigators pinpoint the approximate location of the recorder and hopefully, if it is not among the wreckage of the ship, point to its location and pick it up off the ocean floor.

The NTSB's decision today—which I commend; and I thank the Chairman for continuing to keep after this—to search again for the data recorder is a critical step in our understanding of what went so tragically wrong that day. We owe it not only to the families of the lost mariners aboard the El Faro but to the future safety of all those who travel on the high seas. It is up to us to not only understand what happened but to do what we can to ensure that it doesn't happen in the future.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

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

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Leonard Terry Strand, of South Dakota, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Iowa.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will now be 15 minutes of debate, equally divided in the usual form.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today, as was just reported, we will vote on the nomination of Len Strand from Iowa. I am very pleased to be here to support him, just as I was here a few days ago to support Judge Ebinger from Iowa, who was unanimously confirmed by the U.S. Senate on Monday, and I hope this person will likewise be unanimously approved.

I said this on the floor earlier this week, but for the benefit of my colleagues who didn't get a chance to hear that wonderful speech I gave, in my opinion, the Iowa nominees, Judge Ebinger and now Judge Strand, are the two best judicial candidates this President has nominated. Earlier this week I discussed the extensive selection process these nominees underwent. I will not go into those details again, but I will say that I am very pleased the process produced such a nominee as Judge Strand.

Judge Strand has deep Iowa roots. He received his undergraduate degree from the University of Iowa in 1987 and his law degree from the University of Iowa College of Law in 1990. Upon graduation, he joined one of the most prestigious law firms in Iowa as an associate, where he specialized in employment law and commercial litigation.

During his time at the law firm, he received several awards, including ''Super Lawyer'' for Iowa and the Great Plains region for 6 years straight. During his time at the firm, he was very involved in his community. He has been a member of a wide range of organizations important to Iowa, all the way from the symphony orchestra, to the medical center, to the YMCA.

In 2012 Judge Strand was appointed as a magistrate judge for the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Iowa. In this capacity, he has handled hundreds of cases, which has prepared him well to be a Federal district judge, article III.

The ABA considers him—as you know the classifications—''unanimously well qualified'' for this position.

As I did Monday for Judge Ebinger, I urge all my colleagues to support his nomination today, and we will be voting on it shortly.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today we will vote on the nomination of Leonard Strand to fill a judicial emergency vacancy in the Federal district court in the Northern District of Iowa. I will vote to support his nomination.

The next district court nominee pending after we return from the President's Day recess will be Waverly Crenshaw, an exceptional African-American nominee who is nominated to a judicial emergency vacancy in the Middle District of Tennessee. Mr. CRENSHAW has the support of his Republican home State Senators, Senators ALEXANDER and CORKER, and he was voice voted out of the Judiciary Committee last July. There is no reason to continue to delay the confirmation of such a qualified nominee who is urgently needed for Tennesseans to receive swift justice. I hope the Senators from Tennessee can convince their majority leader to schedule a vote for Mr. CRENSHAW as soon as we return from recess. I further hope that the majority leader will continue to regularly schedule judicial confirmation votes to ensure that our Federal judiciary is fully functioning.

Since Republicans took over the majority last January, they have allowed votes on just 15 nominees. In stark contrast, at this point in the last 2 years of the Bush Presidency in 2008, when Senate Democrats were in the majority, we had confirmed 40 judicial nominees. Senate Republicans' obstruction has resulted in judicial vacancies soaring across the country—rising by more than 75 percent. Judicial vacancies deemed to be ''emergencies'' by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts because caseloads in those courts are unmanageably high has nearly tripled in that time. Senate Democrats worked hard to reduce these judicial emergency vacancies to 12, but under Republican leadership, they have now risen to 32. There is an urgent need for the Senate to confirm highly qualified nominees who will get to work in Federal courthouses across the country where justice for too many Americans has been delayed. Judge Strand will fill just one of these emergency vacancies. There are dozens more to fill.

Judge Strand is an excellent judicial nominee who has served in our Federal judiciary since 2012 as a U.S. magistrate judge in the district court for the Northern District of Iowa. Prior to joining the bench, he spent over 20 years in private practice as a partner at the Cedar Rapids, IA, law firm Simmons Perrine Moyer Bergman PLC. The ABA Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary unanimously rated Judge Strand ''Well Qualified'' to serve on the Federal district court, its highest possible rating. He has the strong support of his home State Senators, Chairman GRASSLEY of the Judiciary Committee and Senator ERNST.

After today, 17 judicial nominees will remain pending on the Senate floor. These nominees are from Tennessee, Maryland, New Jersey, Nebraska, New York, California, Rhode Island, and Pennsylvania. Many of these nominees will fill emergency vacancies, and nearly half of these nominees have Republican home State Senator support. Furthermore, there are another 15 judicial nominees pending in the Judiciary Committee from California, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Utah, and Wisconsin.

It is our constitutional duty as Senators to provide advice and consent on these judicial nominees. The Federal judiciary is dependent on us to fulfill this obligation, and the American people expect that we will do the jobs we have been elected to do in the U.S. Senate. This is why the demand from certain moneyed Washington interest groups that Republican Senators oppose the confirmation of any judicial nominee this year, regardless of a nominee's merit or qualifications, is so destructive. Not only would this require Senators to cede their role and judgement to outside political action committees, but refusing to confirm any judicial nominees for the rest of this year would also make the high number of vacancies in our Federal judiciary even worse. This would hurt the American people and weaken our justice system. We cannot allow this to happen.

In the first 5 weeks of this year, the Senate has voted on five judicial nominees. During this time, we have also debated and voted on legislation and confirmed executive nominees. There is no reason why the Republican majority cannot continue to hold confirmation votes on judicial nominees when we return. In 2008, when I was chairman of the committee with a Republican President, we worked to confirm judicial nominees as late as September of the Presidential election year. In fact, that year Senate Democrats confirmed 28 of President Bush's judicial nominees, 22 of these in the last 7 months of 2008. This includes the confirmation of 10 of President Bush's district court nominees pending on the Senate floor in a single day by unanimous consent on September 26, 2008.

I urge my fellow Senators to vote to confirm Judge Strand and look forward to continuing to work with my fellow Senators to ensure that we continue to vote on the remaining pending judicial nominees when we return from recess.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I yield back all time on this side, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Strand nomination?

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

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

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

[Rollcall Vote No. 23 Ex.]

YEAS—93

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
Brown	Heller	Risch
Burr	Hirono	Roberts
Cantwell	Hoeven	Rounds
Capito	Inhofe	Sasse
Cardin	Isakson	Schatz
Carper	Johnson	Schumer
Casey	Kaine	Scott
Cassidy	King	Sessions
Coats	Kirk	Shaheen
Cochran	Klobuchar	Shelby
Collins	Lankford	Stabenow
Coons	Leahy	Tester
Corker	Lee	Thune
Cornyn	Manchin	Tillis
Cotton	Markey	Toomey
Crapo	McCain	Udall
Daines	McCaskill	Vitter
Donnelly	McConnell	Warner
Durbin	Menendez	Warren
Enzi	Merkley	Whitehouse
Ernst	Mikulski	Wicker
Feinstein	Murkowski	Wyden

NOT VOTING—7

Boxer	Moran	Sullivan
Cruz	Rubio	
Graham	Sanders	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

Under the previous order, the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 1169

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, soon Senator WHITEHOUSE and I will be offering a unanimous consent request. It is in regard to the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act. It has an amendment at the desk. I introduced this measure last April with Senator WHITEHOUSE, and it has three main goals.

First, this measure would extend a federal law, known as the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, for 5 more years. The centerpiece of this 1974 law, which Congress last extended in 2002, is its core protections for youth.

There are four core protections. The first calls for States to avoid detaining youth for low-level status offenses. The second requires that juveniles be kept out of adult facilities, except in rare instances. The third ensures that juveniles will be kept separated from adult inmates whenever they are housed in adult facilities. The fourth calls for reducing disproportionate minority contact in State juvenile justice systems. States adhering to these four requirements receive yearly formula grants to support their juvenile justice systems.

Second, this legislation would make important updates to existing law in order to ensure that juvenile justice programs will yield the best possible estimates. The authorization for these programs expired in 2007, but they continue to receive appropriations. Nearly 14 years have elapsed since the last reauthorization, and the programs are long overdue for an update.

Third, this bill would promote greater accountability in government spending. The Judiciary Committee that I chair heard from multiple whistleblowers that reforms are urgently needed to restore the integrity of formula grant programs that are the centerpiece of our current juvenile justice law. The Justice Department's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention administers this formula grant program.

This grant program would be continued for 5 more years under this bill, but the Justice Department would have to do much more oversight if this bill is enacted. This bill also calls for evidence-based programs to be accorded priority in funding. The goal is to ensure that scarce Federal resources for juvenile justice will be devoted mostly to the programs that research shows have the greatest merits and will yield the best results for these young people.

For years and years, I have been reading inspector general reports that disclose shortcomings within the Justice Department, under both Republican Presidents and Democratic Presidents. Money is not being spent according to congressional intent, and it has not yielded the results we should be getting. That's why we want evidence-based programs to be accorded priority in funding.

A coalition of over 100 nonprofit organizations, led by the Campaign for Youth Justice and the Coalition for Juvenile Justice, worked closely with us on this bill's development. Others that have endorsed this measure include Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, Boys Town, Rights4Girls, the National Criminal Justice Association, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, and the National District Attorneys Association. Senator WHITEHOUSE and I are very grateful for their support.

I also take this opportunity to thank our 15 cosponsors, who include not only numerous Judiciary Committee members but people off the committee, such as Senators BLUNT, RUBIO, ERNST, and other non-committee members. This bill is a truly bipartisan effort, and many Senators contributed provisions to strengthen this bill since we introduced it last April.

There are a few provisions of the bill that I especially want to highlight. First, as already mentioned, this bill calls for continued congressional support of existing grant programs that serve at-risk youth. It also incorporates new language, championed by the organization called Rights4Girls, which emphasizes Congress's support for efforts to reduce delinquency among girls. Experts tell us that many girls in the juvenile justice system today have experienced violence, trauma, and poverty.

Second, at the urging of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, this bill gives States 3 years to phase out the detention of children who have committed so-called status offenses. Status offenses are those that are low-level offenses, such as running away from home, underage tobacco use, curfew violations, or truancy, which wouldn't be crimes if committed by an adult and which would never result in an adult being jailed.

Most status offenders are boys, with one exception. Girls account for about 60 percent of the runaway cases. Many of these girls and boys come from broken homes, and many have experienced trauma or mental health issues in childhood. Research shows that detention tends to make mentally ill status offenders worse. Because some detention facilities are crowded, violent, or chaotic, they can be very dangerous places for the low-risk offender. It is very expensive to lock up status offenders who don't pose a public safety risk. Finally, experts say that the status offenders learn negative behavior from high-risk offenders in detention, which greatly increases their risks of reoffending. Researchers call this peer deviancy training.

Third, the bill incorporates new provisions designed to rehabilitate and protect juveniles while they are in custody. It encourages screenings of boys and girls who may be exploited by human traffickers, as well as those with trauma, mental health, or substance abuse issues. It includes language, authored by Senators CORNYN AND SCHUMER, which would end the shackling of pregnant girls in detention. It calls for greater data collection, including reports on the use of isolation on juveniles in State or local detention facilities, and it includes language calling for States to ensure that juveniles will continue their education while in detention.

The measure we are seeking to pass today also includes a minor amendment at the request of Senator MURKOWSKI to ensure that the bill's definition of the phrase ''Indian tribes'' is the same as existing law. We also have added several new provisions to meet the better needs of tribal youth, who are overrepresented in the juvenile justice system. They include a requirement that the GAO report back to Congress on ways to improve prevention

and treatment services, as well as provisions encouraging States to notify Indian tribes when tribal youth come into contact with their juvenile justice systems.

I am pleased to have had the opportunity to work so closely in such a bipartisan manner with Senator WHITEHOUSE, who I hope will speak shortly on these key reform provisions. I am pleased that we have revisited the authorization statute for some vitally important juvenile justice programs—a statute which is long overdue for an update to reflect the latest scientific research on what works with at-risk adolescents.

At this point, would the Presiding Officer recognize Senator WHITEHOUSE under the rules.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am here to show support for my Judiciary Committee chairman's effort to move this measure by unanimous consent. He has described the bill in considerable detail, so I will not repeat his description of the bill.

From a point of view of process, I will say that this was a bill that came through Judiciary without a single voice of dissent. A great deal of bipartisan work was done to make sure it addressed new problems that young people face in all these different areas that the chairman described. It has a lot of enthusiasm and support in the Judiciary Committee. Indeed, it had such broad enthusiasm and support in the Judiciary Committee that we decided that we would simply hotline the bill because there seemed to be no objection to it. ''Hotline'' means you ask unanimous consent and warn people you are going to ask unanimous consent, and anybody who wants to object has a chance to come to the floor and do so.

It is my understanding that there is one Senator of the 100 of us who wishes to do so, and so here we are going through that exercise. But it has completely cleared on our side and is ready for action.

I would say that it is quite broadly supported. This is the list of law enforcement support for it. As you can see even from a chair quite far away, this is a fairly considerable document with a substantial list of hundreds of folks from across the country who pledge their support to this bill in law enforcement.

I would add that from the State of Arkansas, the junior Senator from Arkansas is the Senator who is going to raise the one objection, I gather. The Arkansas State Advisory Group, the association called Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families, and the official State Arkansas Division of Youth Services all support this bill.

On the list of law enforcement supporters that I showed you are the following law enforcement leaders from Arkansas who support this bill. Robert Alcon is the chief of police of the Mayflower Police Department, and he supports this bill. Steve Benton is the chief of police of the Ward Police Department; he supports this bill. Ray Coffman is the chief of police of the Judsonia Police Department; he supports this bill. Randy Harvey is the chief of police of the Lowell Police Department; he supports this bill. Mark Kizer is the chief of police of the Bryant Police Department; he supports this bill. Kirk Lane is the chief of police of the Benton Police Department; he supports this bill. Randy Reid is the chief of police of the Glenwood Police Department; he supports this bill. Montie Sims is the chief of police of the Dardanelle Police Department; he supports this bill. Obie Sims is the sheriff of the Lafayette County Sheriff's Office, and he supports this bill.

I would note that the senior Senator from Arkansas is not here to object to it.

I would hope that since the Governor of Arkansas has appointed a Youth Justice Reform Board, whose purpose is to ''improve the overall effectiveness of the juvenile justice system'' through evidence-based practices, the 3-year period that this bill gives for the implementation of this would give Arkansas plenty of time to accommodate itself. If there proves to be a problem, we can always come back to it later. In the meantime, this effort that is being undertaken under the leadership of the Governor of Arkansas is being done in conjunction with the Arkansas Division of Youth Services, which supports this bill.

I would add one other thing, which is that the purpose of this bill is to prevent children from being locked up for something that no adult could be locked up for if they were to do it—truancy, not showing up for school, things like that.

In the event, however, that a child comes under the supervision of a court and the court directs that child to do certain things, if the child then fails to comply with the court order, judges have broad authority to enforce compliance with their orders. It is known as the contempt power. It is inherent in the judicial office. It can include fines; it can even include detention.

To be in violation of a court order is not, in my view or in the view of anybody else that I am aware of, a status offense. Therefore, in a particularly acute or difficult situation in which a judge feels the need to enforce compliance with his or her order, the contempt power inherent in the judiciary is not obviated or addressed in any way by this bill.

So for all those reasons, I will conclude by recalling the story of the conclusion of the Founders' work on the Constitution, when, at the end, Benjamin Franklin stood up and acknowledged that there had been various disagreements but that he would urge that each of the Members of that body doubt just for one moment their own infallibility and allow the measure to proceed.

In that spirit, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, this is the opportunity we have been waiting for. I hope it is not objected to. If it is, we will have to take that into consideration and just hold the bill in the Senate.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 325, which is S. 1169; further, that the Grassley substitute amendment be agreed to; that the committee-reported substitute amendment, as amended, be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be read a third time; and that the Senate vote on passage of the bill, as amended, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, first, I want to express my appreciation for the work Senator GRASSLEY, Senator WHITEHOUSE, and others have done in crafting the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act. I agree with my colleagues—the bill improves the way we handle juvenile offenders. The bill properly focuses on rehabilitation and services that seek to turn juveniles away from crime and provide help to at-risk youth. I support the vast majority of the bill, and I hope it ultimately passes into law. However, I would like to take more time to discuss one specific provision of the bill relating to juvenile status offenders and secure confinement.

Secure confinement is not and in my opinion should not be the preferred option for instances of alcohol possession, truancy, or other status offenses. In fact, current law bars judges from imposing secure confinement for initial status offenses. But I am concerned that the bill eliminates completely the ability for judges to order secure confinement for a short time in instances where a status offender flagrantly violates the judge's prior order for him to, say, enter into rehabilitation, counseling, or take part in other treatment services. In such narrow circumstances, it may be prudent to allow judges—often in consultation with the parents and attorneys involved—to have secure confinement as a means to enforce their own orders and to ensure that the juvenile receives the help he needs.

Currently, many States are developing an array of options for treating status offenders beyond secure confinement. Yet a majority of States do, in fact, still choose to retain the option for judges to order secure confinement in narrow circumstances.

Just last year, my State of Arkansas passed a new juvenile justice bill that sought to expand rehabilitation services for status offenders so the State could reduce the number who were subject to secure confinement, but in my State legislature's judgment, it chose

to retain secure confinement as a last-resort option. I don't believe Congress should second-guess this choice. I have heard from Arkansans on this point, and I have raised it with the bill's sponsors.

A blanket Federal mandate that bans secure confinement in each and every circumstance may not be the best way forward. I submit we should continue to entrust States with the decision to retain it as a last-resort option and to allow judges on a case-by-case basis to use their discretion about the best course to enforce their prior orders. Therefore, with hopes we can resolve the issue promptly and pass this legislation, I regretfully object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, may I clarify one point?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, there are grants that the Federal Government makes to States to support their juvenile justice programs, and there are conditions that come with those grants. But I want to make sure that what is clear from the exchange is that this is a condition for receiving these Federal grants, but there is no mandate of any kind. The State, if it wishes, is free not to receive the Federal grant money and not comply with those conditions. It may be a technical point, but I think it is one that is important to clarify.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I understand the point the Senator from Rhode Island makes. I would say it poses a Hobson's choice for many States.

I would also make note of his earlier comment about a court's inherent authority to enforce its previous order using its inherent power of contempt, which would include the ability to order secure confinement for a short period of time. Perhaps we can work together to include a proviso in the bill that would recognize that inherent authority, and this bill would not remove that inherent authority on the condition of accepting the grant.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Again, for the RECORD, I am the Senator from Rhode Island, not the Senator from Vermont.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I respect the Senator from Arkansas. In the short time he has been in the Senate, he has been an outstanding leader on very important issues. He is a good Senator. I have watched him over the period of time he has been in the Senate, and I think this is the first time I felt he was wrong. But he has his rights.

Juvenile judges are the ones who originally requested that Congress include a valid court order, or ''VCO,'' exception in the Federal juvenile justice statute, and they now are asking us to repeal it. We accorded great weight to the opinion of the National Council of Family and Juvenile Court Judges because their members are the ones who invoke this exception.

As further noted this week by Elizabeth Pyke of the National Criminal Justice Association: ''No one on the state government side is arguing to keep the VCO. . . . All agree that the VCO is the wrong tool to get a child's attention. Holding them in detention for a status offense is no longer considered the best practice for scaring a kid into going straight . . . So parsing the language to allow judges to continue to use the VCO for punishment doesn't really make sense. And, again, no one in the states has argued for that.''

Detaining status offenders is not good public policy. We don't support a further language change because locking up these adolescents will make them worse, expose them to violent offenders who have committed serious crimes, and increase the likelihood they will become serious offenders themselves.

Remember that we are talking about juveniles who have committed infractions that would not be crimes if committed by adults. Curfew violations. Truancy. Underage tobacco use.

Status offenders often come from broken homes or homes with family conflicts. Many have had traumatic childhoods or suffer from mental health issues.

Strikingly, girls are 16 percent of the detained population but comprise 40 percent of status offenders. In the case of girls, the root cause for commission of a status offense may be severe forms of child abuse, including child sex trafficking.

In truancy cases, placing a status offender in detention only ensures that the juvenile will miss even more school without ever resolving the issue motivating the truancy. Even a brief time in detention may make it harder for the child to keep up with school work. Yet truancy is one of the status offenses that frequently results in a status offender's detention in Arkansas. We need to resolve the issues that lead these children to skip school so that they can succeed.

Judges have more effective and less costly tools at their disposal to ensure these juveniles' accountability. For example, they can suspend their driver's license; impose fines; send the juvenile to live with another family; order the juvenile into counseling. Judges also may ask parents to undergo counseling or take parenting classes.

Finally, as already noted, locking up status offenders costs the taxpayers a lot of money, even though these juveniles typically don't pose a public safety risk. In Arkansas, housing a child in detention costs hundreds of dollars per day. Community-based programs cost a lot less, but they ensure the judge receives periodic status updates and enable the judge to increase sanctions if the child remains unstable.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD some of the letters we have received in support of the bill's passage.

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

NATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, July 27, 2015.

Hon. CHARLES GRASSLEY,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. SHELDON WHITEHOUSE,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS GRASSLEY AND WHITEHOUSE: We are pleased to support S. 1169, the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act (JJDPA) of 2015. Members of the National Criminal Justice Association (NCJA) include the state, territorial and tribal chief executive officers of criminal justice agencies charged with managing federal, state, and tribal justice assistance resources. About half of these administer the programs authorized by the JJDPA.

NCJA members applaud the goals of S. 1169 to preserve and strengthen the prevention, youth development and rehabilitation purposes of the JJDPA, and are committed to achieving the reforms envisioned by the bill. In particular, the bill focuses on employing evidence-based and promising practices to promote alternatives to detention and provide for the diversion from, and the safe and effective treatment for, youth in confinement. It also would further the progress we have made as a nation in keeping youth out of contact with adult offenders, from the time of arrest through confinement.

The promise of the JJDPA is federal support for innovative state approaches to reforming the juvenile justice system and improving the treatment of juveniles under the state's care. S. 1169 will add to states' responsibilities by substantially expanding the activities under the core requirements, increasing data collection, and potentially requiring states to establish new facilities to house youthful offenders and increase the number of facilities states are required to monitor. Yet, since the last reauthorization in 2002, funding for JJDPA programs has dropped by more than 60 percent. This means that the resources available to states for juvenile delinquency programming and compliance with the core requirements are substantially dropping at a time when the requirements on states are substantially increasing.

It is for this reason that NCJA members appreciate the flexibility and spirit of partnership embedded in the bill which will help all states reach a common standard of protection and service for children in the juvenile justice system even when resources are scarce.

NCJA members also believe the bill will help continue to rebuild the partnership between OJJDP and the state agencies responsible for carrying out the purposes of the Act. The bill includes new training and technical assistance opportunities for state agency administrators, offers a new opportunity for state agencies to partner with OJJDP in research and the sharing of best practices, and holds the promise of improving transparency.

We are effusive in our praise and thanks for Evelyn Fortier and Lara Quint. Throughout the bill development process, Evelyn and Lara have been thoughtful, professional, welcoming, patient, collaborative, and kind. They have listened to our concerns and

worked hard to craft language that supports the role of the state administering agencies while keeping pressure on the states to strengthen our juvenile justice systems.

Thank you for your leadership, for your commitment to improving the outcomes for youth, and for supporting state efforts to prevent and reduce juvenile crime.

Sincerely,

JEANNE SMITH,
President.

ACT 4 JUVENILE JUSTICE,
Washington, DC, January 25, 2016.

Hon. CHUCK GRASSLEY,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.
Hon. SHELDON WHITEHOUSE,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRASSLEY AND SENATOR WHITEHOUSE: We, the undersigned—representing more than 200 national, state, and local organizations and hundreds of thousands of constituents—thank you for your leadership in sponsoring S. 1169, the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act of 2015. The bill strengthens and updates the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDPA), which has provided States and localities with federal standards and supports for improving juvenile justice and delinquency prevention practices and contributed to safeguards for youth, families and communities for more than 40 years, and we are grateful that you have made it a priority this Congress.

Despite a continuing decline in youth crime and delinquency, more than 60,000 young people are held in detention centers awaiting trial or confined by the courts in juvenile facilities in the U.S. For these confined youth, and the many more kids at-risk of involvement in the justice system, the JJDPA and programs it supports are critical. Youth who are locked up are separated from their families, and many witness violence. These youth struggle when they get out, trying to complete high school, get jobs, housing, or go to college. Aside from the human toll, the financial costs of maintaining large secure facilities have also made it vital to rethink juvenile justice in every community.

Premised on research-based understandings of juvenile justice and delinquency prevention, S. 1169 reaffirms a national commitment to the rehabilitative purpose of the juvenile justice system; one that supports developmentally appropriate practices that treat as many youth as possible in their communities. It advances important improvements to the JJDPA, its core requirements and its central purposes, provides enhanced safeguards for youth in the system, increases community safety, and ensures progress toward racial fairness.

Since the last JJDPA reauthorization was approved in 2002, there have been many developments in the field of juvenile justice that significantly impact practitioners' work. S. 1169 recognizes and addresses many of these developments in several key ways. Specifically, we are pleased that the bill:

1. Strengthens the Deinstitutionalization of Status Offenders (DSO) core requirement by calling on states to phase-out use of the Valid Court Order Exception that currently causes non-offending youth/status offenders to be locked up.

2. Extends the adult Jail Removal and Sight and Sound Separation core requirements to apply to juveniles held pretrial, whether charged in juvenile or adult court.

3. Gives States and localities clear direction on the Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) protection to plan and implement approaches to ensure fairness and reduce racial and ethnic disparities, and to set measurable objectives for reduction of disparities in the system.

4. Encourages States to eliminate dangerous practices in confinement and to promote adoption of best practices and standards.

5. Recognizes the impact of exposure to violence and trauma on adolescent behavior and development.

6. Encourages investment in community-based alternatives to detention; encourages family engagement in design and delivery of treatment and services; improves screening, diversion, assessment, and treatment for mental health and substance abuse needs; allows for easier transfer of education credits for system-involved youth; and calls for a focus on the particular needs of girls either in the system or at risk of entering the justice system.

7. Promotes fairness by supporting State efforts to expand youth access to counsel and encouraging programs that inform youth of opportunities to seal or expunge juvenile records once they have gotten their lives back on track.

8. Reauthorizes the Juvenile Accountability Block Grant (JABG) program which helps states and localities reduce juvenile offending by providing judges and other juvenile justice officials with a range of age/developmentally-appropriate options to both hold youth accountable and get them back on track so they are less likely to reoffend.

9. Encourages transparency, timeliness, public notice, and communication on the part of OJJDP, its agents and the States.

10. Increases accountability to ensure effective use of resources, to provide greater oversight of grant programs, and to ensure state compliance with federal standards.

Given the significant gains reflected in S. 1169, we are pleased to endorse the bill and look forward to continuing to work with you and your colleagues toward final passage in the 114th Congress.

HUMAN RIGHTS PROJECT FOR GIRLS,
Washington, DC, January 30, 2016.

Hon. CHUCK GRASSLEY,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRASSLEY: Rights4Girls is a human rights organization focused on gender-based violence against young women and girls here in the U.S. We write to thank you for your leadership and commitment to our youth in sponsoring the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act (JJDPA) this Congress. We believe this bill strengthens the existing law by providing critical updates needed to protect youth, families, and communities.

We write to express our support for the JJDPA, which has not been reauthorized in over a decade. Despite an overall decline in youth crime and delinquency, more than 60,000 children are held in detention centers across the United States. We also know that girls are now the fastest growing segment of the juvenile justice population, requiring a more gender-responsive lens when looking at issues related to delinquency and justice-involvement. The research shows that the vast majority of girls in the justice system enter with extensive histories of sexual and physical abuse. Nationally, over 70% of girls in the justice system report histories of sexual and physical violence, but in some states it can range anywhere from 80–93%. For youth and especially young girls in the system or at-risk of involvement in the system, the JJDPA and the improvements in this year's language are vital.

For example, we know that each year more than 1,000 American children are arrested for prostitution, despite not being old enough to consent to sex and despite the existence of federal laws that define them as victims of trafficking. The JJDPA protects child trafficking victims by providing for the screening of youth upon intake for child trafficking and promoting services and alternatives to detention for such victims. The JJDPA will also grant greater protection for pregnant girls behind bars by restricting the use of shackles. Because shackles can greatly increase the likelihood of falls, the JJDPA limits the use of restraints on pregnant girls in the system, which will better protect the life and health of both these young women as well as their unborn children. Another critical way in which the JJDPA will benefit young girls is in phasing out the Valid Court Order (VCO) exception. Since girls are disproportionately charged with and detained for status offenses, closing this loophole would particularly benefit girls—many of whom are arrested and detained using the VCO exception for offenses that are directly correlated with suffering abuse and trauma.

We are grateful for your commitment to this issue and to these youth. As a human rights organization dedicated to protecting the rights of vulnerable young women and girls, we urge the Senate to swiftly take up and pass this critical piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

RIGHTS4GIRLS,
Washington, DC.

FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS,
Washington, DC, September 17, 2015.

TO ALL MEMBERS OF CONGRESS: We are members of Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, a national organization of nearly 5,000 law enforcement leaders nationwide, including chiefs of police, sheriffs, prosecutors, and other law enforcement executives. We write to express our strong support for S. 1169, the bipartisan reauthorization of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDPA). This reauthorization supports proven programs that can prevent youths from engaging in criminal activity or rehabilitate youths starting to offend. These programs provide a critical support for law enforcement and an important investment in those young people. We urge your support for this important reauthorization.

Recidivism remains a serious problem, draining law enforcement resources and damaging public safety. Past studies have shown that if a youth 14 years old or younger becomes a second-time offender, their likelihood of future run-ins with law enforcement spikes to 77 percent; and nationwide, almost half of youths who come before juvenile court (40 percent) will come before the court at least one more time. More needs to be done to ensure that if a youth offends, their first contact with the justice system is also their last.

The bipartisan Senate bill to reauthorize JJDPA would provide federal support for evidence-based programs to combat youth recidivism. Many states have expanded the use of these intervention programs in recent years, and additional support through the JJDPA reauthorization would help states continue this work. Research has shown that effective community-based intervention programs for youths and their families can significantly reduce the likelihood that the youth will get into trouble again. By reasserting family and personal responsibility, and coaching parents and children in the skills they will need to change the youths' behaviors, juvenile offenders are much more likely to engage in more pro-social behavior and avoid future run-ins with the law.

This reauthorization strengthens the evidence-based standard, ensuring the federal investment will go to programs that have demonstrated significant effectiveness. It also encourages continued growth in the

anti-recidivism field by allowing a small portion of funds to go to promising programs, thus encouraging innovation and yielding the greatest results for the community.

A study of one intervention program that works with troubled youth and their families, Functional Family Therapy (FFT), found that youth whose families received FFT coaching were half as likely to be rearrested as those whose families did not. Another study found FFT reduced subsequent out-of-home placements by three quarters. Further, because of the reduced costs associated with crime and contact with the justice system, FFT was found to save the public $27,000 per youth treated. Another intervention that works with the families of serious juvenile offenders, Multisystemic Therapy (MST), found juvenile offenders who had not received MST were 62 percent more likely to be arrested for another offense, and more than twice as likely to be arrested for a violent offense.

One effective, research-based program, Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC) provides specially selected and trained foster parents for seriously troubled youth who cannot stay with their parents. While the youth are in foster care learning crucial skills, their parents are receiving coaching so they can continue the process of directing their children's behavior in more positive ways once the youths return home. In studies, MTFC has been shown to cut juvenile recidivism in half and save the public an average of $9,000 for every juvenile treated. Each of these programs can be used successfully either in place of residential facilities, or as after-care upon leaving a facility.

As these programs help to reduce youth recidivism, there also needs to be a clear sense of the progress being made and areas for continued improvement. We support the National Recidivism Measure within this reauthorization that instructs the Administrator to establish a uniform measure of data collection that states can voluntarily adopt, or not, as another tool to evaluate data on juvenile recidivism. The option of measure some re-offending outcomes in the same way could help states compare results and share best practices.

Law enforcement nationwide remain committed to doing what is necessary to protect public safety, and we know that families and communities have an important role to play. We support the reauthorization of JJDPA, which will provide support for family-centered and community-based interventions, like FFT, MST, and MFTC. This is a strategic investment in public safety. Changing the behavior of a teenager is more likely than changing the behavior of an adult career criminal. This not only benefits those youths, but also law enforcement, the taxpayer, and the community.

We urge Congress to pass the reauthorization of JJDPA that will prioritize evidence-based programs to get troubled kids back on track and improve public safety.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I share in the mutual admiration for the Senator from Iowa, and I appreciate his work on this and many other pieces of legislation. I commit to work with both him and the Senator from Rhode Island to try to resolve this as promptly as possible so we can move this piece of legislation forward.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at the conclusion of my remarks, the Senator from Texas, Mr. CORNYN, be recognized.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, for the 10th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, I went down to the Lower Ninth Ward. President Obama had a little convocation which I was privileged to be part of. I pointed out that his budget that year attempted to take the money that the Federal Government had committed, voted on by a majority of this Chamber, to share in the offshore revenue from Louisiana's coast, Texas's coast, and other Gulf Coast States, with those States.

I said: Mr. President, your budget is taking this money away.

If you look at the devastation wrought by Katrina, it was wrought because we lost our wetlands, which was a loss directly connected to the Federal Government's decision to channel the Mississippi River for the benefit of the rest of the country's economy, and also because the Army Corps of Engineers failed to build—and this has been established in court—levees to the degree that would protect the city of New Orleans.

The President clearly agreed. He said so. He looked at his budget man, Shaun Donovan, and said: Why would this be? We need this State to have that money.

I paraphrase, but it was essentially that. And he committed to taking care of that issue so that our State would not be confronted with the kind of disaster Katrina was. He did not want this to happen again.

On Tuesday the President released his fiscal year 2017 budget. Once more, despite his words, he proposed repealing existing revenue-sharing law, which would deny Louisiana and other Gulf Coast States billions. Louisiana will use this money on critical coastal restoration. By doing this, the President betrays the commitment he made in the Lower Ninth Ward. The President and some in this Chamber want to repeal a law that received bipartisan support, with over 70 Senators supporting the original legislation in 2006. By the way, it is also a law that antipoverty and environmental organizations support.

I hold up a letter from Oxfam. Oxfam America states in this letter that ''America's Gulf Coast is home to some of our nation's highest rates of poverty and greatest risks of natural hazards like sea level rise, hurricanes, flooding and coastal land loss.''

Passage of amendment No. 3192—which, by the way, is my amendment to the Energy bill which brings more equity and revenue sharing—will provide new resources to address the glaring inequities facing these communities.

In response to the President's fiscal year 2016 budget, the Environmental Defense Fund, the National Wildlife Federation, the National Audubon Society, and the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation stated:

> But we are disappointed by the budget's proposed diversion of critically needed and currently dedicated funding for coastal Louisiana and the Mississippi River Delta.
>
> This proposed budget undercuts the Administration's previous commitments to restore critical economic infrastructure and ecosystems in the Mississippi River Delta, where we are losing 16 square miles of critical wetlands every year—a preventable coastal erosion crisis.

So if you are pro-environment and pro helping poverty-stricken communities, how can you not support revenue sharing for coastal States?

Coastal restoration is critical to Louisiana's economy and safety but also to America's economy. Every 38 minutes, Louisiana loses about a football field-sized chunk of land. I am presiding next. At the bottom of the hour, Louisiana will have lost another football field of land. This revenue sharing helps reverse that.

By the way, in Louisiana, our Constitution dedicates 100 percent of revenue from offshore energy production to restoring and rebuilding our coastal wetlands.

A strong coast protects families and businesses against storm surge. It prevents posters like this: ''Why New Orleans Still Isn't Safe,'' and posters like this, and many other posters.

With our coasts so degraded—it puts Louisiana's economy in jeopardy, but it also puts America's energy and trade infrastructure in jeopardy. Most importantly, loss of coastal wetlands puts American lives in jeopardy.

Not only do we need to protect this revenue sharing as promised, but I and others feel we must increase that revenue sharing amount if we are to truly protect our coast.

Royalties to States from energy produced offshore is a fraction of what States that produce energy onshore receive. In fiscal year 2014, the Federal Government received $4.6 billion—with a ''b''—in royalties from energy production in the Gulf of Mexico. The coastal States that provide the energy infrastructure received $3.4 million—with an ''m''—so 0.7 percent of the royalties. In comparison, States that produce energy onshore—and I think the Presiding Officer's State is such—get 50 percent of those royalties. So 0.7; 50 percent—there is no equity there.

I have introduced a bipartisan amendment to the Senate's Energy bill that I hope we can keep working on to provide greater equity and revenue sharing for States that do host offshore energy production.

For decades, energy activities in the Gulf of Mexico have produced billions of barrels of oil and trillions of cubic feet of natural gas. Gulf of Mexico offshore oil production accounts for close to 20 percent of the U.S. crude oil production. Over 45 percent of total petroleum refining capacity in the United States is located along the gulf coast,

as well as 51 percent of total natural gas processing plant capacity. The Gulf States provide the docks, roads, railroads, refineries, and other infrastructure that makes energy production possible to fuel America's economy.

On top of this, our waterways support trade throughout the country. Farm crops produced in the Upper Midwest pass through the lower Mississippi on their way to international markets. We need equitable revenue sharing to continue hosting these industries, ensuring that America continues to have a resilient domestic energy supply and access to the goods and services we need.

If the President is serious about protecting families, our environment, enhancing the resiliency of the gulf coast and improving the Nation's economic infrastructure, he should have worked with Congress to ensure that this never happens again.

I yield to the Senator from Texas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

MENTAL HEALTH AND PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I thank my colleague and friend from Louisiana.

I want to talk a little bit about the work of the Senate Judiciary Committee because we have had a pretty extraordinary week this week in the committee under the leadership of the Senator from Iowa, Mr. GRASSLEY. We have been focusing our efforts on our criminal justice system and how it has been transformed in recent years because instead of just being law-and-order courts, our criminal justice system is dealing with everything from heroin addiction to opioid addiction, mental health challenges, and the recognition that eventually many of the people who are in our prisons will get out of prison, and we have become more focused on what we can do to help those who are willing to accept some help to be better prepared for a life on the outside and not reengage in this turnstile that sometimes our criminal justice system has become, where they get in jail or in prison, they get out, and then they automatically end up back in prison. That is not good for society, for public safety. It is not good for the taxpayer who has to pay for it, and it really is a squandering of human capital when some people—indeed, a significant number of people—are willing to accept that help to deal with their drug or alcohol issues, to learn a skill, and to turn their lives around.

We had a hearing yesterday that I want to make particular note of on a piece of legislation I have introduced called the Mental Health and Safe Communities Act. The Presiding Officer is well familiar with this and is sponsoring some important comprehensive mental health legislation himself, and we are working together to try to find common ground on that, but my legislation is designed specifically to address how do we equip law enforcement with the additional tools they need in order to address the mental illness crises they find in their daily work and in our criminal justice system.

We made good progress, but the fact is I think most of us were shocked to realize our jails and prisons have become the de facto treatment centers for people with mental illness, and actually in most instances it is not diagnosed and not treated. People self-medicate with drugs or alcohol, exacerbating their problems, and we couldn't have had two better witnesses. One was the sheriff, Susan Pamerleau, from Bexar County, TX, San Antonio—my hometown—which has created a model program of how to divert people for treatment and to get them out of the criminal justice system and back on their feet but also to save tax dollars and make sure our jails and our criminal justice system is reserved for people who are bad actors and not just people who are suffering from a mental health crisis.

Today we considered and passed a bill called the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, known as CARA. This is another example of bipartisan work being done in the Senate, which is back doing the people's work with some notable accomplishments.

More importantly, it addresses a real crisis in the country because we have all come to be aware of the fact that America is facing an epidemic of drug addiction, ranging from prescription drug painkillers to heroin, addiction that is ruining lives of Americans and taking the lives of far too many.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 47,000-plus Americans died from drug overdoses in 2014—47,055 Americans died from drug overdoses in 2014, more than any previous year on record and more than double the mortality record from the year 2000. That statistic cries out for further investigation and action. These 47,000-plus drug overdoses represent 150 percent more deaths than those caused by motor vehicles. I know we spend a lot of resources and a lot of time trying to improve safety for people on our highways driving cars down the road, but more than 150 percent more people died from drug overdoses than motor vehicles, and 61 percent of those deaths involved some type of opioid, including heroin.

Fortunately, this legislation begins to establish a strategy to address this problem head-on. The bill would expand prevention and education efforts to help people learn the dangers of becoming addicted to prescription medication and the dangers of even experimenting with a drug as powerful and addictive as heroin.

It would also reauthorize and expand Federal anti-heroin and anti-methamphetamine task forces, which are on the frontlines in the battle against drug trafficking organizations, many of whom operate south of the Texas-Mexico border and import their poison into the United States.

This legislation would also promote treatment and recovery options for those struggling with deadly addictions and provide law enforcement and first responders the tools they need to help reverse overdoses as fast as possible by giving medication, which will actually restore people to health rather than see them die because of their overdoses.

This legislation is another example of the fight that I think we all share in common without regard to partisan affiliation. I want to particularly point out the leadership of the Senator from New Hampshire, Ms. AYOTTE, and the Senator from Ohio, Mr. PORTMAN, together with Senator WHITEHOUSE from Rhode Island, who have been leading the effort to make opioid addiction a national priority.

I hope there are other ways in the future we can consider strengthening the hand of those fighting on the supply side of the drug addiction battle. The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act primarily deals with the demand side, people who have become addicted to prescription drugs and heroin, but as I indicated a few moments ago, we have tons of heroin, methamphetamine, and other drugs being imported into the United States by transnational criminal organizations, otherwise known as cartels.

Earlier this week, the Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, testified before the Armed Services Committee. He touched on how significant this problem is in Latin America and where many of the drugs sold in the United States are grown or manufactured. Director Clapper noted that the production of heroin in Mexico has been increasing steadily in response to U.S. demand. Other illicit substances, such as cocaine, have been increasing in volume as well, but while the production and importation through illicit networks into the United States has been growing, our efforts to interdict or intercept these drugs and keep them from landing on our shores has not been keeping up.

In 2014 alone, drug cartels successfully smuggled more than 250,000 pounds of heroin across our borders at a street value of about $25 billion. We need to have a real conversation about the budget shortfalls that allow this to happen and how it is impeding our ability to choke off the flow of these illicit drugs coming into our country.

We have to do more to resource our military, particularly the Southern Command, which has as its area of responsibility Mexico and to the south, where many of these drugs transit. We need to provide those on the frontlines with the tools they need in order to combat and prevail over these transnational criminal organizations.

Let me give you a quick snapshot. U.S. Southern Command, which I mentioned a moment ago, is our geographic

combatant command that has responsibility for this region, but it has been given zero ships needed to conduct countertrafficking missions in the Caribbean. Why is that?

Unfortunately, the Navy fleet is too small, and the Navy doesn't have enough ships to commit to this region in light of the growing array of national security threats around the globe. Even though the U.S. Coast Guard has stepped up and provided a variety of ships, their fleet also has limitations. It is aging and small.

Other nations have noticed our hands-off approach in this region and around the world. Just like the Middle East, our adversaries, like Russia, are happy to fill the power vacuum left by an America that they see in retreat. At least four times last year Russia had more naval ships in the SOUTHCOM area of responsibility than we did—four times. That is our backyard. What were those Russian ships doing there? Most likely they were conducting intelligence collection missions. This is simply unacceptable and an invitation to even further confrontation and perhaps even conflict. We have obvious national interests in this part of the world, and they include putting a stop to the trafficking of illegal drugs that end up poisoning and often killing Americans.

If we can't even accurately patrol the Caribbean with our own vessels, we clearly have a problem. Let me be clear. We are not asking or talking about multibillion-dollar aircraft carriers or ballistic missile submarines but rather smaller ships that can help launch and recover helicopters to help interdict the growing shipment of drugs in the region.

SOUTHCOM simply needs to be better resourced if it is going to make a dent in the rampant trafficking of drugs that ruin American lives once they reach our border. General Kelly, the former head of the Southern Command, has testified previously that too often his troops have to simply sit and watch the drugs come into the United States across the Caribbean because they simply don't have the resources to interdict it and to stop it.

While the men and women of SOUTHCOM's Joint Interagency Task Force South are doing yeoman's work in this area, they can't fully succeed in taking down the trafficking networks if we don't give them the resources to do so.

As we continue to work hard for the American people, I hope we will take a serious look at the shortfall in our military budgets for countertrafficking missions. We can't just look at the devastation wrought by heroin and prescription opioid abuse in the Northeast without looking at the supply of the very heroin that is killing Americans and addicting them to a miserable existence, one that threatens not only their life and their families but our communities. We need to focus on the supply side and better equip the men and women tasked with the difficult job of protecting our country and our people from these transnational threats.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASSIDY). The Senator from Washington.

TRADE FACILITATION AND TRADE ENFORCEMENT BILL

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I come to the floor this afternoon with my colleague from Maine, Senator COLLINS, to talk about an important national security measure that was passed in today's Customs bill that the conference report included and was voted out of the Senate. The Customs bill included an important provision that was authored by myself and Senator COLLINS in December of last year. Called S. 2430, the Travel Facilitation and Safety Act, it concerned how to improve biometric standards for visa waiver countries. Senator COLLINS and I focused on two things: increasing security standards for those visa waiver countries that we believe should use better biometrics and share that information and data, and improving security at our airports before people reach the United States, so we can know that we have done a thorough background check and evaluation.

Senator COLLINS and I want to stop potential terrorists before they board a plane bound for the United States.

I thank Secretary Jeh Johnson for working with us in December on S. 2430, and also for helping to get this included in the Customs bill.

What we want to do is expand the customs and border security efforts that exist here in the United States and, if you will, expand our border controls to overseas airports. After the Paris attacks reignited a national discussion about what to do to improve U.S. security, we wanted to make sure that we do something specifically for those individuals traveling from 38 visa waiver countries. These are countries for whose citizens we do not require a full background check on individuals prior to coming to the United States. I know the Senator from Maine understands commerce. From the perspective of my home State, I know that we appreciate the free flow of people and commerce. It is something we depend on for our economy, but our economy also depends on the security of a travel system to catch bad actors before they reach the shores of the United States.

Currently, manifests are checked by Homeland Security when passengers board a plane bound for the United States. Airline personnel perform some checks as well, but when no U.S. visa is required for travel to the United States, there is less scrutiny on those travelers before they reach U.S. shores, when they go through customs.

This is something we sought to address. With an ever-changing security landscape around the world and the challenges that we face with ISIS, it is very important to continue to upgrade our security regime.

Earlier this week, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper warned that ISIS is likely to try to attack the United States this year, so we must continue to do everything we can to make our country safe. Two incidents highlight the need for expanding the border protection outside the United States of America.

One EU citizen, Mehdi Nemouche, was radicalized through multiple stints in prison. After he was released, he was able to cover his tracks and fly from the EU to Syria. He was able to carry out an attack on a Jewish museum when he came back to Brussels, even though he was on an EU watch list, because he was not placed under ongoing surveillance. Nothing in his travel through airports helped him to be deterred.

German officials notified the French of his appearance in Frankfurt after returning from several weeks in Southeast Asia, having since departed Syria. There was no record of his having traveled to Syria as an EU resident, so he was allowed to come back into Germany and travel through Europe's common border zone. It was from there he entered Belgium unchecked to carry out his attacks.

In addition, one of the masterminds behind the Paris attacks traveled back and forth between Belgium and Syria multiple times, even though he was known to French intelligence. His mobile phone was traced to Greece because of a call he made to an extremist group in Belgium. We don't know exactly how he crossed into Greece from Syria, but we do know that there are holes in the system that terrorists can exploit.

Senator COLLINS and I first started working on the issue of biometric standards and improving our security with visa waiver countries several years ago after the Ressam case, in which an individual from Algeria went to France and from France to Canada, making up a new identity every step of the way. He then made it to the U.S. border in Washington State at Port Angeles and made up a new identity as a Canadian citizen. Thank God a customs and border security agent was smart enough to realize something was amiss, and when they checked the trunk of the car, they found explosives that he had planned to use to blow up LAX.

Today's legislation makes sure our physical border checks are moved to overseas airports so that U.S. law enforcement officials will be there on the ground to check for those people who are slipping through the European regime and may try to board an airplane bound for the United States of America.

It is very important that we continue to strengthen our security regime, and I believe there is more that we can do. Our bill, S. 2430, would have allowed

Customs and Border Protection to expand preclearance operations at targeted airports where we are concerned that the U.S. has a full partnership. If you have traveled outside of the United States of America and then return, you are very well aware of what happens to you at Customs—something like what is depicted in this photo where somebody is asking you for your passport information and background. Many of these operations have continued to be improved, including at Dulles airport. Through a pilot program, they now have the latest and greatest biometric technology that allows for enhanced fingerprint identification, facial recognition pictures, and a variety of things that are making our air travel more secure. We would like to do the same thing at U.S. preclearance operations abroad, and we will keep working to do just that.

We would like to see customs and border operations, which is U.S. law enforcement on the ground, at partnership airports for places such as the United Kingdom, Spain, Norway, Sweden, Belgium, and Turkey, even though it is not a visa waiver country, because it is a transit point between Syria and Europe.

The language in the bill today shows that Congress supports efforts to strengthen the security of our border checks by stretching them overseas to these operations. Again, I appreciate Secretary Johnson's committed insight to constantly improving our border security. He and his agency have been working hard to constantly upgrade our security. He engaged in a conversation with Senator COLLINS and me last December on this legislation, and he has continued to help us get this language into the Customs bill that we just voted on.

I so appreciate Senator COLLINS' focus on this issue for many years as the head of the Homeland Security Committee. She has since turned that responsibility over to Senator JOHNSON, and he has also been focused on these issues. I just want to thank her for working with me on this legislation over several years. In 2010, we tried to improve the biometric standard for visa waiver countries and passed strong legislation out of the Senate. Unfortunately, it was watered down to a lesser standard. Yet it did start the efforts on more aggressive biometric travel infrastructure with our visa waiver partners.

In our bill, S. 2430, we try to set up new biometric pilot projects that will work with our partners overseas and test out the best biometrics we can use. That provision was not included today, but it's something we will keep working on.

We know ISIS has set up operations and is continuing to focus on these visa waiver countries, as well, like the U.K. and Belgium, and we know it is active in Turkey. Giving the best technologies and tools to our partner countries and working on counterintelligence is very important. Having trained U.S. law enforcement officials working with our partner airports is important for U.S. travelers, U.S. businesses, international commerce, and for travel and the airline industry in general. The fact that customs agents can conduct interviews, capture biometrics, and conduct behavioral analysis before travelers come to the United States of America helps improve the security of our system.

Customs and Border Patrol has announced they want to increase the number of these preclearance-screened travelers by a considerable percent by 2024. This will help us protect the ever-growing traveling population—and know that we are doing a better job before people reach the shores of the United States.

We know with a U.S. law enforcement presence overseas that we will increase security. Customs and Border Patrol turned away nearly 10,000 people seeking admission to the United States. That is 29 people per day. I am not saying all of these people were terrorists. Some had expired documents or otherwise inadmissible information, but the key fact is that preclearance worked. It worked in helping to prevent people that should not have been here from coming to the United States.

Existing U.S. Customs and preclearance operations have stopped some suspected terrorists from reaching our country, and that is why we are so glad we passed this legislation and hope that it will be moved throughout the process to the President's desk and quickly signed.

I also want to thank all of our colleagues and the managers of the legislation for including this in the bill. I thank all those who work at our U.S. border and U.S. Customs and Border Protection—like the person at the Washington State border who helped catch the Millennium Bomber, Ahmed Ressam, before he could harm Americans.

I again thank the Senator from Maine for her constant work with me on this issue and for her focus on U.S. security. She and I know this job is not done. She and I would go even further in this effort, but we are at least glad we are expanding our border controls to these overseas airports, making U.S. travel safer and protecting people by not letting people come to the United States who pose a security threat.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, it is a great pleasure to join the Senator from Washington State, Ms. CANTWELL, in discussing some very important provisions that were included in the Customs conference report that the Senate acted on earlier this afternoon.

As Senators representing border States, we are particularly attuned to the security and economic consequences of our border security policies. When it comes to travel, our country's goals should be to let our friends in and to keep our enemies out. As the Senator from Washington so eloquently described, the best way for us to do that is to push out our borders.

Today, approximately 15 percent of travelers boarding an airplane destined for the United States do so only after fully clearing U.S. Customs and immigration inspections at 15 Department of Homeland Security preclearance facilities located in foreign airports. That is a start, but it doesn't go far enough. If we truly want to enhance our security, we need to advance the use of preclearance facilities in other foreign airports, and that is exactly what the Senator from Washington and I would do and what the Senate voted to do today. As Senator CANTWELL has described, it is something that we have long worked on together as a team for many years, and I am very pleased with the progress we can point to today.

Now, let me just briefly explain how preclearance works. Under the preclearance program, we station U.S. law enforcement officials overseas at foreign airports. There they can screen passengers at the point of departure to the United States rather than waiting for the passengers to arrive in the United States. Well, that makes all the sense in the world. It helps to prevent someone—a terrorist—from smuggling a bomb onto a plane. It helps make the no-fly list more effective. It helps Federal law enforcement to do a scan of other terrorist databases to see if a passenger is listed.

In addition, the unique biometric information of each passenger is also collected before the flight departs to our country rather than after it has arrived. Again, it is this concept of pushing back our borders so that more screening is done overseas. We are doing this more with cargo, also, that is shipped on those cargo ships coming into our ports. It makes all the sense in the world. The security feature is particularly important because biometric information is so much more difficult to fake than biographic information such as the name or a date of birth, which can easily, regrettably, be falsified. As a result of the preclearance operations, threats to aviation security and to our country and its people can be identified at the earliest opportunity.

Accelerating the expansion of preclearance operations incurs minimal costs and great benefits. Instead, new preclearance operations overseas are often paid for by the foreign airport authorities in exchange for the opportunity to offer passengers an improved travel experience returning home.

Think of it, I say to my colleagues. When we come back from a long overseas flight and then we see that long line to go through Customs and immigration, wouldn't we rather do that on the front end of the flight when we are fresher and before that long flight

home? This is advantageous for our foreign visitors, as well as increasing our security.

The conference report passed by the Senate today thus represents an important step forward in strengthening our security. It will help to strengthen the security of travel to the United States. It does not represent our entire bill.

The Cantwell-Collins bill also has enhanced information sharing between the United States and Europe regarding the identities of suspected terrorists. If our intelligence community can provide more information to European border authorities and they can use it in the screening of the more than 1 million migrants that are arriving in Europe, we simultaneously improve the security of Europe and of the United States.

The continued threat posed to aviation from terrorist groups like Al Qaeda, like ISIS, and so many others demands that we take immediate steps to improve our security, keeping our borders and our aviation industry safe but, most of all, keeping the American people safe. Today's vote on the Customs bill conference report is a significant step in the right direction.

I want to acknowledge the work of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, which is headed by our colleague Senator RON JOHNSON, as well as the Department of Homeland Security, headed by Secretary Jeh Johnson. Both of them have also worked hard on the preclearance issue.

I hope that our colleagues will join Senator CANTWELL and me as we continue the work we have been doing for the past 5 years on this issue. It is so important. As border State Senators, I think we are particularly sensitive to the fact that we want tourists, we want trade, we want people to come into this country, but we do not want lax border security to allow those who would do us harm to be able to enter this country.

Let me end where I began. Our goal is to keep our enemies out and invite our friends in when it comes to travel. I want to commend Senator CANTWELL for her longstanding leadership on this issue. It has been a pleasure to work with her.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

WASTEFUL SPENDING

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, this week the President unveiled his budget for fiscal year 2017, and it landed here in the Senate with a big thud.

This is not the first time that has happened. In fact, when the President's budget has been brought up for a vote by the 100 Members of the Senate, it has never received more than 1 vote. Both Democrats and Republicans have roundly rejected the President's proposals. Why? Overspending and overtaxation, driving us ever deeper into debt—nobody wants to put their name to that. Yet that is the situation we are in. We are in that situation because of the irresponsible policies that have been laid upon the American people and put into law by this President and by those who have supported him.

Despite numerous efforts over the past several years to address this ever-growing threat to our future, all of these efforts—some of them bipartisan, even—have been rejected by the President. They have failed due to the President's unwillingness to work with the Congress and to put us on a path to fiscal solvency.

Now, I have been a part of that effort now for the last 5 years. All of us throw our hands up in frustration as we watch the debt clock click away ever faster, as we watch the debt rising ever greater.

When the President took office, our national debt—the money we had to pay back—was $10.6 trillion. It is almost impossible to describe what $1 trillion is. Trust me; it is a lot of money. It was $10.6 trillion. Today, it is over $19 trillion—nearly double—just in the term of this President. And what have we done about it? Nothing. Some will say a little bit. We have touched on it a little bit, but it continues to rise.

The Congressional Budget Office, a nonpartisan organization that just does the numbers, has told us that in 10 years the debt will rise to well over $27 trillion. The shocker is the amount of money that has to be spent in paying interest on the debt. Nobody is giving us this money for free. We have to pay interest on it because people want interest, and they want their principal back. The interest on that, plus the mandatory spending—that is, automatic spending over which we have no control here unless we put reforms in place—will consume 99 percent of all the taxes and revenue that is coming in to pay for these programs. So that means we won't be building any roads; we won't be repairing any roads. That means we won't be providing research capabilities to the National Institutes of Health or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That means we won't have money for viable programs in the fields of education, commerce, and transportation. Ninety-nine percent is all revenue consumed by just these two items: the mandatory spending—which we have lost control over and refuse to take reform actions to address—and the interest that has to be paid.

Well, this is unsustainable. It will all come down with a crash. That is why the President's budget this year will be soundly rejected and will only receive one vote, if it gets that.

I am not giving up. I am looking at the major reforms that are necessary, even if we start today, even in an election year. I personally think the public is way ahead of us on this, and they will reward people who stand up and tell them the truth: Folks, we are going broke, and here are the numbers. This isn't political; these are pure numbers that come out of a neutral office. Nevertheless, we will see whether or not those who are running for office will take up the cause.

So I thought: Well, OK, we can't do the big stuff. Can we at least look at waste, fraud, and abuse? Can we not at least encourage my colleagues to take things that have been presented to us—examples of waste, fraud, and abuse by inspectors general, by the Congressional Budget Office, by the Government Accountability Office that looks into all the ways in which we spend money—can't we at least do that? So for the last 33 weeks, starting in the last session and moving into this session, I have been coming to the floor every week to highlight yet another documented example of waste, fraud, and abuse. This is the 33rd time.

Today, this one involves the sum of $25 billion that has not been properly accounted for by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, which is part of the Department of Health and Human Services. I spoke with the Secretary this morning about it. There are 25 recommendations as to how the Department can address this matter, and she is committed to that. I know she has the right intent, and we will see if it can be accomplished.

In this particular case private sector contractors partner with the CMS, or the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, to provide any number of products and services to beneficiaries—those on Medicaid and Medicare. Federal agencies that administer the contracts are required to track the contracts' progress and costs and then close out these accounts once the contracts are finalized. There comes the rub. The regulations give a grace period of up to 20 months in order to close out a contract—to get everything closed down and so forth on these contracts. There is a handful of extensions where maybe it takes a little bit longer to do that. The timeframe or the grace period is intended to prevent improper payments and reduce the agency's financial risk and then close it out.

The inspector general looked at all this and said: Great idea, good regulation—but it is not happening. In December the Health and Human Services inspector general issued a report of the investigation into these terminated contracts. There are over 6,000 contracts that have been completed, but $25 billion in funding is overdue—meaning that the accounts haven't been closed, which makes CMS vulnerable to improper payments.

Sadly, 15 percent of the completed contracts remained overdue for more

than 10 years, even though the regulation states they have to be closed out within 20 months. It shows the ineptness of this bureaucracy. It shows the incompetence of this bureaucracy, the inability of this bureaucracy to manage taxpayers' money in an effective way, to perform functions in an effective and efficient way. It is shocking. It is shocking to have the inspector general come along and find that there are thousands of contracts that have been completed for years—some over 10 years—and they are still open. The cost of that is $25 billion. Even worse, the system that CMS has in place to monitor the contracts hasn't been accessible to the bureau within HHS responsible for closing the contracts. It is just a complicated mess.

Once again, we have situations totaling about $25 billion that could either be used for more necessary functions, returned to the taxpayer or not taken from the taxpayer in the first place. The bottom line is that these have been identified and action needs to be taken.

This Senator continues to add to an ever-growing amount of waste, fraud, and abuse totaling, since we have started, a grand total approaching $156 billion.

Having exposed this, the first thing we ought to be doing before we begin talking about raising taxes, before talking about a program staying in place or not staying in place is going after the waste, fraud, and abuse and stopping this outrageous waste of money that is occurring.

The next time we are back in session, I will be back down here with more. They just keep pouring in. We keep finding these documents, finding this and that. It is unbelievable that we have put ourselves in this situation and the ineffectiveness is out of control. It is no wonder the public no longer trusts us. If we can't get to this, how can we ever get to the reforms necessary to stop us from becoming insolvent?

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

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

EVERY CHILD SUCCEEDS ACT

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, last summer, by a vote of 81 to 17, the Senate passed a bill to fix No Child Left Behind. The House of Representatives had already passed their version. We had a conference report. We sent it to the President, and it was in December that President Obama signed the Every Student Succeed Acts to fix No Child Left Behind. The President not only signed it in a large ceremony attended by parents, teachers, students, Governors, and people from all walks of life, the President said it was a ''Christmas miracle.'' I think he said that for a couple of reasons. One, it was good news. Miracles are usually good news, and this was good news for 50 million children, 3.5 million teachers, and 100,000 public schools. They had waited 8 years for the U.S. Congress to fix the problems with No Child Left Behind. They knew it was difficult to do, and they looked forward to the result that we achieved because we achieved a consensus. There surely was a consensus if this was a law that everybody wanted fixed, but we also had a consensus about how to fix it.

People who don't usually agree in the education world said: We want to keep the tests. We want to keep the 17 federally required, State-designed tests between grades 3 and 12 so we can know how our children are doing, and we want to report that to the parents and the students, but we want to move the responsibility for our children and our schools out of Washington and back to the classroom teachers, back to the local school boards, back to the communities, and back to the Governors.

We heard that from the left, and we heard that from the right. We heard that from the Governors, and we heard that from the teachers unions. Because we all had that consensus, we were able to secure a vote of 81 to 17 here, and, as I often said last year, that is not that easy to do. Everyone is an expert on education. We have all had some education. It is like being in the Louisiana State University football stadium or the University of Tennessee football stadium. The stands are filled with 80,000 or 100,000 people who know exactly what the next play to call is because they have all played a little football and they are usually ready to say what it is. So that is what we had to navigate, but we did. As the President said, it was a Christmas miracle and a gift for the children, the teachers, and the parents who care about our public schools.

The reason I am on the floor today is to put into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD a letter to the Acting Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, John B. King, Jr. The letter is from a number of those in the coalition of educators and others who helped to pass the Every Student Succeeds Act.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the letter I am referring to at the conclusion of my remarks.

This is a letter from people who don't always work together. In fact, in their letter to the Acting Secretary of Education they say: ''Mr. KING, although our organizations do not always agree, we are unified in our belief that ESSA is a historic opportunity to make a world-class 21st century education system. We are dedicated to working together at the national level to facilitate partnership among our members in States and districts to guarantee the success of this new law.''

This letter comes from the National Governors Association, the School Superintendents Association, the National Education Association, and the American Federation of Teachers who all signed this letter. So did the National Conference of State Legislators, the National Association of State Boards of Education, the National School Boards Association, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and the National Parent Teacher Association. I have racked my brain, and I can't think of any significant group in the State or local education world that hasn't signed this letter, except the Council of Chief State School Officers. I have no idea why they have not yet signed it because they were enthusiastically in support of our bill as well, so I hope they are also part of our coalition.

But here is the importance of this coalition. The coalition that sent this letter is the same coalition that supported passage of the bill. They know what I know and what Senator MURRAY of Washington State knows—who was the principal Democratic architect of the bill—that bill isn't worth the paper it is printed on unless it is implemented properly.

This bill makes a dramatic shift in policy for elementary and secondary education. The Wall Street Journal called it the largest devolution of power from Washington to the States in a quarter of a century. They are right about that. Both the left and the right had grown tired of a national school board in Washington, in effect, telling teachers and school boards and Governors and legislators what to do about their children and what to do about their schools. Those decisions are best made by those closest to the children. We don't get any wiser by flying from Nashville to Washington each week. In fact, there are a lot of people back in Nashville who think we lose a little bit of our common sense when we come here. So this is important. This is what we usually don't see from Washington—taking large amounts of power and sending it back home where it belongs. That is what all of these organizations say about the new law. Their letter says:

> ESSA replaces a top-down accountability and testing regime with an inclusive system based on collaborative State and local innovation. For this vision to become a reality, we must work together to closely honor congressional intent. ESSA is clear: Education decision-making now rests with states and districts, and the federal role is to support and inform those decisions.

Let me read that again:

> Education decision-making now rests with states and districts, and the federal role is to support and inform those decisions.

That is what the Governors say. That is what the National Education Association says. That is what the American Federation of Teachers says. That

is what the superintendents, the legislators, the State boards of education, the school boards, the principals, and the PTA say. And that is what the Senate said, that we are moving power out of Washington and back to the classroom, back to the community, back to the State. Our next year is going to be devoted to making sure that gets done. Our committee—of which the distinguished Senator from Louisiana is a member—will be having six hearings this year with the Department of Education and with many of the people whom I just mentioned to make sure the law is being implemented in the way Congress wrote it. The House of Representatives will do the same thing. Our objectives will be the same that are in this letter—working together to ensure a timely, fair transition to the new law; coordinate with Governors, State representatives, et cetera; promote State and local decision-making—in other words, make sure that what happens is what Congress said should happen.

I thank the National Governors Association especially, which took the lead in organizing this coalition. I thank each member of the coalition for organizing this coalition. I will be visiting with the Governors in a week, and I will be suggesting to the Governors—after I thank them for their support for the bill—that every single State organize a coalition just like the coalition represented in this letter.

In Tennessee, I think it would be a good idea if the Governor and the superintendent work together with the NEA, the AFT, the legislators, the State board of education, the school boards, the principals, and the PTA to make sure that in Tennessee, the responsibility for the children, the schools, the standards, and the progress is in the hands of those in whom we decided it ought to be vested. And we, at our level in Congress, will keep the spotlight on what is happening here.

There was not a piece of legislation more important that passed in the Congress last year. We got a lot of good things done in the last year, but nothing was more important than this, nothing was more difficult than this.

I have already mentioned Senator MURRAY, the Senator from Washington State, who was superb in working with both sides of the aisle to help get a result that had evaded the Senate for 8 years. I welcome the support of this coalition for the very same work we will be doing in the Senate. I hope every State will follow the example of these national organizations.

I look forward to a period of innovation and excellence that I am sure will be the result of this new era of accountability, responsibility, and opportunity placed in the hands of those who should have the responsibility for our children and our schools.

I thank the president, and I yield the floor.

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

FEBRUARY 10, 2016.

JOHN B. KING, Jr.,
Acting Secretary, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC.

DEAR ACTING SECRETARY KING: On behalf of states, school districts, educators and parents, we write to express our strong, shared commitment to making the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) a law that puts students first. We invite you to work with us to ensure that communities determine the best methods of educating our nation's children.

Although our organizations do not always agree, we are unified in our belief that ESSA is a historic opportunity to make a world-class 21 century education system. We are dedicated to working together at the national level to facilitate partnership among our members in states and districts to guarantee the success of this new law.

ESSA replaces a top-down accountability and testing regime with an inclusive system based on collaborative state and local innovation. For this vision to become a reality, we must work together to closely honor congressional intent. ESSA is clear: Education decision making now rests with states and districts, and the federal role is to support and inform those decisions.

In the coming months, our coalition—the State and Local ESSA Implementation Network—will: Work together to ensure a timely, fair transition to ES SA; Coordinate ESSA implementation by governors, state superintendents, school boards, state legislators, local superintendents, educators and parents; Promote state, local and school decision-making during implementation; and Collaborate with a broader group of education stakeholders to provide guidance to the federal government on key implementation issues.

In ESSA, Congress recognizes states and schools as well-suited to provide a high-quality education to every child, regardless of their background. We have long prioritized lifting up those students who need help the most and our members stand ready to continue this work.

Our organizations look forward to a cooperative, collaborative and productive relationship with you and your staff throughout the implementation process.

Sincerely,

Scott D. Pattison, Executive Director/CEO, National Governors Association; William T. Pound, Executive Director, National Conference of State Legislatures; Kristen J. Amundson, Executive Director, National Association of State Boards of Education; Daniel A. Domenech, Executive Director, AASA: The School Superintendents Association; JoAnn D. Bartoletti, Executive Director, National Association of Secondary School Principals; Lily Eskelsen Garcia, President, National Education Association; Thomas J. Gentzel, Executive Director, National School Boards Association; Gail Connelly, Executive Director, National Association of Elementary School Principals; Randi Weingarten, President, American Federation of Teachers; Laura M. Bay, President, National PTA.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

COMMENDING STAFF ON TRADE POLICY LEGISLATION

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I wish to take a few minutes to thank our staff who did so much to address what I call the need for a fresh trade policy, for trade done right through the course of this year. Our staff and Senator HATCH's staff have put an enormous amount of sweat equity into this process. I would like to thank some of these terrific and dedicated individuals here this afternoon so that all of the Senate will get a sense of what they did.

Over the course of the last year and a half, with the support of Chairman HATCH, we were able to successfully conclude negotiations to introduce four major trade bills: the trade promotion authority legislation; the trade adjustment assistance legislation; the bill that passed overwhelmingly today, the Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act; and the trade preference program renewal and enhancement program. These staff leaders helped manage those bills in the Finance Committee, on the Senate floor, completed conference committee negotiations, and along the way, they did some awfully good work in terms of assembling a bipartisan coalition for this legislation.

In my view, the last year has arguably been the most productive in terms of trade policy in decades. In my view, these accomplishments are going to make an enormous difference for American workers, American innovators, and our country's ability to compete in these tough global markets, and the stakes are just enormous. There are going to be 1 billion middle-class people in the developing world in 2025. Frankly, they are just crazy about America's goods and services. They like so much what we make, grow, and produce—whether it is airplanes, transportation equipment or our wonderful wine and cheese, our fruit, bicycles. The list just goes on and on.

I am going to be home this weekend for townhall meetings in rural Oregon. I often say that one out of five jobs in Oregon depends on international trade. Trade jobs often pay better than do nontrade jobs. If anybody is interested in a modern economic theory, I say we ought to do more to grow things here, to make things here, to add value to them here, and then ship them somewhere. With those trade-related jobs paying better, that ought to be a strategy that would win bipartisan support.

This work doesn't happen by osmosis. It happens because we have a terrific team of people behind these efforts. I would like to recognize the members of that team who have done so much to make this year successful.

Greta Peisch is our counsel. She put together the Customs components of the trade enforcement package. Her patience and her ability to work with staff, with industry, with all kinds of organizations—leaders representing workers, consumers—Greta Peisch creatively worked to try to address all concerns as responsibly as possible and what an impressive job Ms. Peisch has done.

Elissa Alben has done an extraordinary job in influencing the shape of

the final Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement. She put in an awful lot of important and valuable exercises in negotiating TPA. Of course, these are the rules under which we conduct trade policy, and in my view she did superb work with the TPA amendments in the trade enforcement package.

Andy Heiman is our resident innovation adviser. His contributions have been crucial on Internet tax policy, on the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act, trade preference, creating a new program for Nepal—an area where Senator FEINSTEIN has done an awful lot of good work—or improving the African Growth and Opportunity Act. Of course, that legislation involves several of our colleagues—Senator ISAKSON, Senator COONS, and others—who did very important work on those bills.

Jayme White is with me on the floor. He is our team leader. It would be hard to overstate the excellent work Mr. White has done. Over the last 2 years, his ideas, his patience, his leadership, and his ability to get a sense of where we needed to go for the future have been very valuable. My view is we couldn't have had these exceptional accomplishments in this Congress on the trade issue without Mr. White.

Now, he is not here on the floor, but I want to say a word about Jeff Michels, our chief of staff. Jeff has been with me since I came to the Senate. I think it would be fair to say there is not a person in the Nation's Capitol who better understands the intersection, particularly on technology and innovation, between policy and politics. We would spend the entire afternoon if we were to talk about the good work Jeff Michels has done on these issues, but in particular, on the Internet tax freedom bill, Jeff Michels was there during those first days in 1998. Our former colleague from the other body, Chris Cox, was the sponsor on the Republican side of the aisle. I was the sponsor of the legislation in the Senate. I had pretty much just arrived in the Senate. We were struck by the idea that somebody might be trying to tax Internet access. If you tax Internet access, you are doing something that is extraordinarily regressive. What it means—for example, in the State of Louisiana—if somebody were to try to do this in one of our States that doesn't already have some kind of grandfathered arrangement, taxing Internet access means that you have new regressive taxes in America—taxes that are especially punitive to working families, families who are trying to use the Internet to find out about educational opportunities or employment or maybe they are using it to learn more about dealing with matters associated with raising children. We wouldn't have the Internet tax freedom legislation, in my view, without Jeff Michels.

In addition to the problem with the prospect of taxing Internet access, what we found back then is just out and out discrimination. For example, people would buy a paper snail mail and they wouldn't face a tax. Then they would buy the online edition of the very same publication, and they would face a tax for the online edition. We said: That seems pretty odd, even by Washington, DC standards. Let's ensure that there is, in effect, technological neutrality. So what the Internet tax freedom bill is all about is ensuring that there are no regressive taxes to hit working families hard on Internet access and that we don't reward discrimination against technology and innovation. That work would not have been possible without Jeff Michels.

Importantly, Joshua Sheinkman, who is the Democratic staff director, and Mike Evans, our chief counsel, did masterful work in navigating all the pitfalls and landmines of the Finance Committee, the Senate floor, and the other body in the Congress. Their leadership and their experience has been essential to our success on trade and all other policy matters before the committee.

Before I wrap up, I want to note that none of this happens just coming from one side of the aisle. Chairman HATCH's trade team and senior staff were absolutely essential to the success of the last year and today. Specifically, I commend Everett Eissenstat, Douglas Peterson, Shane Warren, Andrew Rollow, Jay Khosla, Chris Campbell, the staff director of the Finance Committee, and Mark Prater, whom we have always been very proud of because he is an Oregonian. All of his friends still give me a hard time when we are working out in Southeast Portland at the gym. Mark Prater is a truly talented and thoughtful public servant, and we appreciate his leadership.

I would also like to thank a couple of others who have been very helpful in the leadership to work with us. Ayesha Khanna on the Democratic leader's staff and Brendan Dunn have been very helpful in terms of working closely with our team.

Finally, there are a couple of alums. These issues have gone on so long, I believe the Presiding Officer was probably practicing medicine when we started some of these battles. A number of alums have also contributed significantly to the work that was completed today.

Hun Quach and Ayesha Khanna started working on Customs legislation what seems like eons ago under Chairman Baucus, and Alan Treat helped lay the groundwork for the ENFORCE Act. The ENFORCE Act is really landmark legislation—landmark legislation that Alan Treat helped lay the groundwork for.

What we found when we set up a sting operation that demonstrated this is that trade cheats all over the world were basically laundering merchandise. They would get caught violating the trade laws in one jurisdiction, and they would just move to another, slap a label on the box, and off they would go. Alan Treat helped lay the groundwork to get the ENFORCE Act, which I think is going to be a landmark in our ability to get tough with the trade cheats and those who rip off American jobs.

So good policy doesn't just get created out of the ether, and it doesn't get advanced unless you have dedicated staff on both sides of the aisle. It doesn't happen just because a Senator has an election certificate. So I wanted to take just a few minutes this afternoon to make sure that the Senate understood that there were very capable staff on both sides of the aisle who gave up nights and weekends, family time, and a lot of opportunities they could have had to catch a movie or a game or go for a jog. It has led us to be able to introduce four major trade bills. So I thank them. They don't get thanked enough. They probably deserve a lot more praise than I have given them this afternoon, but at least what they have heard from me today is a start.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

TRADE FACILITATION AND TRADE ENFORCEMENT BILL

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I stand before the Senate to talk about legislation that was marked up today in committee that deals with the opiate addiction crisis we have in this country.

Before I do that, and while my colleague is still on the floor, let me congratulate him and Senator HATCH, who is on the floor, for the legislation that was passed today that will now go to the President with regard to trade—and two provisions in particular: one that Senator WYDEN just talked about, which has to do with ensuring that when you get an order against an unfairly traded import from a country because it is dumped or because it is subsidized, that you can't just take that product and shift it to another location to evade the Customs duties. That is called the ENFORCE Act. It is going to make a huge difference. I introduced it with him originally, and it is legislation that will help Ohio steelworkers and steel companies in particular, but it helps everybody who goes through the long process—which is a little better, now thanks to the Level the Playing Field Act—to get an order against a product that is not being sold here fairly, to ensure that some country doesn't just move it to another jurisdiction. I thank Senator WYDEN for his hard work on that issue and ensuring that we can have a more level playing field. If it is level, we can compete and win, but when it is not level, it is impossible for our workers, our farmers, our service providers to be able to get a fair shake. So I thank the Senator from Oregon for that.

The other is the BDS legislation, which didn't get as much play on the

floor today because there were so many other things in this legislation, but there are countries that have boycotts that divest from and put sanctions on Israel in an effort to delegitimize Israel. In this legislation, it provides that if countries want to do business with us and do trade with us, they cannot put in place these discriminatory policies as to Israel. I thank the chairman and ranking member for that as well. This is very important legislation for us to be able to ensure that we can continue to stand by our friends in Israel so they are not treated unfairly, but rather, where trade is involved, we can use our leverage to ensure that they can be able to be treated with the respect that other countries have around the world.

So those are two parts of the bill that I think are extremely important. I thank Senator WYDEN and Senator HATCH, who was on the floor a moment ago, for their hard work on that.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY ACT

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I now turn to the issue of opiate addiction.

I thank my colleagues again on the Judiciary Committee for reporting on legislation today, on a bipartisan basis—in fact, there wasn't a single ''no'' vote. It was reported out on a voice vote. Everybody in committee agreed to it. That doesn't happen very often. The reason it happened this way is that the legislation before the committee called CARA—the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act—is legislation that has been thoughtfully crafted, with Republicans and Democrats alike, really for the past 3 years.

We have had five conferences in Washington, DC, to put together the experts from all over the country. SHELDON WHITEHOUSE and I have lead this effort but also with Senator AYOTTE, Senator KLOBUCHAR, and others. What we have said is that we want to come up with legislation that will make a difference in our States and around the country to deal with what is sadly a growing crisis of people who are abusing prescription drugs, heroin, and this addiction problem is leading to not just a lot more people becoming addicted but people actually overdosing and dying.

In Ohio we lost over 2,400 fellow Ohioans last year to overdose deaths. It is now the No. 1 cause of death in America, accidental deaths in America. Now more people are dying from overdoses than they are from car accidents. So this is an issue that affects every single one of us. It has no ZIP Code. It is in our rural areas, it is in our suburban areas, and it is in the inner city. It is something that affects so many families.

When I am back home talking about this, it is hard for me to find a group I am meeting with that doesn't bring this up. Most recently I was in Ohio this past week talking with women who had been trafficked. They also were women who were given drugs and became addicted, and that dependency led to the kind of sex trafficking that they were involved with and their sense of being coerced and being compelled because of this drug addiction issue. They are now trying to work through that issue, God bless them. They are back with their families. They are back getting their lives back on track, but as they told me, Rob, going through this issue of the addiction and the treatment and the recovery is hard work because the grip of addiction from opioids—meaning prescription drugs and heroin—is very difficult to address.

That is why our legislation is so important, because it provides to State governments, to local governments, to nonprofits the tools they need to be able to have better treatment and better recovery programs, longer term recovery, but it also focuses on prevention and education to try to keep people out of the funnel of addiction. It also helps our law enforcement personnel. It gives them the ability to save lives through Narcan and naloxone, which is the drug that is a miracle drug to be applied when someone has an overdose. It is saving lives right and left in my State of Ohio and around the country.

Finally, our legislation helps to get the prescription drugs off of the bathroom shelves, to ensure that these prescription drugs which have been overprescribed over the years—there are too many prescription drugs out there—aren't going to be taken by somebody, often young people who get them, it gets them involved in this addiction issue, and then often they turn to heroin as a less expensive and more accessible alternative. Our legislation does that, and it also provides for a monitoring program for the prescription drug prescribing, so we know who is getting prescribed what, including across State lines, which is why it is very important to have Federal legislation in this regard. Until we get at this issue of prescription drugs, it is very hard to stop what is a growing crisis in our communities.

Can we turn the tide? Yes. I am absolutely convinced we can because I have seen the treatment programs that work. I have seen the prevention and education programs that work. I started my own anti-drug coalition in my hometown of Cincinnati, OH, about 22 years ago. Using proven techniques, we can make a difference and we have made a difference there. Unfortunately, most communities don't have that kind of a coalition, that kind of effort.

Our legislation will help to provide that. In treatment, most Americans who are suffering from addiction do not have access to treatment. This will provide more needed resources, not just money but also being sure that the money is going to evidence-based treatment and recovery that works, that has been proven to work, so we are not just throwing money at a problem, but we are setting up a framework for success.

The legislation is supported by many groups because it has been carefully crafted. It has been bipartisan or I would say nonpartisan. Over 120 groups have come in from around the country to support this legislation. Today I am happy to report that we have a new endorsement, and this one comes from the National Fraternal Order of Police. The FOP endorsed our legislation today, which is a tremendous boost to us.

Law enforcement around the country has been supportive. The doctors have been supportive. The nurses, first responders, those in recovery themselves, and of course experts from around the country who are involved in providing treatment and providing the prevention that is science-based, evidence-based know that if they have more support from the Federal Government, they can do more. They can leverage that at the local level to make a difference in our communities.

I am glad to hear that this legislation got reported out with such broad bipartisan support today and that everyone said this is good legislation and we need to move it forward because the next step is to get it to the floor of the Senate and to get it passed on the Senate floor and then get it over to the House where there is a companion bill. In other words, there are Democrats and Republicans working together in the House as well on this issue, understanding the urgency of addressing this crisis. They are ready go. If we send them the legislation, I believe that legislation can end up on the President's desk in short order, and we can begin to turn things around and change what is unfortunately a growing problem. It is a spreading problem. We can begin to reverse it, and through prevention and education keep people, particularly young people, from making bad choices and going down this route.

I have gone across the State holding roundtables on this over the year, but in the last month alone, I have met in Columbus, OH, Marion, OH, and in Cleveland, OH, with people who are directly affected. In Cleveland I toured the Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital. This is one of the great children's hospitals in America. There they have lots of specialists, particularly an issue that sadly is one that is affecting more and more of our hospitals; that is, drug-dependent babies. These are babies who are drug-addicted when they are born because their mothers used.

These are consequences of this addiction problem we talked about. They take these babies through withdrawal. These are babies, many of whom are born prematurely and can almost fit in the palm of your hand. These babies, God bless them, are getting the help they need to be able to withdraw from that addiction.

We don't know what the longer term health consequences might be, but we

do know that many of these babies are now starting their life in a much healthier situation because of this special expertise that is being provided, but these hospitals are telling me this is an increasing problem. Every hospital in America needs to have this expertise now to deal with a situation that is hard to imagine, a baby who is born drug-addicted.

I also toured a community alternative sentencing center in Claremont, OH, to see where a court is taking people who have been arrested for possession and instead of throwing them in jail is setting up an alternative program where they can get some of the treatment they need and get some of the life skills they need to get their life back on track. It is an intensive program that is working.

These are programs that are also supported by our legislation. Our legislation also deals with people who are in prison who have addiction problems, to be able to get them treatment, so when they get out of prison they don't fall back into a life of crime to support their addiction problem.

Most recently I was in Columbus, OH. I met with four women who were recovering addicts who had this addiction foisted upon them as part of human trafficking, sex trafficking. Their traffickers got them addicted to make them dependent. In one case, the woman told me she wasn't paid anything. She was just paid in terms of the drugs. Her trafficker kept her dependent because of that. These women were in a program where they had been given the opportunity to get into treatment, given the opportunity to be able to get their lives back together, but sadly a lot of people do not have that opportunity, not having access to treatment. Our legislation will be very important to do that.

The bill targets the very issues we know have to be addressed—keeping people away from these substances in the first place. Then, once they are addicted, if they become addicted, get them the treatment they need to begin to turn their lives around. For that longer term recovery, which we think is absolutely essential from the experience and the good science that is out there for successful programs, it is important that we have, in some cases, medication treatment as well that supports that.

It also says that we have to help our law enforcement more. I think that is one reason the Fraternal Order of Police, the national sheriffs' organizations, and others have supported this legislation with such wonderful statements, as I just talked about earlier, as we got today from the FOP.

This is an issue that will continue to be a serious problem in all of our communities unless we take these kinds of actions at the Federal level, the State level, and the local level. We have to work as a team with nonprofits, with people who are in the trenches dealing with this. If we do not, we will continue to see families torn apart. We will continue to see communities that are devastated, including by the crimes and other consequences of this, and we will continue to see Americans who are not able to fulfill their God-given abilities and destinies because of this drug addiction problem.

Today I am told that others who support this legislation would like to spend more money in addition to the $80 million that this program provides every year going forward. This is a well-crafted, well-thought-out framework of how to spend that money more effectively to be able to address the problem. I am for spending more money. If there are people who would like to spend more money on this issue of opiate addiction, I am for that. I think it is enough of a crisis that we should be fending more funds on it.

I will say something else. Let's get this bill moving. Let's get this bill to the floor. Let's get this bill passed. Let's get the House to pass the companion legislation. Let's get it to the President's desk. This is an urgent problem. We cannot wait. If people are going to offer other ideas, including more funding and funding that is an emergency, rather than in a way that is paid for, that may make it more difficult to move this bill forward because some people in this Chamber will not support that.

We now have a consensus on this bill. Let's not play politics with this bill and stop this bill. Let's move this bill forward. Right now we have on the floor of the Senate an energy bill. It includes energy efficiency provisions I have worked on for years. Yet it is being stopped by other issues, important issues. Around here we too often refuse to move forward on legislation where there is a consensus, where we know it is the right thing to do, because other issues come up, and sometimes it is other issues that are very important issues but ones that end up stopping the legislation and not allowing us to make progress for the people we represent.

I do support more funding. I support funding in this legislation. Over and above that, I support additional funding. The President's budget has a request for additional funding. I talked about that today in a hearing we had. I told the Secretary of Health and Human Services I would support some of these programs that have additional funding. Let's be sure it is well-spent, as it is in this legislation. Let's be sure we are not throwing money at a problem. Let's make sure we are making a difference in the lives of the people we represent, and let's be sure it doesn't derail this effort to get this legislation passed.

We are on a track now. It is bipartisan. It is bicameral. It has the President's general support. He hasn't specifically said he will endorse this bill, but his representatives—including the Secretary of Health and Human Services—today were very supportive of the direction we are moving.

It was reported out of a committee today in a total bipartisan way. It was unanimous. Again, that doesn't happen often around here. Let's address this issue now. Let's not sit back and play politics. Let's take the politics out of this, as has been the case for the last few years.

SHELDON WHITEHOUSE has been my partner in this. SHELDON WHITEHOUSE and I don't agree on a lot of issues. He is more liberal. I am more conservative on some issues. We agree on this issue because we know the way it affects the communities we represent, the families we represent, and the people we represent. Let's move forward or this legislation. Let's get it to the floor. Let's get a vote. Let's start turning the tide. Let's start changing the dynamic on the ground where instead of us having this creeping problem of addiction and all of its horrible consequences that we begin to allow people to get their lives back together, to give them the opportunity to get their families back together, to be able to achieve the dreams they have for themselves and their families.

Mr. President, I yield back my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I compliment the distinguished Senator from Ohio on his remarks here today. He is one of the pillars of this Senate. He is one of the finest men I have served with in the whole time I have been in the U.S. Senate. He is on top of everything. His experiences outside of the Senate have been magnificent. Everybody, I think, has a very high opinion of him. Those who might express otherwise, deep down do. They know what a fine man he is. He is absolutely right on this issue. We need to do many things about it.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, having said that, during the 2008 Presidential campaign, one of the candidates criticized the outgoing President for adding $4 trillion to the national debt. He called that increase not only irresponsible but even ''unpatriotic.'' Barack Obama was that candidate. He won the election and took office with the Government Accountability Office warning the long-term fiscal outlook is ''unsustainable.''

The national debt on inauguration day 2009 was $10.6 trillion, and it stands at $19 trillion today. The national debt for American households has risen from $93,000 to nearly $160,000 since President Obama took office.

If a $4 trillion increase is irresponsible and unpatriotic, what words describe an increase that is more than twice as large? The national debt crisis has been around for a long time, but we have never been in a more serious, perilous situation than we are today. One way to grasp the magnitude of the national debt is to compare it to the size of the economy, or the gross domestic

product. In other words, we can compare what we owe to our ability to pay.

When President Obama took office, the national debt was 82 percent of GDP. It is now 105 percent of GDP today, by far the largest increase in American history during a President's first 7 years. Economists tell us that the national debt above 90 percent of GDP for a sustained period of time will lead to substantially slower economic growth and higher interest rates.

The United States is now in the longest period in history with a national debt above that toxic 90-percent level. Not surprisingly, since the recession ended in June 2009, the national debt has grown more than twice as fast, and GDP has grown less than half as fast as during the same period after previous recessions. Some economists prefer to evaluate the national debt as a percentage of tax revenue; that is, comparing what we owe to what we earn. The national debt has risen from approximately 350 percent of Federal revenue when President Obama took office to 600 percent of Federal revenue today. But even that does not tell the whole story.

During the last several years of skyrocketing national debt, the interest rate on that debt has been nearly zero. If interest rates had been at the historical average, annual interest costs would be more than twice what they are today and on their way to consuming more than half of all Federal revenue. And now interest rates are starting to creep up. The Concord Coalition and the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget both anticipate that over the next decade interest payments on the national debt alone will approach $1 trillion per year. That is interest against the national debt. By any of these measures, the national debt crisis is not only serious, it is worse than ever and much worse than when this President took office.

The Congressional Budget Office has a new budget, an economic outlook that projects the national debt rising by nearly $10 trillion over the next decade. Looking beyond the next decade, CBO says that under current law, the national debt will explode to more than 150 percent of GDP, the highest level in American history. CBO also says that interest on the national debt is one of the engines driving the debt even higher. A national debt of this magnitude undercuts the economic growth necessary to minimize borrowing to fund the government. Rising interest costs for such a monstrous debt add to the debt on which more interest must then be paid.

In this new report, CBO again outlined some of the serious negative consequences of this national debt for the budget and the Nation. In addition to substantially higher interest payments, these include lower productivity and wages, less flexibility by lawmakers to respond to fiscal challenges, and an increased likelihood of a fiscal crisis. In addition to those problems, former Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Michael Mullen and experts from the Heritage Foundation to the Brookings Institution warned that the national debt crisis is a serious threat to national security. It is no wonder that more than two-thirds of Americans say that their concern over the national debt is growing, and more than three-quarters of Americans say that the national debt should be among Congress's top three priorities.

The national debt was once a top priority. In fact, America's Founders were so determined to avoid debt that their commitment to fiscal balance was often called our unwritten fiscal constitution. President George Washington, for example, told Congress that the regular redemption of the public debt was the most urgent fiscal priority. That commitment is long gone. The Federal budget has been balanced in only a dozen of the last 80 years, and as I said earlier, we are in the longest period of American history with a debt above 90 percent of the GDP.

As its willpower failed, Congress has also tried to address the debt crisis by legislation. The first bill requiring a balanced budget was introduced in 1934, when the national debt was 40 percent of GDP, compared to today. Fifty years later, Congress enacted the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act. Since then, we have enacted multiple budget control acts and budget enforcement acts as the national debt climbed from 42 percent of GDP in 1985 to more than 100 percent of GDP today.

Good intentions will not balance the Nation's checkbook. Statutes that Congress can change or ignore will not keep our fiscal house in order. Neither willpower nor legislation will tackle this national debt crisis. Pretending otherwise is the fiscal equivalent of fiddling while Rome burns. In no other way, except by an amendment to the Constitution, can Congress be compelled to balance its budget in peacetime. Let me say that again. In no other way, except by an amendment to the Constitution, can Congress be compelled to balance its budget in peacetime. While I claim that as my firm conviction, I cannot claim authorship of those words. The Appropriations Committee expressed that principle in 1947 about a balanced budget amendment introduced by Senator Millard Tydings, a Democrat from Maryland. Everything that has happened since then has proved the truth of those words.

Year after year, decade after decade, we slide deeper in debt until today our economy is being suffocated. One definition of insanity is doing the same thing but expecting different results. If we keep doing what we have done, we will get more of what we have been getting. This would be a very different country, a freer and more productive country, if Congress had already proposed the only solution that exists—a constitutional amendment that requires fiscal responsibility. The first balanced budget amendment was introduced in the House in 1936.

I introduced my first balanced budget amendment in June of 1979 during my first term in the U.S. Senate. Adjusted for inflation, the national debt then was $2.6 trillion, or 32 percent of GDP. That share of GDP doubled by 1997, when the Senate came within one vote—one solitary vote—of passing a balanced budget amendment that I introduced. It rose to 95 percent when the Senate last voted on a balanced budget amendment in 2011 and is 105 percent of GDP today.

Since this crisis is already so grave and getting worse, and since the only way to tackle it is through the Constitution, we should propose a balanced budget amendment and let the American people decide to take this step. Congress, after all, cannot amend the Constitution. A requirement that Congress keep its fiscal house in order does not become part of the Constitution until it is approved by three-quarters of the States, or 38 States.

Article V of the Constitution also allows the States to apply for a convention to propose constitutional amendments. Concerned citizens have been working since the mid-1970s to reach the two-thirds threshold for calling such a convention to propose a balanced budget amendment. Since Congress has never called an article V convention, many questions remain unresolved, and theories remain untested regarding that method of proposing an amendment. I can assure my colleagues, however, that Congress's continued failure to propose a balanced budget amendment guarantees that our fellow citizens will continue working to force that course upon us.

I looked at dozens of polls conducted by major polling firms and national news organizations since I was first elected to the Senate. Three-quarters of Americans supported a balanced budget amendment in 1976, and three-quarters support it now. They believe even more strongly today what the Appropriations Committee said in 1947—that in no other way, except by a constitutional amendment, can Congress be compelled to balance its budget in peacetime. It will do no good to pretend that the national debt is not a fiscal Tsunami. It is. It will do no good to pretend that this ocean of debt is not already taking a serious toll on our country. It is. It will do no good to repeat the mantra that Congress can tackle the national debt crisis by itself. No one believes that anymore—not anyone. That emperor has no clothes. Perhaps some of my colleagues believe that all the polls over the last 40 years are wrong, that the American people are content watching the national debt swallow the economy.

Perhaps our fellow citizens are actually OK with slower economic growth, a rising threat to national security, the greater likelihood of a fiscal crisis, and an unsustainable path to fiscal disaster. If that is what the American

people actually believe, then they will decline to ratify a balanced budget amendment. So why not give it a chance?

Perhaps some of my colleagues believe that the Congressional Budget Office is wrong in its disturbing projections and dire warnings or that the Government Accountability Office is mistaken and the fiscal path we are on is sustainable after all or that the Concord Coalition and the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget are wrong about how national debt interest payments will continue to grow and add to the debt or that economists are wrong to warn about the impact of a sustained national debt of this magnitude. If my colleagues are convinced that everyone else is wrong and that our fiscal future is just fine and hunky-dory after all, then I still urge them to let the American decide. The Constitution belongs to the American people—not to the people here, although we are part of the American people.

President Obama once said that a $4 trillion increase in the national debt is irresponsible and unpatriotic. This week he submitted a budget for fiscal year 2017 that reflects the same recycled misguided policies that have both added to the debt and have failed in Congress. On all of the budgets he submitted, there was only one vote for his budget. There was a bipartisan rejection in each case.

President Obama wants to expand a broken Medicaid system rather than reform it. He wants to impose higher taxes to prop up more government spending. He continues to turn a blind eye to the Nation's unsustainable entitlement programs that are propelling the national debt to unprecedented levels.

We all know the facts and the dangers about the national debt crisis. We all know that the American people are, if anything, more alarmed about this crisis than we are—certainly with the exception of myself. The only reason that Members of Congress have refused to give our fellow citizens a choice about adding a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution is that they know what that choice will be. I say with respect, but as strongly as I can, that this is not a legitimate basis for refusing to propose a balanced budget amendment. In our system of government, as Founder James Wilson once put it, the people are the masters of government. Only they have authority to set the rules for government. This choice must be theirs, not ours.

Here is the heart of the matter. First, the national debt crisis poses a significant and growing threat to the economic and national security of this country. In fact, we have never been in such an extended, perilous period than we are right now. Second, Congress has tried and failed to address this crisis by either willpower or legislation and will do so only if the Constitution requires it. Third, the decision of whether to use the Constitution to require fiscal responsibility belongs to the American people, not to Congress. A balanced budget amendment would allow the American people to make that choice.

What are we afraid of? Are we afraid that we can't keep going on spending like this or that the American people might pass a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution? Yes, I think we are afraid of that, but we shouldn't be. We should be glad to have it in the Constitution itself. We could either take the responsibility we were elected for and propose a balanced budget amendment or the American people may do it for us.

The key to me is to pass a balanced budget constitutional amendment. I filed it, and it has a great number. It was filed right after we got into the Congress. It is an amendment that literally every one of us should support.

Let's get real about this national debt. Let's get real about helping our American people survive. Let's get real about having the greatest Nation on Earth continue to fight for liberty and freedom and independence and religious rights all over the world and all over this country. Let's get real about the future of our young people. Let's get real about being in the U.S. Senate and having an opportunity to form a real, solid approach to this, which would make all the difference in the world.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

AMBASSADOR NOMINATIONS

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I am here today to speak about U.S. policy toward Iran.

I wish to mention first that we are continuing to work on the issue of State Department nominees. Of course, my focus has been on the Swedish and Norwegian Ambassadors from our country to those two countries. We have now gone for 867 days without a confirmed ambassador to Norway and 476 days since the President nominated an ambassador for Sweden.

I think we have made it very clear that nearly every Member in this Chamber does not have an issue with having a vote or even an issue with the qualifications of these nominees who went through the Foreign Relations Committee without objection. Senator COTTON himself said: I believe both nominees are qualified. We have significant interest in Scandinavia. My hope is that both nominees receive a vote in the Senate sooner rather than later.

As we know, Senator CRUZ has had various issues not related to the nominees or our two strong allies, Norway and Sweden. We are hoping we can find a way forward so that he lifts his hold and we can continue to move forward with the 11th and 12th biggest investors in the United States of America, those countries, Norway and Sweden, being able to have Ambassadors like the rest of Europe. Every other major Nation has an ambassador.

I wish to thank Senator MCCONNELL and Senator REID and Senator CORKER and Senator CARDIN for their work on this issue. I am hoping to get this done as soon as possible.

U.S. POLICY TOWARD IRAN

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, as I mentioned, I rise today to discuss U.S. policy toward Iran—an issue that is critical to our national security and the security of our allies. When we talk about our policy toward Iran, we must do so with our eyes wide open. The Iranian regime is one of the world's leading State sponsors of terrorism. It threatens Israel, it destabilizes the region, and it abuses human rights. That is why I have cosponsored the Iran Policy Oversight Act, a bill that allows Congress to move quickly to impose economic sanctions against Iran's terrorist activity. It expands military aid to Israel, and it ensures that agencies charged with monitoring Iran have the resources they need.

Preventing Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon is one of the most important objectives of our national security policy. I have strongly advocated for and supported the economic sanctions that have brought Iran to the negotiating table over the last few years. Those sanctions resulted in a nuclear nonproliferation agreement between Iran and the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Russia, and China.

The Iran nuclear agreement, as we have talked about many times on this floor—including my own words—is an imperfect but necessary tool to prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon. In order for the agreement to work, of course, we must remember that simply trusting Iran to do the right thing is not an option. We must be vigilant in our monitoring and in our verification.

In my view, our national security strategy must focus on three things. This is overall: Protecting our citizens, eliminating threats to our national security, and never losing sight of our core American values. It is through this lens that we must approach Iran.

First of all, we must do all we can to keep our own citizens safe. We can't be naive. We cannot trust in the Iranian regime—and the Iranian regime continues to prove that is the case. Iran repeatedly violated the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1929 by testing ballistic missiles, most recently on October 10 and November 21 of 2015. The very next month, in December of 2015, Iran conducted a live fire exercise using unguided rockets

near a U.S. aircraft carrier in international waters. Make no mistake, this was an intentional provocation.

Just last month Iran announced it flew a surveillance drone over a U.S. aircraft carrier. Afterwards, an Iranian Navy commander went on State TV and said the drone strike was a ''sign of bravery'' that ''allowed our men to go so close to the warship and shoot such beautiful and accurate footage of the combat units of the foreign forces.''

Iran flying military drones over our aircraft carriers means that we must respond.

We also have to keep in mind that Iran isn't just provoking our military. Iran also targets innocent civilians by funding terrorism around the world. Iran is the world's leading State sponsor of terrorism. Iran funds Hezbollah, a terrorist group that wreaks havoc in the Middle East. Recently Hezbollah was accused of recruiting five Palestinian men to attack Israelis using explosives. Luckily, the Israeli defense forces were able to stop the attack before anyone was hurt.

Iran also continues to defend Bashir al-Assad and attack U.S.-backed rebel forces in Syria. The United Nations estimates that Iran spends $6 billion a year to fund Assad's government. What is Assad doing with that money? He buys barrel bombs to level entire Syrian towns. He pays for blockades to prevent food, medicine, and other critical supplies from reaching his own people. He is starving entire villages in northern Syria where children are starving and thousands of people have been forced to survive on grass because Assad and troops from Hezbollah will not let food and medicine get to them.

Iran is funding a government that is responsible for a civil war that has killed 250,000 people and displaced 11 million more. Again, we need to be at the top of our game when it comes to sanctions. The worst would be for a country that behaves in this manner and that disrespects international human rights to have access to a nuclear weapon, which is why many of us in this Chamber did support the agreement. While imperfect, we did support the Iranian nuclear agreement.

Our national security strategy also must focus on eliminating threats. We must demonstrate that the United States has the capability to stand up to Iran when it funds terror and seeks to destabilize the world.

Given Iran's history, we can anticipate that it will test the boundaries of international agreements, and we have to be ready to respond when it does so. That is why we must hold Iran accountable every step of the way. Imposing harsh sanctions against those responsible for Iran's ballistic missile program is a good start.

Iran's ballistic missile program is a threat to regional and global security. Any person or business involved in helping Iran obtain illicit weapons should be banned from doing business with the United States, have their assets and financial operations immediately frozen, and have their travel restricted. Minimizing the threat Iran poses also means working to ensure that the money flowing into Iran now that nuclear sanctions are lifted is not used to further destabilize the region and spread terrorism. We must monitor the flow of terrorist financing and use every tool available to punish bad actors who seek to do harm.

It is also known that Iran has a terrible human rights record. In fact, Iranian Americans and Iranians around the world will be the first people to tell you that 35 years of religious dictatorship has been a human rights nightmare for the people of Iran.

Recently, thousands of Iranians took to the streets of Paris to join a mass demonstration protesting President Ruhani's visit to Paris. Those protestors are demonstrating against things like Iran's policy to permit girls as young as 9 to boys as young as 15 to be sentenced to death. They protested Iran's continuing suppression of journalists and freedom of speech.

Beyond imprisoning journalists—and we do applaud the recent release of the Washington Post journalist. I was so honored to be at the opening recently at the Washington Post facility where he appeared and spoke. We learned how he was taken from his home in Iran at gunpoint, blindfolded, handcuffed, and thrown into solitary confinement for 18 months until recently his release was negotiated. Beyond imprisoning journalists, Iran arbitrarily jails human rights activists, and it oppresses religious minorities including Christians, Jews, and Sunni Muslims.

America has a long history of being an arbiter of peace and security around the world. In order to continue this legacy, we must hold Iran accountable for its human rights violations.

I sponsored the Iran Policy Oversight Act because it is a bill that does three important things to hold Iran accountable. First, it allows Congress to more quickly impose economic sanctions against Iran's terrorist activities. This is really important because the best way to stop terrorism is to cut off the financing for it. We should be doing everything in our power to better track terrorist financing so that we can stop the flow of money that funds suicide bombers and illicit weapons.

The United States and the international community have maintained sanctions against Iran for decades. I have voted to increase sanctions on Iran's oil imports and strengthen sanctions against human rights violators in Iran. Sanctions are a powerful tool, and Congress should exercise its authority to implement them as fast as possible against people who fund international terrorism.

Second, the bill also expands military aid to Israel. The United States plays a critical role in supporting Israel's defense. The United States and Israel have enjoyed a friendship based on values rooted in democracy, freedom, and mutual strategic goals. Protecting Israel—our most reliable ally in the Middle East, the beacon of democracy—against a hostile Iran is essential.

Third, the bill ensures that agencies charged with monitoring Iran have the resources they need. We cannot take Iran's word for it that they are obeying the rules. We need strong independent verification and monitoring. The United States and our European partners must fulfill our obligation to fund the international agencies responsible for that monitoring.

In order to protect our citizens, Congress must exercise its constitutional authority to enact legislation that expands oversight of the Iran nuclear agreement. We must also continue to work with the P5+1 to ensure that the agreement is strictly enforced. Iran must understand that we will not hesitate to snap back sanctions if it fails to comply with the rules. Sanctions were effective at getting Iran to the table, and they will continue to be a tool that allows the United States and our allies to minimize the threat posed by Iran.

Those of us who supported the Iran nuclear agreement have a special responsibility to ensure that it works. In fact, this whole Senate has a responsibility, regardless of whether Members supported it or not. It is in the best interest of our country. We cannot shirk from our duties and we must be vigilant. We owe it to the American people, to Israel, and to our allies. Our mission here is clear: We must protect our own citizens by exercising our authority to enact strong legislation to ensure that Iran does not cheat on its international commitments. Because we know from experience that Iran will test the international community, we must be ready to respond when it does.

Iran must know that if it violates the rules, the response will be certain, swift, and severe. We must also minimize the threat Iran poses to our citizens and the world by doing everything in our power to stop Iran from funding the world's terrorists.

Last year the world was shaken by a series of successful terrorist attacks on innocent civilians. The attacks in Paris, Lebanon, Mali, and San Bernardino, right here in the United States, remind us that the victims of these massacres will never be limited to one nationality or one ethnicity or one religion.

It is critical that we take additional steps to stop countries like Iran from funding terrorism and destabilizing the world. Stopping Iran's support of terrorism protects us here at home, but it also helps millions of refugees fleeing Syria, the children that are starving in cities like Madaya, and the families fleeing mortar fire in Yemen. Our values of justice, democracy, and freedom for all demand nothing less.

Iran's recent behavior suggests that the United States needs to have the ability to snap back as soon as possible. We have to have the ability to

impose sanctions. That is why I am supporting this bill. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

VETERANS CHOICE PROGRAM

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the Veterans Choice Program and the challenges some of Indiana's veterans are experiencing with its implementation.

Our veterans have served our country and have sacrificed for our country every day. Some come home bearing physical or mental wounds. Some bear both. Serving also means being away from their families, who also sacrifice for us. Veterans have missed their sons' or daughters' first words, first steps, birthdays, little league games, holidays, and many other life milestones that we all treasure.

When our veterans first come home, they are met with the many challenges of settling back into everyday life, which can include stress from finances to reconnecting with their wife or husband and sons and daughters. Some, as mentioned, must deal with the physical and mental wounds of war.

All of our vets should be able to have peace of mind that they will be able to have a good-paying job and access to quality health care. Our veterans should not be burdened with wondering if or when they will be able to schedule a medical appointment.

While we can never fully repay our veterans or their families for their service and sacrifice, our country has a sacred responsibility to honor our veterans and to take care of them. Serving our veterans and making sure they receive the best care possible, whether for physical ailments or for mental health challenges, is something I take very seriously. We are committed to ensuring each and every one of them has access to quality care and the full range of benefits they have earned by their service.

Following gross mismanagement and misconduct at several VA medical centers nationally, in 2014 Congress passed the bipartisan Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act that was signed into law. The law established the Veterans Choice Program to help address the inadequate access to care that our vets were facing. The program is designed to enable veterans who can't see a VA doctor within 30 days or who live more than 40 miles from a VA facility to access a local non-VA provider using a Veterans Choice Card.

Unfortunately, there are repeated examples of the Veterans Choice Program coming up short. It is our responsibility as legislators to review, follow up, and ask questions about this program we helped to put in place to make sure it is working correctly and efficiently.

I stand here today to state that some Indiana veterans are experiencing problems with the Veterans Choice Program, and we must work to address these issues and to solve them.

There are two third-party vendors contracted to help the VA implement the Veterans Choice Program around the country and in Indiana—Health Net Federal Services, which covers most of our State, and TriWest, which extends into parts of southern Indiana. Instead of making Veterans Choice Program appointments directly with local hospitals, veterans must use Health Net Federal Services or TriWest. In recent weeks, our office has heard from Indiana veterans who are experiencing long wait times of up to 90 minutes on the phone and disconnected calls when they contact Health Net Federal Services.

I share the stories of some of these veterans and the struggles they have dealt with. Vietnam vet Daniel Vice from Marion, IN, had eye surgery through the Veterans Choice Program and had been told by Health Net that his postoperation appointments would also be covered. When he was at the eye doctor for his follow-up appointment, he learned that Health Net Federal Services had not sent over his paperwork. This meant that instead of being covered by the Veterans Choice Program, Dan would have to pay out of his own pocket. Dan contacted our office while at the doctor seeking help. Our case manager called Health Net only to be put on hold for 21 minutes before speaking to a supervisor. The company could not provide immediate answers but called back our staff a few hours later and said that Dan's paperwork had not been approved. We continue to work with Dan to get answers to solve this problem.

Veteran Robert Trowbridge, from South Bend, had surgery on his ankle almost 6 months ago and has yet to be scheduled for his post-op physical therapy. He called Health Net many times and was put on hold for 30 to 40 minutes each time he called. When he was able to reach a rep, he was told repeatedly that his paperwork was sent to be approved, only to find out 4 months later that there was a problem. He was later informed that his Social Security number was not attached to his file. Frustrated, Robert contacted our office for assistance.

Our staff experienced firsthand the frustrations and inadequate customer service that some of our vets like Robert face. One of our case managers called Health Net and it took 23 minutes into the conversation with a representative before the customer service rep even asked for the veteran's name. After calls with a representative, then a supervisor, and then a manager from Health Net Federal Services, we were finally able to work with the manager to resolve the issue for Robert.

What our veterans are going through to schedule appointments and access their benefits through the Veterans Choice Program is completely unacceptable. Our office continues to work to assist vets who experience difficulties.

I have called on Health Net Federal Services to get answers. We need to get to the bottom of this problem, and we need to ensure that all Hoosier veterans and all American veterans and their families receive the timely and quality care they deserve.

I will work nonstop to end this problem, and our office will continue to work nonstop to make sure we get to the bottom of the problems that our Hoosier veterans are having with the Veterans Choice Program. They gave too much to this country to be treated this way. We will solve these problems for Hoosier veterans and for every American veteran.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

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

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

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise today to join the American people in celebrating Black History Month, but it should be noted that the immeasurable role African Americans have had in making the Nation the strong Nation that it is today could not be fully recognized in 1 short month. Black history is American history.

This February we highlight the titans of African-American history: Marylanders such as Harriet Ross Tubman, Frederick Douglass, and Thurgood Marshall; icons, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Dr. Dorothy Height; and contemporary heroes, such as JOHN LEWIS and Mae Jemison.

We all celebrate the countless men and women whose names will never grace the history books or newspapers, those who fought each day for freedom and equality, those who pushed the limits of innovation, and those who endured and overcame hardships over the centuries.

As we celebrate, the struggle to ensure all Americans under the law are treated equally under the law rages on. I believe that as much as Black History Month is about reflecting on a rich past, it is also a time for all Americans to contemplate how to create a better future.

It is not enough simply to recognize the great contributions that African Americans have made, to honor those who have come before us; we must use Black History Month as a springboard to bring about positive change in America. I have a number of legislative priorities that relate directly to Black History Month and to building a better future.

I take pride in being from Baltimore for many years reasons. I know all my colleagues are familiar with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the NAACP for short. The NAACP celebrates its 107th anniversary on the 12th of month. The NAACP is headquartered in Baltimore City. The model of the NAACP is ''One Nation Working Together, For Justice and Equality Everywhere.'' The motto is fitting because for the last 107 years, this is exactly what the NAACP and its more than half a million members have done. I have introduced legislation to honor the legacy of the civil rights champion, executive director of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Solicitor General, Supreme Court Justice, and Baltimorean Thurgood Marshall. The legislation would direct the National Park Service to determine the suitability of including his alma mater, Public School 103 in West Baltimore, as a national historic site.

The stories of Justice Thurgood Marshall reading the Constitution in the basement of P.S. 103 during detention typifies the American dream. Preserving P.S. 103 would not only be a fitting tribute to a great Marylander but also an enduring symbol of the importance of education in shaping civic-minded and great Americans. I understand that the legislation may be included in the Energy Policy Modernization Act that the Senate may consider again in the near future, and I hope the Senate will approve of this amendment.

I just mentioned education, and during Black History Month, I think there are few topics more important to promoting equality than ensuring that all Americans have access to a high-quality, affordable education. In December of this past year, Congress enacted the Every Student Succeeds Act in a strong bipartisan manner. I hope the Members of this body can build on this momentum by confronting the pressing issues of college affordability and student debt.

I am a strong supporter of President Obama's America's College Promise proposal to provide 2 years of community college education tuition-free for responsible students. This proposal will allow students to earn the first 2 years of a 4-year degree or the critical skills necessary to enter the workforce without having to take on decades of debt before they even embark on their career.

While student debt is a critical problem for nearly 42 million Americans, paying for higher education can be especially difficult for African-American families. According to the Urban Institute, since the mid-2000s, African-American families on average have carried more student loan debt than White families. This is driven in large part by the growing share of African-American families who take on student debt. In 2013, 42 percent of African Americans ages 25 to 55 had student loan debt, compared with 28 percent of Whites. Because African-American families on average have less wealth and fewer private resources, they may be more likely to turn to loans to finance their education.

Education is the great equalizer in our society. As a nation, we cannot afford to price Americans of any race out of education and the opportunities a quality education provides.

The main higher education equalizer, the Federal Pell grant, provides its lowest share of college education costs since its enactment in 1965. As a result, more than 61 percent of the students who receive a Federal Pell grant award have to take out loans, compared to only 29 percent of their more affluent peers. With more than 60 percent of African-American undergraduate students utilizing the Federal Pell grant to pay for their education, this has placed an undue burden on African-American communities for decades. During Black History Month and beyond, I will continue to help support legislation to help ease the burden of paying for higher education.

In the last year, Baltimore and many cities across the United States have been inundated with news crews covering the deaths of unarmed Black men and women at the hands of police officers. Long before the unrest that gripped Baltimore last spring, I had introduced a number of bills seeking to empower communities and rebuild trust between the citizens and police departments. Events in Baltimore, Charleston, Cleveland, Chicago, and many other places showed the urgent need for congressional action. That is why I introduced the BALTIMORE Act, which would help communities nationwide by building and lifting trust in order to multiply opportunities and racial equality.

The BALTIMORE Act is a package of legislation made up of bills that I have previously introduced, along with several new additions. Many provisions in the BALTIMORE Act enjoy bipartisan support. Title I of the BALTIMORE Act includes law enforcement perform provisions to help better train and equip law enforcement officers so they can better serve communities across the country.

The first provision contained within the BALTIMORE Act is the End Racial Profiling Act. The End Racial Profiling Act would end racial and discriminatory profiling by State and local law enforcement and require mandatory data collection and reporting. Think about this for a moment: In 2016 there is no national standard against law enforcement officers stopping someone merely because of his or her race. I am pleased that Maryland attorney general Brian Frosh recently issued guidelines prohibiting the use of discriminatory profiling by State and local law enforcement in Maryland. And the Attorney General of the United States has acted, but we need a national standard with the force of law that would prohibit the use of discriminatory profiling by any Federal, State, or local law enforcement officer.

The second provision deals with State and local accountability. It would require local law enforcement officials receiving Byrne JAG and COPS Hiring Program funds to submit officer training information to the Department of Justice. That information would include how officers are trained in the use of force, racial and ethnic bias, deescalating conflicts, and constructive engagement with the public.

The Police CAMERA Act would establish a pilot program to assist local law enforcement in purchasing or leasing body-worn cameras.

I am pleased that several provisions that are consistent with the BALTIMORE Act were included in the fiscal year 2016 appropriations measure enacted by Congress in December. The appropriations legislation directs the Department of Justice to swiftly devise and submit plans to improve training levels in use of force, identifying racial and ethnic bias, and conflict resolution for State and local law enforcement officers. It urges DOJ to partner with national law enforcement organizations to promote consistent standards for high-quality training and assessment and directs the agency to better collect State and local law enforcement data on the use of force.

I also want to mention that I introduced the Law Enforcement Trust and Integrity Act, which would help local law enforcement agencies strengthen their department and combat officer misconduct.

The BALTIMORE Act deals with voting rights reform and civil rights restoration. The Democracy Restoration Act would make citizens who have returned from incarceration eligible to vote. At the State level, I was proud to see that the Maryland State Senate recently overturned our Governor's veto of a State statute expanding the right to vote for people who have served their time. I want to reduce recidivism and give people a stake in their communities. If you want to do that, they need to have a voice and a vote. The Democracy Restoration Act would also restore one's eligibility to serve on a Federal jury.

Congress should also enact legislation to restore the Voting Rights Act and reverse the damage done by the Supreme Court decisions that undermine the fundamental right to vote as Americans, to cast their votes for the Presidential primary elections of 2016.

The BALTIMORE Act also deals with sentencing reform. Over the years, sentencing in this country has been marred by racial disparities. The discrepancy between jail time for crack and powder cocaine users is only one such example. The RESET Act would reclassify specific low-level nonviolent drug possession felonies as misdemeanors and eliminate the aforementioned distinctions between crack and powder cocaine. I am pleased to be

able to say that the sentencing reform is a bipartisan issue, and I look forward to working with any member who is willing to ensure that all Americans are treated equitably under the law. I hope the Senate will take up legislation to address some of these disparities in the very near future. Finally, the BALTIMORE Act addresses reentry and employment law reforms. I think this section is especially important because once someone has served his or her sentence, that person should be able to start anew and should get a fair shot to reenter the workforce.

I would be remiss if I did not mention Second Chance, Inc., a Baltimore nonprofit that trains returning citizens in deconstruction, architectural salvage, and much more. I have had a chance to meet with the staff of Second Chance, and I can tell you that their reentry and job program should be a national model. I invite my colleagues to learn more about the good work that is being done only a short drive north of here.

I am pleased the administration has ''banned the box'' when it comes to the hiring of Federal contractors, so that ex-offenders get the second chance to rejoin our communities as productive and working members of society.

I am pleased the State of Maryland as well as Baltimore City, Montgomery County, and Prince George's County have all ''banned the box'' in various forms, and I urge the private sector to follow suit. Helping ex-offenders find gainful employment is a win-win by reducing social services costs, increasing tax revenues, and making our communities safer.

Eliminating disparities in our justice system is critically important. It is just as important to eliminate disparities in the quality of health care available between groups of Americans. In Baltimore, living in certain African-American neighborhoods instead of a White neighborhood, separated by only a few miles, can shorten life expectancy by as much as 30 years—a full generation. That is unacceptable. As a Senator with a longstanding record of working to promote health equity, including my legislation establishing Offices of Minority Health throughout the Department of Health and Human Services and elevating the National Institutes of Health's National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities to an Institute, I will say we have made progress in shrinking disparities, but I am far from satisfied.

I am very encouraged to see that NIH received a $2 billion increase in the fiscal year 2016 omnibus spending bill. That is very important. That is the largest increase NIH has received since 2003. The National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities received $278 million. This is an increase of $8.7 million over its fiscal year 2016 enacted level. Make no mistake, that money will help save lives.

Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, we have recently made health care coverage more accessible and affordable than it has been in decades. By reducing the number of uninsured Americans across the country, the ACA is working to address health inequalities. For instance, between 2013 and 2014, the percentage of uninsured African Americans fell by 6.8 percent. Also, because of the ACA, there is increased funding available for community health clinics, and 300,000 Marylanders, including more than 140,000 African Americans, are served by these clinics. Under the ACA preventive services, which are critical to the early detection and treatment of many diseases that disproportionately affect minorities, are now free for 76 million Americans, including 1.5 million Marylanders.

Some of what Congress can do to shrink disparities is not limited to health care policymaking. Recent events in Flint, MI, have brought to light the need to focus on environmental justice issues. Flint is a case study in what happens when environmental stewardship and water infrastructure needs are ignored. It is also an example of how pollution can hurt minority populations in a severe way. Flint's population is about 100,000 people. Roughly 56 percent are African American. The residents of Flint will have to live with the complications of lead poisoning for the rest of their lives.

What disturbs me the most—both as a grandfather and a member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee—is the very real possibility that children may have suffered irreversible damage to their developing brains from exposure to lead in drinking water. Exposure even to low levels of lead can profoundly affect children's behavior, growth rates, and their intelligence over time. I might point out that Freddie Gray, the person who was killed in Baltimore, had high levels of lead in his blood. Elevated levels in the bloodstream may cause learning disabilities and other developmental issues.

I wish to quote from an article in the New York Times, January 29 of this year:

> Emails released by the office of [Michigan] Governor Rick Snyder last week referred to a resident who said she was told by a state nurse in January 2015, regarding her son's elevated blood level, ''It is just a few IQ points. . . . It is not the end of the world.''

It is a crisis when we deny a child his or her full potential by exposing them to lead. This crisis could have been avoided. It is going to affect an entire generation of children in Flint to varying degrees.

Sadly, Flint is not alone among the cities in which pollution is harming African Americans at disproportionately alarming rates. Nationally, African Americans are 20 percent more likely to have asthma versus non-Hispanic Whites. According to a study in the Annual Review of Public Health, many African-American children live in more heavily polluted areas. Living in urban centers increases one's exposure to traffic and industrial pollution, which promotes a greater sensitivity to allergens.

As I said at the beginning of my remarks, Black History Month is about reflecting on a rich path but also a time for all Americans to contemplate how to create a better future. The Senate is capable of great things. Landmark bills like the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the Fair Housing Act of 1968 all passed through this Chamber. I call on my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and in both Houses of Congress to transfer the good will and kind words of Black History Month into meaningful legislation to help African Americans and all Americans.

I presented only a small portion of my legislative priorities today. I know other Senators may have different ways of approaching some of these same challenges. In honor of the countless men and women who have contributed to making this country great, let us work together to get something done for the American people.

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

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 443, Robert McKinnon Califf, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Robert McKinnon Califf, of South Carolina, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Robert McKinnon Califf, to be

Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services.

Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, Lamar Alexander, Bill Cassidy, Chuck Grassley, Pat Roberts, John Barrasso, Richard Burr, Tim Scott, Orrin G. Hatch, Michael B. Enzi, Johnny Isakson, John Boozman, Cory Gardner, Roger F. Wicker, Thom Tillis, Roy Blunt.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call with respect to the cloture motion be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, at 5:30 p.m., on February 22, the Senate vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the Califf nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

REMEMBERING PETTY OFFICER JOHN BALDWIN

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to a World War II veteran and an American hero—PO3 John B. Baldwin. Petty Officer Baldwin was a member of the United States Navy Reserve and sailed on the USS *St. Louis*. Tragically, on February 14, 1944, he died as a result of enemy fire during the Battle of the Green Islands.

Petty Officer Baldwin's sister—Ms. Irene Baldwin Cox of Beaver, UT—recently informed me that her brother had earned prestigious military medals, which neither he nor his family ever received. As a result of John's dedicated service during the battle that besieged the USS *St. Louis*, he earned the Purple Heart, the World War II Victory Medal, the American Campaign Medal, the Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal with two Bronze Star appurtenances, and a Combat Action Ribbon. Thankfully, the military has since verified John's medals and will soon present them to the Baldwin family.

As we approach the anniversary of this historic battle, we should remember the challenges Petty Officer Baldwin and his fellow soldiers faced on that fateful day. At dawn, American fighters sighted six Aichi D3A dive bombers, which approached the *St. Louis* and dropped six bombs, killing 23 sailors and wounding 20 more. Petty Officer Baldwin was among the fallen.

The Baldwin family has always been proud of John's service. We owe this family a debt of gratitude that can never be repaid. It is only fitting that we present John's siblings with the medals he earned for his heroism. I am grateful for the assistance of the USS *St. Louis* CL–49 Association and the National Personnel Records Center for helping me secure these medals for the Baldwin family.

I hold our Nation's veterans in the highest regard. Because of men and women like Petty Officer Baldwin, our Nation enjoys the full blessings of liberty. I am pleased that these medals have finally found their rightful home. May they ever serve as a testament to John's valor and his love of freedom.

This Valentine's Day, I intend to spend a moment reflecting on the bravery of our sailors who served aboard the USS *St. Louis*. Today I honor them for their courage, their selflessness, and their sacrifice.

TRIBUTE TO JUDGE EUGENE SILER, JR.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to recognize a celebrated Kentuckian who has received a great honor. Federal appeals court judge Eugene Siler, Jr., a fixture in his community, who has served on the bench for over 40 years, has received the ''Tri-County 2016 Leader of the Year'' award from the Leadership Tri-County organization in Kentucky.

Leadership Tri-County focuses on civic, business, and community leadership in Laurel, Knox, and Whitley Counties in southeastern Kentucky. A nonprofit organization founded in 1987, it identifies potential, emerging, and current leaders from the three counties and nurtures their continued development.

Judge Siler is a native of Williamsburg and earned his bachelor of arts at Vanderbilt University. He has a law degree from the University of Virginia and has two graduate law degrees from the University of Virginia and Georgetown University.

Judge Siler served as an Active-Duty officer in the U.S. Navy from 1958 to 1960 and later retired as a commander in the U.S. Naval Reserve.

Judge Siler practiced law privately alongside his father in Williamsburg and was then elected Whitley County attorney, an office he held from 1965 to 1970. In 1970, he was appointed U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky by President Richard Nixon.

In 1975, he was appointed as a judge for the U.S. District Court for the Eastern and Western Districts of Kentucky by President Gerald Ford. In 1991, he was appointed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the sixth circuit by President George H.W. Bush.

Today Judge Siler is a senior judge on that court. He was awarded the ''1992 Outstanding Judge of the Year Award'' by the Kentucky Bar Association, and that same year, he was sent to Lithuania by the U.S. State Department to advise and assist the judiciary in that country as they transitioned from a communist to a democratic system. He also traveled to Albania at the behest of the U.S. Justice Department to advise that country's judges on ethics and discipline.

Judge Siler is married to the former Chris Minnich. They have two sons, Gene Siler III and Adam T. Siler. I am sure Judge Siler's family is proud of him for receiving this award and for all that he has accomplished. I want to thank him for his many years of public service, and I know my colleagues join me in congratulating Judge Siler on his receipt of the ''Tri-County 2016 Leader of the Year'' award.

An area newspaper, the News Journal, published an article about Judge Siler receiving his award.

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 News Journal, Feb. 10, 2016]

WILLIAMSBURG NATIVE EUGENE SILER PICKED AS LEADER OF THE YEAR

(By Mark White)

A federal judge and U.S. Navy veteran has been selected as Leadership Tri-County's 2016 Leader of the Year.

Eugene Siler Jr., a senior judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, said he was notified about a month ago that he was receiving the award.

''I was honored by it and humbled by it,'' Siler said Monday afternoon.

Leadership Tri-County is a non-profit organization established in 1987 as an educational program designed to identify potential, emerging, and current leaders from Knox, Laurel and Whitley counties and to nurture their continued development into the leaders our area needs now and in the future.

Past recipients of the Leader of the Year Award have included: Dr. James Taylor, U.S. Rep. Hal Rogers, U.S. Senator Mitch McConnell, Terry Forcht, Nelda Barton-Collings, Gene Huff and last year's winner Dr. Michael Colegrove.

''I know a lot of people who have gotten it before. I feel like I am in very good company, am pleased that they are giving it to me and I will do my best to live up to it,'' Siler said.

Siler, a Williamsburg native, served in the U.S. Navy on active duty from 1958 to 1960, and later retired as a commander in the U.S. Naval Reserves after 26 years of service.

He began his law practice in 1964 alongside his father. He served as Whitley County Attorney from 1965 until 1970 when President Richard Nixon appointed him as United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky.

In 1975, President Gerald R. Ford appointed Siler as a United States District Judge for the Eastern and Western Districts of Kentucky.

In September 1991, President George Bush appointed Siler to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit.

Siler will be honored during Leadership Tri-County's Leader of the Year Banquet, which will be held on Feb. 23 at the London Community Center.

There will be a reception at 5:30 p.m. followed by a dinner at 6 p.m.

During the banquet, there will be a memorial tribute to G.W. Griffin and Bill Brooks.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, last Friday, America celebrated the 23rd anniversary of the Family and Medical Leave Act—landmark legislation that transformed American workplaces for the better.

I am deeply proud to have voted for this bill in 1993 when I served in the House of Representatives. This bipartisan legislation was a major victory

for many working families, providing workers the ability to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for family needs.

This meant working parents could take care of their newborns without fear of losing their jobs and sources of income. Workers could care for an ailing family member or care for their own serious health conditions without having to worry about whether they would be able to come back to their careers.

Before the Family and Medical Leave Act, being a working parent meant having to choose between your job and taking care of yourself and your family. Today, thanks to this legislation, this attitude has changed for many families.

Since 1993, American workers have used the leave provided by the Family and Medical Leave Act more than 200 million times. This legislation has helped balance workplace demands with family needs for millions of hard-working men and women across the country. And there is no doubt that these are achievements we should all be proud of.

But we need to do more.

As families change, so should the laws designed to help them—our workforce, our economy, and our family responsibilities have changed dramatically over the past two decades. Women now make up half the workforce, and many families depend on two incomes. Family caregiving needs are on the rise, and both men and women provide critical care.

But according to a recent Department of Labor survey, only 60 percent of employees have access to FMLA leave—and 8 out of 10 eligible workers cannot afford to take leave when they need it.

For too many Americans, unpaid leave is not an option—it is unaffordable. Just 13 percent of the workforce has paid family leave through their employers, and less than 40 percent have personal medical leave through an employer-provided disability program.

It is clear that we need to do more to ensure families can earn the support they need. I am proud that both Senator MURRAY and Senator GILLIBRAND have stepped up and introduced legislation this Congress to address these shortcomings. I hope we will continue to see support for these bills and get more of my colleagues from across the aisle to talk about these concerns.

The reality is ensuring paid family and sick leave would help keep new parents and family caregivers in the workforce and boost their earnings and savings overtime. Studies have already shown that mothers who are able to take paid maternity leave are more likely to return to their jobs and stay in the workforce. That just means more money for families to spend and put back into our economy.

Expanding paid family and sick leave makes moral sense, and it makes economic sense. It is about time we get it done.

As we mark the anniversary of this groundbreaking legislation, I hope we take the time to recommit ourselves to the values that inspired this law. Let's continue to lead on this issue and expand paid family and health leave to cover more families.

I will continue to fight and protect the benefits provided by the Federal and Medical Leave Act and help ensure fairer workplaces and healthier, more secure families.

RECOGNIZING HILL FARMSTEAD BREWERY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, as a Vermonter, it is with great pride that I call to the Senate's attention the success of one of Vermont's fine businesses, Hill Farmstead Brewery, which was recently named the best brewer in the world by RateBeer for the second year in a row and for the third time in 4 years. The brewery's success is a testament to the hard work and dedication of founder and brewer Shaun Hill, whose philosophy revolves around brewing beer as an art rather than solely as a business. His drive to brew the best beer in the world has brought accolades and interviews in national publications from Vanity Fair to the New York Times; yet he remains staunchly opposed to following the path of most conventional breweries. Rather than focusing on boundless production, his business model gives value to what is created with integrity, grit, and perseverance.

Shaun's approach sets the Hill Farmstead Brewery apart from other, more commercial enterprises. Its location in Greensboro, VT, is situated in the Hill family's former dairy barn, surrounded by dirt roads and rolling hills. Despite its remote geography, beer lovers come from far and wide to experience the world-renowned beers, to take in the beautiful setting, and to buy some beer to take home. Because a visit to Hill Farmstead is a unique and intimate experience, it is no surprise that is on the bucket list of beer lovers around the world.

As members of his team fill orders, it is not uncommon to see Shaun buzzing around the brewery, moving grain or stopping to talk with visitors. Even if they do not know it at the time, these visitors are taking with them something extremely special. Bottled with the beer is a taste of something greater: Vermont values, and a celebration of life, initiative, and hard work.

Experiencing dramatic growth in the last decade, the craft beers made at Vermont's 40 breweries have a reputation as being some of the best in the world. It is not uncommon for people to drive from New York City, Boston, or even Washington, DC, to spend a few hours or a weekend visiting Vermont breweries. So it is wonderful to watch an entrepreneur like Shaun, with such a passion for his work, grow his idea into a valued and sought after product from all over the country. While many Vermonters still feel the effects of a recovering economy, there are a lot of good things happening in our State thanks to people like him.

When Shaun opened his brewery 5 and a half years ago, he said his goal was to brew the best beer in the world. Well, he achieved that goal and in an impressive short amount of time. Its consistent and exemplary performance over the years, combined with success in creating several phenomenal beers across various styles, have this brewery to shine above more than 22,500 other breweries worldwide. The distinct and nuanced beers pay homage to the art of brewing and to the ambition of their creator. They are a testament to the quality products produced in Vermont, by Vermonters.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION RESOURCES

• Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask to have printed in the RECORD a copy of my remarks last week to the National Council of Higher Education Resources.

The material follows:

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION RESOURCES

I was smiling a little bit when you said that I probably knew more than anybody in Congress about student loans. That is probably true, but that may not be saying very much. This is a complex subject. And although I have been in and around it for a long time, I still spend most of my time listening and learning from you and others who deal with how we help students take advantage of the tremendous opportunities they have in this country.

I'm sure some of you were up late last night watching politics. I went to bed early, but 20 years ago I was right in the middle of it. When you have the privilege of running for president, you find out that you spend most of your time hoping nobody says to you what they said to the late Mo Udall—the congressman from Arizona—when he was walking into a barbershop in New Hampshire and he stuck out his hand and said ''I'm Mo Udall running for president,'' and the barber says, ''yeah I know, we were just laughing about that yesterday.''

I watched with interest the results this morning—my sideline view is that Marco Rubio is somebody to watch in the next week. Twenty years ago, about two weeks before the New Hampshire primary, I was at 10 percent in New Hampshire polls, and I came in third in Iowa as Marco did last night. 26% Dole 23% Buchanan and I got 18. That 18 was such a surprise I ended up on the cover of Time magazine and was in first in New Hampshire within the week. So things can change rapidly, and what happens in the 8 days between the Iowa caucuses and the New Hampshire primary should be very interesting—I have no idea what will happen.

I do think that 20 years ago it was said to be 3 out of Iowa, and 2 out of New Hampshire. And the financial limits on fundraising were such that it made that come true because you could only raise money from people up to $1000 a person. You can imagine trying to raise millions of dollars at $1000 per person. You can't start a business that way, you can't start a college that way and you

can't have a presidential campaign that way. So it was 3 out of Iowa and 2 out of New Hampshire.

I think this time they are going to carry 4 out of New Hampshire. And one reason is because the rules have changed about fundraising. So hopefully more Americans will have a chance to participate in the system and will get a chance to run through the southern primaries and on into the convention. So it ought to be an interesting year.

I'd like to talk just a minute about higher education and some of the things that I hope we could do. Then I'll be glad to take up to 3 questions you'd like to ask me. I'll be glad and try to respond to them if there's something you want to say to me. First—thank you for the work you do to help students have a chance to participate in what still is the best system of colleges and universities in the world. We have millions of families every year who still fill out their student aid application forms. It's a large number.

Here is what our committee, which is the Senate's education committee, will be doing. As Ron said, for the last year our major priority was elementary and secondary education. We tackled fixing No Child Left Behind which was 7 years overdue, and filled with partisan problems. It's like higher education but even more so. In fact—with elementary and secondary education it's like going to a University of Tennessee football game—you've got 100,000 people in the stands and every single one of them played football and is an expert and knows what plays to call and usually wants to call it. Well it's the same thing with elementary and secondary education—you have 50 million students, and 3.5 million teachers and parents. And everybody has got an idea—whether it's transgender bathrooms—they all want to put it in the bill. But all these things could sink the bill in a minute. And I will compliment Senator Patty Murray of Washington because she and I worked together and we got a result and the president to sign the bill. Fundamentally, it was a major change because it basically says ''sure we want to know how the students are doing so the federal government will require you to take 17 tests between the 3rd grade and senior year.''

Then you report that to see how the students are doing. And you disaggregate it so you can see if the African American kids or the white kids or the Latino kids are being left behind. But after that, the decisions about what to do about the results of the tests—if you're a 4th grade teacher in Franklin—that's your business. That's the state of Tennessee's business. So if you want the common core academic standard you can have it. If you don't want it then you don't have to have it. That's not anything the United States Secretary of Education is going to tell you. It's not going to tell you what the test should be, how to evaluate the test, what the accountability system should be and how to evaluate the teachers.

People assume that because I have been a big fan of evaluating teachers as Governor that I'll come up here and try to make everybody do it. It's just the reverse with me. I think people are fed up with Washington telling them so much about what to do—whether it's elementary and secondary education or in higher education. My goal with higher education is to try to deregulate it. Try to take the federal rules and regulations which just piled up through 8 different reauthorizations of the Higher Education Act, and simplify them and make them more fair. Several years ago I got an appropriations bill; a study for how to do that with research, and the head of the University of Texas at Austin, chancellor, former chancellor now, had them update me a report. I asked the chancellor of Maryland and the chancellor at Vanderbilt to lead a group of higher education folks to recommend how we could make higher education more simple and effective: 59 recommendations. A few of them the Secretary himself can do. As many as we can, maybe 3 dozen of the rest of those, we hope to put in a piece of legislation that Sen. Mikulski and Bennet from the Democratic side, and Sen. Burr and from the Republican side will introduce. They all will help to save the time and money from this jungle of redtape the study would have.

Another simplification we would like to do is with the FAFSA. You know better than almost anybody that it's not necessary to have 108 questions. In fact we had testimony before our committee from people that come from many different directions that said basically you only need 2 questions. One was ''the size of your family?'' and one was ''your amount of income.'' Well, maybe we don't need only 2 questions, but we need a lot fewer questions. I mean you have 20 million families filling that out every year. That's an enormous savings of time and money. And if we simplify and demystify the forms to some degree more students will take advantage of the student aid enrollment. The president of Southwest Community College in Memphis told me he thinks he loses 1,500 students every year just from the complexity of the FAFSA. And so we are experimenting in a whole variety of ways. Parents and grandparents asking, ''why do I have to give this info to the government again, they've already got it on my FAFSA?'' Well, good question. Maybe all you need to do is give permission to the IRS to send it over and you fill out only a few questions. So, simplifying for FAFSA is another thing we have a bipartisan agreement on.

We'd like reduce the number of student loans. I'd like to see a single undergraduate loan. I think students would be less likely to over borrow and less likely to make mistakes. And we could use the savings from that to provide another thing that I think would be helpful and that's the year-round Pell Grant. We have ridiculously complex student aid and student aid repayment terms. I saw the other day, Bernie Sanders had some person up there holding up a sign that said she had $90K in student loans and she was paying half of her income to pay it off every year. Well, as an undergraduate loan she doesn't have to do that.

If she knew what the existing income-based repayment programs are, she wouldn't have to pay half of her income toward loans, she would only have to pay 10 or 15 % of her income towards it. If she had been working for public service she might have it forgiven. After 20 to 25 years it would be forgiven. So there's a lot of misinformation about student loans and about repayment and our goal is to cut it down to two. To have a 10 year repayment plan and have an income based repayment plan. So you would have two choices.

Fundamentally, if students knew what their options were and that they were that simple to understand, we'd probably have a lot more students take advantage of those repayment plans and on the front end a lot more students going to college. There are other steps we'd like to take.

The ones I have just described have a lot of bipartisan agreement. We'd like to allow students to use their income from two years ago, called the prior-prior year, to use to fill out their financial aid forms. The administration agrees with us on that. Other areas where we may be able to have a bipartisan agreement on in the Senate are campus safety and sexual assault, accreditation reform, giving institutions more authority to counsel students on how much to borrow as a way to reduce over borrowing. Having institutions have some skin in the game (or risk sharing) as a way to reduce over borrowing. So those are some of the areas where we should be able to have bipartisan support.

Now what can we actually get done this year?—My goal is as I've said to the group earlier, the tax payers will pay our salaries this year, and I think we ought to just continue to work. Our number one priority is oversight on the elementary and secondary education bill we passed last year. The bill's not worth the paper it's printed on unless it's implement properly and I don't want the Department of Education granting back to itself all the decision making authority we pushed out of Washington and to the states and classroom teachers. So we're going to be watching that very closely and having a number of hearings.

Number two—we have a very important biomedical innovation research bill. There's never been a more important time for scientific research The House has passed, the president's interested in precision medicine and cancer research. We have a genius, Francis Collins, heading the National Institutes of Health. We want to do our part. So that's going to take some time.

The third of three top priorities is reauthorization of Higher Education Act.

Maybe we can do it all this year. This year is challenging because it's not only an election year, it's a presidential election year. So we have some really interesting proposals on higher education from some of the candidates. You've heard those. And those could box things up in the Senate as we try to deal with them.

But we're going to go ahead and take some of these proposals that I've just described, and bring them through our committee, pass them in the House of Representatives, and look for opportunities to bring them to the Senate floor.

I'm really proud of what we did in elementary and secondary education. Because I think it's really good policy. It's carefully written, it was vetted by everybody who is involved in the education system, and I think it will govern elementary and secondary education for the next 15–20 years because it will be difficult to change.

I'd like to do the same thing for higher education. Over the last eight reauthorizations, the stack of regulations has gone like that. I'd like to start the stack of regulations going downward like that. I'd like your advice as we begin to do it.●

RECOGNIZING RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEWARK DEBATE TEAM

● Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the Rutgers University-Newark debate team for celebrating its victory at the National Debate Tournament at the University of Missouri Kansas City, UMKC.

The Rutgers University-Newark debate team, founded in 2008, is sponsored by the School of Public Affairs and Administration and the Office of the Chancellor, Newark. They have competed in tournaments hosted by Harvard, the U.S. Military Academy, the U.S. Naval Academy, and James Madison University and outranked schools such as Boston College, Dartmouth, and New York University. Director of debate, Christopher Kozak, has led the team to 3 consecutive years as the 1st-ranked team in the Northeast; and in the 2014–2015 year, the team was the 14th-ranked team nationally.

Since 2011, the Rutgers University-Newark debate team has hosted an ever-growing collegiate tournament every year and a high school tournament in collaboration with the Newark Debate Academy. They support debate from the elementary to high school level by offering internships as assistant coaches at many local schools. RU–N debate team has also participated in a series of public debates, including a debate I participated in about student debt hosted at Rutgers University-Newark.

From September 11 to 15, the Rutgers University-Newark debate team sent two teams to the Baby Jo Memorial Debate Tournament at UMKC, the first national-level debate tournament of the season. Programs from the University of Texas, University of Kansas, Oklahoma University, the University of Iowa, and others participated in the tournament as well.

The team of Nicole Nave and Devane Murphy won six of eight of their preliminary debates and were awarded 6th-place speaker and 11th-place speaker, respectively.

The Rutgers University-Newark debate team entered the elimination rounds as the seventh-ranked team and continued to the final round to face the first-ranked team in the Nation, UC Berkeley. By a 2-to-1 decision, the RU–N team defeated UC Berkeley to be crowned champion. Going into the 2015–2016 season, this means the Rutgers University-Newark team will be ranked the No. 1 team in the Nation.

I am proud to acknowledge this landmark achievement in the Rutgers University-Newark Debate Team's history and its efforts to support debate at all age levels.

Thank you.●

TRIBUTE TO BEVERLY ANDERSON

● Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Beverly Anderson of Conrad, MT, for her incredible generosity and service to the people of her community. Beverly has a huge heart for helping those in need and has truly cared for those around her.

Beverly previously worked as an emergency dispatcher before taking on the many volunteer roles that she now serves in. She is head of her community's Salvation Army, serves at the food bank every Friday, and volunteers for the local abused spouses advocate groups, DFS and CASA.

She has a heart for children as well. Every week, she plans crafts and other afterschool activities for area students. Beverly prioritizes spending time helping underprivileged children and, every year, coordinates local efforts to gather school supplies for those in need.

As a woman of faith, Beverly regularly takes individuals in recovery from drug abuse with her to church and out to lunch. She visits and prays for those who are sick and dying in her community and takes a special effort to cook food and provide encouragement for the bereaved families.

During the holiday season, Beverly is known to secretly shop for children of families in need and gathers people across town to participate in a ''knock and drop'' with presents. She also delivers turkey dinners to families at both Thanksgiving and Christmas. A proud parent of two soldiers, Beverly gladly promotes every veteran activity that takes place in her community and helps the VFW send gift boxes to soldiers every Christmas.

I am humbled by Beverly's heart for service and her selfless commitment to putting the needs of others before herself. She is truly a standout in her community and has made Montana a much better place. It is with deep gratitude that I honor her today.●

REMEMBERING JESSE DANNELS

● Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I would like to honor Jesse Dannels—a young man with a kind smile and a strong leader in all aspects of life, who was lost from us on February 7, 2016, at the age of 18.

Jesse came into this world on November 29, 1997, to Robert and Ruth Dannels of Chinook, MT. Jesse's motivation and happy spirit impacted everyone he met. His love for sports was evident in his swimming, football, track, and wrestling. He excelled at everything he did. His teammates were not only friends, but brothers. Jesse's willingness to always help others was inspiring. He was continually motivating others to do their best, and he was there to cheer them on. He will be missed by all who knew him.

Sugarbeeter Nation, I extend my condolences to Jesse's family, his football and wrestling brothers and coaches, to Chinook High School, and to the entire community of Chinook. May God rest his soul.●

TRIBUTE TO LARRY GIANCHETTA

● Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, Larry Gianchetta, the dean of the University of Montana School of Business, has announced that he will be retiring at the end of this school year. Dean Gianchetta has been a part of the University of Montana staff for 41 years and has served as dean of the School of Business for the past 30 years.

Dean Gianchetta has been an inspiration not only for his staff, but also for his students. Dean Gianchetta is an enthusiastic teacher who has instilled an excitement for learning and a commitment to service in his staff and students. He created positive environment for his staff and students, making experiences at the University of Montana enjoyable for all.

Dean Gianchetta made sure the school of business could support students for generations to come through its scholarship program. He worked tirelessly to promote the University of Montana School of Business Administration name to gain the financial support needed to educate Montana's next generation of leaders. His dedication not only resulted in donations for the school's scholarship program, but also funding for new school buildings, including the Gallagher Business Building, which opened in 1996, and the Gilkey Center for Executive Education, which opened earlier this year.

One of Dean Gianchetta's most admired accomplishments is the founding of the American Indian Business Leaders. It began at the University of Montana and, today, has grown to be a national organization that includes 76 high schools, colleges, and universities. Dean Gianchetta has also helped the University of Montana develop new college majors in marketing and management, a minor in business program, and six certificates in several different areas.

Dean Larry Gianchetta does not boast about the accomplishments he has made while at the University of Montana School of Business, but they can be clearly seen not only on the University of Montana campus, but also throughout the country. I may be a Bobcat, but I recognize the tremendous impact this Grizzly has made on our State and our Nation. He will be greatly missed at the University of Montana, but I am confident that the legacy he's left will be carried on for years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO MIRANDA CROSS AND KATE KROLICKI

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate two students, Miss Miranda Cross and Miss Kate Krolicki, who have gone above and beyond in their academic pursuits and were selected to represent the Silver State as delegates of the 54th annual United States Senate Youth Program, USSYP. This is an incredible accolade, recognizing the very best students across the Nation, and I extend my most sincere congratulations to these two Nevadans.

USSYP was created in 1962 to bring excellent students to our Nation's Capital to gain knowledge and insight on the three branches of government. Every year, this program brings 104 outstanding students to Washington, DC, for a weeklong program highlighting the Federal Government. Students also receive a $5,000 undergraduate college scholarship to encourage them to continue on in their scholastic pursuits. Students selected for the program generally fall in the top 1 percent academically within their State. Both Miss Krolicki and Miss Cross have excelled in their academic ambitions and are certainly deserving of the opportunity to attend this weeklong program.

Miss Cross is a student at Reno High School and serves on the Washoe County School District's student advisory board. She is a proud member of the Future Business Leaders of America, taking three State championship titles and serving as a national finalist. She

is also the founder of Girls in STEM. Miss Cross is a role model to her peers, and I am thankful to have such an ambitious Nevadan representing our State at this prestigious event.

Miss Krolicki attends George Whitell High School and serves her peers in a number of student activities. She is president of her senior class, a member of the student issues committee, president of the National Honor Society and Key Club, and captain of the varsity soccer team. I am grateful that Miss Krolicki served the State of Nevada as an intern in my office last summer. She is truly an inspiration to her peers and future generations of Nevadans.

Both students are shining examples of what hard work and determination can accomplish. They should be proud of their selection in this competitive process. Today I ask my colleagues to join me and all Nevadans in congratulating both Miss Cross and Miss Krolicki in this achievement and in wishing them well as they represent Nevada at USSYP 2016.●

TRIBUTE TO TINA QUIGLEY

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Tina Quigley for all of her hard work and dedication to the State of Nevada. Ms. Quigley has gone above and beyond in her role with the Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada, RTC, bringing efficient transportation methods to the region and driving economic development.

Ms. Quigley was raised in Petaluma, CA, and initially planned to have a career in aviation. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in aviation business and planning from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University, she moved to Las Vegas and began working for former Clark County director of aviation Bob Broadbent at McCarran International Airport. Ms. Quigley began her career with RTC in 2005, accepting the position of deputy general manager. In 2012, she was selected to lead the commission as general manager.

Since accepting the position, Ms. Quigley has led numerous projects at RTC that have greatly benefitted the State. These projects have led to vast improvements to the area's transit system, bringing greater accessibility to the local community and the many tourists traveling throughout the region. Under her leadership, RTC launched a transit pass program for university students and staff, eight new rapid transit and express bus routes, and a residential route. The commission has also added hundreds of new bus shelters, three transit terminals with commuter parking lots, and a platinum LEED-certified transit hub in Las Vegas. As a result of her successful initiatives, RTC was named one of the most efficient transit providers in the Nation.

She has also served as a voice to the Nevada legislature, advocating on behalf of southern Nevada's transportation and infrastructure needs. Recently, Ms. Quigley spearheaded work within the State to move forward on the future Interstate 11, I–11. I am proud to have led the way in Washington, DC, on legislation including the extension of I–11, which was signed into law. Developing critical infrastructure in our State is the first step toward long-term job growth and sustainability, and I am thankful to have Nevadans like Ms. Quigley working as an ally in the fight to complete this initiative.

Over the last decade, Ms. Quigley has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to bringing southern Nevada the transportation and infrastructure tools it needs. The Silver State is fortunate to have Ms. Quigley working to build a greater and more accessible Nevada. I ask my colleagues and all Nevadans to join me in thanking Ms. Quigley for her many contributions to our State. I wish her well as she continues her efforts to address southern Nevada's transportation needs.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

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

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:11 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, 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. 3293. An act 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.

H.R. 4470. An act to amend the Safe Water Drinking Act with respect to the requirements related to lead in drinking water, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 111. Concurrent resolution 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.

The message further announced that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 907) to improve defense cooperation between the United States and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

The message also announced that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 1428) to extend Privacy Act remedies to citizens of certified states, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 3293. An act 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; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Ms. COLLINS, from the Special Committee on Aging:

Special Report entitled ''Fighting Fraud: U.S. Senate Aging Committee Identifies Top 10 Scams Targeting our Nation's Seniors'' (Rept. No. 114–208).

By Mr. GRASSLEY, from the Committee on the Judiciary, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 483. A bill to improve enforcement efforts related to prescription drug diversion and abuse, and for other purposes.

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. REID (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. UDALL, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 2540. A bill to provide access to counsel for unaccompanied children and other vulnerable populations; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. SANDERS):

S. 2541. A bill to amend the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to clarify provisions enacted by the Captive Wildlife Safety Act to further the conservation of prohibited wildlife species; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mrs. CAPITO (for herself and Mr. KING):

S. 2542. A bill to provide for alternative and updated certification requirements for participation under Medicaid State plans under title XIX of the Social Security Act in the case of certain facilities treating infants under one year of age with neonatal abstinence syndrome, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MANCHIN:

S. 2543. A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to amend the mission statement of the Food and Drug Administration; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. KIRK):

S. 2544. A bill to increase public safety by punishing and deterring firearms trafficking; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN:

S. 2545. A bill to modify the requirements of the Department of Veterans Affairs for reimbursing health care providers under section 101 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and

Accountability Act of 2014, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mrs. MCCASKILL):

S. 2546. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require certain plans providing for nonqualified deferred compensation to require repayment of benefits to the employer in the event of extraordinary governmental assistance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MENENDEZ:

S. 2547. A bill to increase the maximum penalty for unfair and deceptive practices relating to advertising of the costs of air transportation; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. 2548. A bill to establish the 400 Years of African-American History Commission, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. ENZI, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. HATCH):

S. 2549. A bill to require the Transportation Security Administration to conduct security screening at certain airports, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mrs. MCCASKILL (for herself, Mr. FLAKE, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 2550. A bill to repeal the jury duty exemption for elected officials of the legislative branch; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. COONS, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. CASEY, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2551. A bill to help prevent acts of genocide and mass atrocities, which threaten national and international security, by enhancing United States civilian capacities to prevent and mitigate such crises; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 2552. A bill to amend section 875(c) of title 18, United States Code, to include an intent requirement; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. CRUZ):

S. 2553. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require multi-line telephone systems to have a default configuration that permits users to directly initiate a call to 9–1–1 without dialing any additional digit, code, prefix, or post-fix, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. INHOFE:

S. 2554. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or misconduct, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON):

S. 2555. A bill to provide opportunities for broadband investment, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. CASEY):

S. 2556. A bill to amend the Trade Act of 1974 to authorize a State to reimburse certain costs incurred by the State in providing training to workers after a petition for certification of eligibility for trade adjustment assistance has been filed, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. HATCH):

S. 2557. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to repeal the suspension of eligibility for grants, loans, and work assistance for drug-related offenses; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 282

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 282, a bill to provide taxpayers with an annual report disclosing the cost and performance of Government programs and areas of duplication among them, and for other purposes.

S. 491

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 491, a bill to lift the trade embargo on Cuba.

S. 497

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) was added as a cosponsor of S. 497, a bill to allow Americans to earn paid sick time so that they can address their own health needs and the health needs of their families.

S. 498

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 498, a bill to allow reciprocity for the carrying of certain concealed firearms.

S. 524

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

S. 843

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 843, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to count a period of receipt of outpatient observation services in a hospital toward satisfying the 3-day inpatient hospital requirement for coverage of skilled nursing facility services under Medicare.

S. 968

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 968, a bill to require the Commissioner of Social Security to revise the medical and evaluation criteria for determining disability in a person diagnosed with Huntington's Disease and to waive the 24-month waiting period for Medicare eligibility for individuals disabled by Huntington's Disease.

S. 1239

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1239, a bill to amend the Clean Air Act with respect to the ethanol waiver for the Reid vapor pressure limitations under that Act.

S. 1566

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) 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. 1624

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1624, a bill to provide predictability and certainty in the tax law, create jobs, and encourage investment.

S. 1890

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL), the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) 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. 1913

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) were added as cosponsors of S. 1913, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish programs to prevent prescription drug abuse under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 1982

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1982, a bill to authorize a Wall of Remembrance as part of the Korean War Veterans Memorial and to allow certain private contributions to fund the Wall of Remembrance.

S. 2218

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Wyoming

(Mr. BARRASSO) 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. 2248

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2248, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to coordinate Federal congenital heart disease research efforts and to improve public education and awareness of congenital heart disease, and for other purposes.

S. 2292

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

S. 2373

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2373, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for Medicare coverage of certain lymphedema compression treatment items as items of durable medical equipment.

S. 2423

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) 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. 2496

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2496, a bill to provide flexibility for the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to increase the total amount of general business loans that may be guaranteed under section 7(a) of the Small Business Act.

S. 2499

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2499, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve access to health care through expanded health savings accounts, and for other purposes.

S. 2517

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2517, a bill to require a report on United States strategy to combat terrorist use of social media, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 99

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 99, a resolution calling on the Government of Iran to follow through on repeated promises of assistance in the case of Robert Levinson, the longest held United States civilian in our Nation's history.

S. RES. 349

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 349, a resolution congratulating the Farm Credit System on the celebration of its 100th anniversary.

S. RES. 368

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 368, a resolution supporting efforts by the Government of Colombia to pursue peace and the end of the country's enduring internal armed conflict and recognizing United States support for Colombia at the 15th anniversary of Plan Colombia.

AMENDMENT NO. 3069

At the request of Mr. HEINRICH, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3069 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 Mr. REID (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. UDALL, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 2540. A bill to provide access to counsel for unaccompanied children and other vulnerable populations; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2540

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 ''Fair Day in Court for Kids Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. IMPROVING IMMIGRATION COURT EFFICIENCY AND REDUCING COSTS BY INCREASING ACCESS TO LEGAL INFORMATION.

(a) APPOINTMENT OF COUNSEL IN CERTAIN CASES; RIGHT TO REVIEW CERTAIN DOCUMENTS IN REMOVAL PROCEEDINGS.—Section 240(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1229a(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (4)—

(A) in subparagraph (A)—

(i) by striking '', at no expense to the Government,''; and

(ii) by striking the comma at the end and inserting a semicolon;

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

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

''(B) the Attorney General may appoint or provide counsel, at Government expense, to aliens in immigration proceedings;

''(C) the alien shall, at the beginning of the proceedings or as expeditiously as possible, automatically receive a complete copy of all relevant documents in the possession of the Department of Homeland Security, including all documents (other than documents protected from disclosure by privilege, including national security information referred to in subparagraph (D), law enforcement sensitive information, and information prohibited from disclosure pursuant to any other provision of law) contained in the file maintained by the Government that includes information with respect to all transactions involving the alien during the immigration process (commonly referred to as an 'A-file'), and all documents pertaining to the alien that the Department of Homeland Security has obtained or received from other government agencies, unless the alien waives the right to receive such documents by executing a knowing and voluntary written waiver in a language that he or she understands fluently;''; and

(D) in subparagraph (D), as redesignated, by striking '', and'' and inserting ''; and''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(8) FAILURE TO PROVIDE ALIEN REQUIRED DOCUMENTS.—In the absence of a waiver under paragraph (4)(C), a removal proceeding may not proceed until the alien—

''(A) has received the documents as required under such paragraph; and

''(B) has been provided meaningful time to review and assess such documents.''.

(b) CLARIFICATION REGARDING THE AUTHORITY OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL TO APPOINT COUNSEL TO ALIENS IN IMMIGRATION PROCEEDINGS.—Section 292 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1362) is amended—

(1) by striking ''In any'' and inserting the following:

''(a) IN GENERAL.—In any'';

(2) in subsection (a), as redesignated—

(A) by striking ''(at no expense to the Government)''; and

(B) by striking ''he shall'' and inserting ''the person shall''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(b) ACCESS TO COUNSEL.—The Attorney General may appoint or provide counsel to aliens in any proceeding conducted under section 235, 236, 238, 240, or 241 or any other section of this Act. The Secretary of Homeland Security shall ensure that aliens have access to counsel inside all immigration detention and border facilities.''.

(c) APPOINTMENT OF COUNSEL FOR UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ALIENS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 292 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1362), as amended by subsection (b), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(c) UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ALIENS.—Notwithstanding subsection (b), the Attorney General shall appoint counsel, at the expense of the Government if necessary, at the beginning of the proceedings or as expeditiously as possible, to represent in such proceedings any alien who has been determined by the Secretary of Homeland Security or the Attorney General to be—

''(1) an unaccompanied alien child (as defined in section 462(g) of the Homeland Security Act on 2002 (6 U.S.C. 279(g)));

''(2) a particularly vulnerable individual, such as—

''(A) a person with a disability; or

''(B) a victim of abuse, torture, or violence; or

''(3) an individual whose circumstances are such that the appointment of counsel is necessary to help ensure fair resolution and efficient adjudication of the proceedings.

''(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Executive Office of Immigration Review of the Department of Justice such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.''.

(2) RULEMAKING.—The Attorney General shall promulgate regulations to implement section 292(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as added by paragraph (1), in accordance with the requirements set forth in section 3006A of title 18, United States Code.

SEC. 3. ACCESS BY COUNSEL AND LEGAL ORIENTATION AT DETENTION FACILITIES.

(a) ACCESS TO COUNSEL.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall facilitate access to counsel for all aliens detained in facilities under the supervision of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement or of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, including providing information to aliens in detention about legal services programs at detention facilities.

(b) ACCESS TO LEGAL ORIENTATION PROGRAMS.—The Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Attorney General, shall establish procedures to ensure that legal orientation programs are available for all detained aliens, including aliens held in U.S. Customs and Border Protection facilities, to inform such aliens of the basic procedures of immigration hearings, their rights relating to those hearings under Federal immigration laws, information that may deter such aliens from filing frivolous legal claims, and any other information that the Attorney General considers appropriate, such as a contact list of potential legal resources and providers. Access to legal orientation programs shall not be limited by the alien's current immigration status, prior immigration history, or potential for immigration relief.

(c) PILOT PROJECT FOR NONDETAINED ALIENS IN REMOVAL PROCEEDINGS.—The Attorney General shall develop and administer a 2-year pilot program at not fewer than 2 immigration courts to provide nondetained aliens with pending asylum claims access to legal information. At the conclusion of the pilot program, the Attorney General shall submit a report to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives that describes the extent to which nondetained aliens are provided with access to counsel.

(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Executive Office of Immigration Review of the Department of Justice such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.

SEC. 4. CASE MANAGEMENT PILOT PROGRAM TO INCREASE COURT APPEARANCE RATES.

(a) CONTRACT AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall establish a pilot program to increase the court appearance rates of aliens described in paragraphs (2) and (3) of section 292(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as added by section 2(c)(1), by contracting with nongovernmental, community-based organizations to provide appropriate case management services to such aliens.

(b) SCOPE OF SERVICES.—Case management services provided under subsection (a) shall include assisting aliens with—

(1) accessing legal counsel;

(2) complying with court-imposed deadlines and other legal obligations;

(3) procuring appropriate housing;

(4) enrolling their minor children in school; and

(5) acquiring health services, including, if needed, mental health services.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Department of Homeland Security such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.

SEC. 5. REPORT ON ACCESS TO COUNSEL.

(a) REPORT.—Not later than December 31 of each year, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Attorney General, shall prepare and submit a report to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives regarding the extent to which aliens described in section 292(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as added by section 2(c)(1), have been provided access to counsel.

(b) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under paragraph (a) shall include, for the immediately preceding 1-year period—

(1) the number and percentage of aliens described in paragraphs (1), (2), and (3), respectively, of section 292(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as added by section 2(c)(1), who were represented by counsel, including information specifying—

(A) the stage of the legal process at which the alien was represented; and

(B) whether the alien was in government custody; and

(2) the number and percentage of aliens who received legal orientation presentations.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. KIRK):

S. 2544. A bill to increase public safety by punishing and deterring firearms trafficking; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I see my distinguished colleague from Maine on the floor. Both of us would like to speak about how for years law enforcement in Vermont and elsewhere have sought more effective tools to go after straw purchasers and gun traffickers. Straw purchasers are people who do not have a criminal record but who purchase firearms for other people, and all too often they enable violent criminals, drug traffickers, and terrorists to obtain guns and to circumvent the background check requirements of Federal law.

This Senator finds it frustrating. I am a gun owner. I go through background checks, but when I think of drug traffickers getting guns through a straw purchaser, that is wrong. In fact, they ship guns with impunity across State lines, not only from Vermont to other parts of New England but also along the Southwest border, allowing them to conduct illegal gun transactions in our cities and towns. Law enforcement officers who have tried to stop this have been hamstrung because under current law there is no Federal statute specifically prohibiting either the practice of straw purchasing or firearms trafficking. So today I am reintroducing legislation with the distinguished Senator from Maine, Ms. COLLINS, to plug those gaps in the law. The Stop Illegal Trafficking in Firearms Act of 2016 would make it a Federal crime to act as a straw purchaser of firearms or to illegally traffic firearms. It would also establish tough penalties for anyone who transfers a firearm when they have reasonable cause to believe it would be used in a drug transaction, crime or an act of terrorism. It will fix a loophole in the existing law and make it clear that it is a crime to smuggle firearms out of the United States just as it is a crime to smuggle firearms into the United States. This legislation answers the call from law enforcement to strengthen our investigative and prosecutorial tools to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and terrorists.

We have to do more to protect our communities. The heartbreaking reports of mass shootings have become all too common and no corner of our country is immune from the tragedies that accompany everyday gun violence—not even Vermont. Criminals in search of firearms exploit gaping loopholes in our gun laws, and they utilize straw purchasers and trafficking networks or unregulated gun markets. In addition, the rise in addiction to heroin and opioids in the Northeast has exposed a new so-called iron pipeline of firearms trafficking. We are seeing firearms serve as a currency. You can use a firearm to buy illegal drugs like heroin. Addicts are being directed to straw purchase firearms for dealers because dealers who have criminal backgrounds could not pass a background check. In Vermont, for example, Federal investigators are reporting increasing instances of straw purchasers buying guns for drug dealers or finding guns that were purchased in Vermont being trafficked to criminals in other States, such as New York, Massachusetts, and Connecticut, where the guns are traded for heroin or used in violent crimes.

This morning the Judiciary Committee approved bipartisan legislation that takes a comprehensive approach to dealing with heroin and opioid addiction. I fought to include provisions to help law enforcement and to provide assistance to rural communities like we have in Vermont. Passing a gun trafficking bill is another way we can keep our communities safe.

Remember, straw purchasing and gun trafficking is not just tied to drug trafficking. Even terrorists, like the suspected San Bernardino shooters, have utilized straw purchasers to acquire their guns. In the San Bernardino case, the prosecutors did not have the option of charging the friend of the terrorists with a straw purchasing offense. Instead, the only charge that was available against him for unlawfully purchasing the two rifles used in the mass shooting was a paperwork violation of making a false statement. This Senator has heard from many prosecutors, Republicans and Democrats alike, that these paperwork charges are wholly inadequate to deter or stop such dangerous conduct.

It is time to take action. Only Congress can fill the gap. Congress must not become so numb to tragedy after tragedy that we fail to fulfill our responsibility to legislate. It is true that

no one piece of legislation can prevent all criminals from acquiring firearms, and it certainly will not solve the epidemic of gun violence, but that is not an excuse for inaction.

I would hope all of us would agree that criminals and terrorists should not have guns and that we should investigate and prosecute the straw purchasers and gun traffickers who help criminals and terrorists get guns. Law enforcement officials have complained for years that they lack the statutory tools to effectively investigate and deter straw purchasers and gun traffickers. That is why this bill has such strong support from law enforcement groups such as the National Fraternal Order of Police, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the Major Cities Chiefs Association, the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, the National Tactical Officers Association, the National District Attorneys Association, and the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys. This bill builds on the progress we made last Congress when I worked with Senator DURBIN to introduce similar legislation. I want to acknowledge the tireless efforts of Senator DURBIN and others on this issue, and I am glad he is an original cosponsor of this important legislation.

As are many others, I am proud to be a responsible gun owner. I enjoy target shooting in the backyard of my farmhouse—with a nice safe backdrop I might add. I am deeply committed to the fundamental and individual rights afforded in the Second Amendment. I know Senator COLLINS shares my commitment to protecting those constitutional rights, but we also share a desire to go after violent criminals, drug traffickers, and terrorists. We do not want to hand guns to violent criminals, drug traffickers, and terrorists, and if they do get guns we want to make sure law enforcement officials arrest the people who gave them the guns to keep guns out of their hands. This legislation does just that.

Mr. President, I yield the floor to my good friend, the senior Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I am very pleased to join my colleague from New England, Senator LEAHY, in introducing our bill, the Stop Illegal Trafficking in Firearms Act. Our bill would strengthen Federal law to make it easier for prosecutors to effectively go after gun traffickers while protecting fully the rights of the vast majority of gun owners who are law-abiding.

The practice of straw purchasing is intended to achieve one result, and that is to put a gun in the hands of criminals. Today traffickers target individuals who can lawfully purchase firearms and then use those weapons to commit crimes. They exploit weaknesses in Federal law that make prosecuting straw purchasers difficult and punishment for such a crime generally minimal.

The guns we are targeting in our bill are frequently sold and resold and trafficked across State lines, resulting in the proliferation of illegal firearms in our communities. This practice has fueled the violence across our southern border associated with the Mexican drug cartels; it has spurred gun violence in our cities; and it has contributed to the heroin crisis that is so devastating to our families and is undermining public safety in our communities.

Current Federal law makes preventing and prosecuting these offenses very difficult for law enforcement. Right now, a straw purchaser can only be prosecuted for lying on a Federal form. Essentially, that is treated as if it were a paperwork violation. Our bill would create new, specific criminal offenses for straw purchasing and trafficking in firearms. Instead of a slap on the wrist, these crimes would be punishable for up to 15 years in prison for those who knowingly purchase a firearm for a prohibited person or had reason to believe they would use the firearm in a prohibited way. For those straw purchasers who know or have reasonable cause to believe that the firearm would be used to commit a crime of violence, that crime will be punishable for up to 25 years in prison.

It is not surprising that so many law enforcement groups have endorsed our commonsense proposal. It would provide them with an effective tool to fight the violence that too often goes hand in hand with drug trafficking. Straw purchasing and the trafficking of firearms puts guns directly into the hands of drug dealers and violent criminals who smuggle heroin into my State and so many other States. The heroin flooding our communities is reaching crisis proportions. In 2014, there were a record 208 overdose deaths in the State of Maine, including 57 caused by heroin, and the problem is only getting worse.

The problem of straw purchasing and drug and gun trafficking is directly linked to the heroin crisis. Law enforcement officers tell me they have seen a major influx of drug dealers coming from out of State, straight up I–95's ''iron pipeline'' and other interstate highways with direct ties to gangs in major cities and ready to sell or trade prescription opiates and heroin for guns.

Oftentimes drug dealers and gang members follow a similar pattern. They seek out and target addicts and they trade or sell them heroin for guns. These gang members with criminal records cross into Maine and approach these drug addicts to be their straw buyers because these addicts usually have clean records, so they can legally purchase the firearms these criminals are seeking. The addict exchanges the gun for heroin to support his or her drug dependency, and that cycle is repeated time and again. Those guns might be used in out-of-State crimes or resold at a profit.

Recently, I received a truly shocking briefing from Federal law enforcement officials about the cases in Maine that fit this pattern. Let me tell you about one. Gang members trafficked in crack cocaine and heroin between New Haven, CT, and Bangor, ME, where I live. They were later charged with acts of violence, including assault, armed robberies, attempted murder, and murder. Law enforcement's investigation revealed that they had gotten the firearms by trading narcotics for them in Bangor, ME. They then distributed these guns to other gang members.

The terrorist attack in San Bernardino, CA, is another tragic example of how straw purchasing can lead to horrific crimes. In this case it is believed that the individual straw-purchased two assault rifles that were later used in the terrorist attack that killed 14 people. He has been charged with making a false statement in relation to the purchase of those firearms. Our bill, the Stop Illegal Trafficking in Firearms Act could have allowed law enforcement officials to charge this individual with straw purchasing and the trafficking of firearms rather than just a paperwork violation.

Our bill also strengthens existing laws that prohibit gun smuggling. Right now it is illegal for someone to smuggle a firearm into the United States with the intent to engage in drug trafficking or violent crime.

To combat the drug cartels operating across our southern border, we must also prohibit firearms from being trafficked out of the United States for these illegal purchases and purposes. In doing so, our bill would provide an important tool to combatting the trafficking organizations that are exporting firearms and ammunition from the United States and into Mexico, where they are used by drug cartels that are fueling the heroin crisis here at home.

According to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, out of the nearly 105,000 firearms recovered in Mexico in the last 5 years, more than 73,000 were sourced to the United States. Similarly, a large percentage of guns used in crimes in our largest cities were trafficked across State lines.

Let me emphasize that our bill protects the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding citizens. It protects legitimate, private gun sales and is drafted to avoid sweeping in innocent transactions and placing unnecessary burdens on lawful, private sales. It expressly exempts certain transactions that are allowed under current law, such as gifts, raffles or auctions. There is absolutely nothing in our bill that would, for example, prohibit a father from giving a hunting rifle to his daughter as a gift. Furthermore, our bill expressly prohibits the act from being used to establish a Federal firearms registry, which I strongly oppose.

This Stop Illegal Trafficking in Firearms Act takes guns out of the hands of criminals without infringing upon the constitutional rights of law-abiding citizens.

We have had many discussions in this Chamber, in our caucuses, and in our

committees about the heroin crisis that is gripping far too many families and communities in States across the Nation, including the State of Maine.

We need to take a comprehensive approach that includes strengthening law enforcement, providing treatment, and increasing education and prevention efforts. This bill is one piece of the law enforcement puzzle as we seek to combat this terrible epidemic that is ruining so many lives.

I urge our colleagues to join Senator LEAHY and me in supporting our legislation.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. 2548. A bill to establish the 400 Years of African-American History Commission, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, today I am introducing the 400 Years of African American History Commission Act.

During my tenure as Governor of Virginia I presided over the 400th anniversary of the founding of Jamestown, VA, by the English colonists in 1604. Last year I attended the 450th anniversary of the founding of St. Augustine, FL, which celebrated Hispanic heritage. Both commemorations included activities sponsored by federal commissions, which were voted on and passed by Congress. In three years, in 2019, we will mark another key anniversary in American history. August 2019 will mark 400 years after the first documented arrival of Africans who came to English America by way of Point Comfort, Virginia. Although in 1619 slavery was not yet an institution the ''20 and odd'' Africans, as it was recorded, were the first recorded group of Africans to be sold as involuntary laborers or indentured servants in the colonies.

Having commemorated the English and Spanish heritage of our founding there is no reason it should be any different for the arrival and continuous presence of Africans and African Americans in the English settlements in 1619. There is no dispute that the beginning of African and African American presence in what is now the United States was both tragic and regrettable. Slavery as an institution broke up families, resulted in the deaths of thousands, and caused irreparable damage to our American psyche. Though we should never forget that period of stain on our history, slavery is not the only part of African American history. We must remember the whole story. African Americans have contributed to the economic, academic, social, cultural and moral well-being of this nation.

So today with my cosponsor Senator MARK WARNER, I introduce the 400 Years of African American History Commission Act, which would establish a commission that would plan programs and activities across the county to recognize the arrival and influence of African Americans since 1619. It is my hope the establishment of a ''400th'' commission would create an opportunity to bring continued national education about the significance the arrival of African Americans has made to the U.S., and the contributions that have been made since 1619. Additionally, the commission would create space to discuss race relations in America and focus on dismantling the institutional systems that have adversely hindered African American progress.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. COONS, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. CASEY, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2551. A bill to help prevent acts of genocide and mass atrocities, which threaten national and international security, by enhancing United States civilian capacities to prevent and mitigate such crises; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, on April 10, 2014, I introduced the Syrian War Crimes Accountability Act in this Chamber. Three days earlier, the world had marked the 20th anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda, one of the most horrific events in modern history that unfolded as the world stood back and watched. At that time I noted that, ''[u]nfortunately, we have not learned the lessons of the past. We must do better to not only see that sort of atrocities never again occur under our watch . . .'' That statement was not only a reflection of my beliefs, but a promise to keep the issue of atrocity prevention in front of the Senate and the American people.

So today, under the heavy cloud of atrocities occurring in Syria, South Sudan, and elsewhere, I come to address this body again. I am here today not to look backward about actions not taken. I am here today to stress that our job, our responsibility, is to make sure the United States has the tools—diplomatic, political, economic, and legal—to take effective action before atrocities occur. Essential to this is authorizing the Atrocities Prevention Board, and ensuring that the United States Government has structures in place and the mechanisms at hand to better prevent and respond to potential atrocities.

President Obama, when he established the Atrocities Prevention Board in 2012, said that, ''preventing genocide [is] an 'achievable goal' but one that require[s] a degree of governmental organization that matches the kind of methodical organization that accompanies mass killings''.

I am introducing the Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act of 2016 to ensure that we do just that. I am joined in this effort by Senators TILLIS, MURPHY, MENENDEZ, SHAHEEN, BROWN, GILLIBRAND, BLUMENTHAL, COONS, MIKULSKI, MARKEY, MERKLEY, and BOXER. This bill authorizes the Board, which is a transparent, accountable, high-level, interagency board that includes representatives at the assistant secretary level or higher from departments and agencies across the U.S. Government.

The Board will meet monthly to oversee the development and implementation of atrocity prevention and response policy, and additionally address over the horizon potential atrocities through the use of a wide variety of tools, so that we can take effective action to prevent atrocities from occurring.

This bill gives our Foreign Service Officers the training they need to recognize patterns of escalation and early warning signs of potential atrocities and conflict. With this training, we will, over time, build atrocity prevention into the core skillset of our people on the ground. They will be equipped to see the warning signs, analyze the events, and engage early.

This bill also codifies the Complex Crises Fund, which has been a crucial tool to our ability to quickly respond to emerging crises overseas, including potential mass atrocities and conflict. We used the Complex Crises Fund in Tunisia during their Arab Spring and in Sri Lanka after its civil war. We've used it to respond quickly in Kenya and Cote d'Ivoire, where it has helped save lives.

Importantly, this bill builds greater transparency and accountability into the structure of the Atrocities Prevention Board. Civil society will have a say, and Congress will have a greater oversight role to make sure we are getting this right.

Mr. President, this is a good bill. It does good things, and places the United States on solid moral ground. But the moral argument alone is not enough. We must also remember that America's security, and that of our allies, is affected when civilians are slaughtered. Our security is impacted when desperate refugees stream across borders. Our security is affected when perpetrators of extraordinary violence wreak havoc on regional stability, destroying communities, families, and livelihoods. We have seen groups like ISIS systematically targeting communities on the basis of their ethnicity or religious beliefs and practices, including Yezidi, Christian, and Turkmen populations, but over sixty years after the Holocaust, we still lack a comprehensive framework to prevent and respond to mass atrocities and genocide.

So, let this bill act as our framework, and also our call to action, so that when we use the phrase 'never again', we know that we are taking meaningful preventative action.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 2552. A bill to amend section 875(c) of title 18, United States Code, to include an intent requirement; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise to introduce the Interstate Threats Clarification Act, which is a necessary bill to clarify the ''level of intent'' required to convict someone for making threats to injure or kidnap another person.

I would like to thank Senators DURBIN, WHITEHOUSE, and KLOBUCHAR for cosponsoring the bill.

In June 2015, the Supreme Court issued a decision in Elonis v. United States, a case involving a man who was convicted for posting on Facebook ''crude, degrading, and violent'' threats against his co-workers, ex-wife, law enforcement personnel, and a kindergarten class.

The man started posting the violent and threatening posts after his wife of nearly 7 years left him and took with her their two young children.

The threats made over Facebook caused his ex-wife to feel ''extremely afraid'' for her life, leading her to obtain a restraining order against him.

But that did not stop the man, who then posted on Facebook to communicate to his ex-wife that she ''[f]old up your [restraining order] and put it in your pocket / Is it thick enough to stop a bullet?''

That same month, he continued to make violent posts, including one that indicated that ''[e]nough elementary schools in a ten mile radius to initiate the most heinous school shooting ever imagined / And hell hath no fury like a crazy man in a Kindergarten class.''

After viewing the posts, an FBI agent and another investigator visited the man at his home, where he was ''polite but uncooperative.'' After they left, he posted the following:

> Little Agent lady stood so close
> Took all the strength I had not to turn the b**** ghost
> Pull my knife, flick my wrist, and slit her throat
> Leave her bleedin' from her jugular in the arms of her partner.

The post went on to threaten what would happen if he was visited again by the agent, including the possible use of explosives.

Due to these threats and others, the man was convicted for making threats to inflict bodily harm under Section 875(c) of Title 18.

This law prohibits the transmission of a communication that contains a threat to injure or kidnap another person.

The man appealed, saying the lower court did not apply the correct level of intent for a conviction.

When the case reached the Supreme Court, the Court overturned the conviction.

The Court found that the law requires the government to prove some type of ''wrongful'' intent by the man—''negligence'' was not enough for a criminal conviction under this law.

The Court's opinion, however, left significant ambiguity regarding what the government must prove for a conviction under the statute.

The Supreme Court simply did not specify the exact ''level of intent'' required for a conviction.

Justice Alito highlighted the problem of the ambiguity in his partial dissent, stating, ''[a]ttorneys and judges are left to guess'' as to the level of intent required.

This ambiguity has left judges and prosecutors in the dark about what the law requires, and has raised concerns among domestic violence victims because prosecutors and judges may now be hesitant to fully enforce the law.

This is why Congressional action is necessary.

The Interstate Threats Clarification Act solves this ambiguity.

It clarifies that, under Section 875(c) of Title 18, the Government has three options to obtain a conviction. It can prove that a defendant either intended, had knowledge, or recklessly disregarded the risk, that the communication would be reasonably interpreted as a threat.

This is exactly what Justice Alito said would be sufficient in his opinion.

As Justice Alito stated when analyzing the statute in the context of the case, ''[s]omeone who acts recklessly with respect to conveying a threat necessarily grasps that he is not engaged in innocent conduct.''

I agree.

Someone who posts violent and crude threats to harm or kidnap judges, domestic violence victims, vulnerable members of society, military personnel, and law enforcement personnel, must be held accountable for their reckless conduct.

This bill clarifies for judges and attorneys alike the proof required to convict those who make such threats to injure or kidnap such persons.

I also appreciate the work done by a coalition of domestic violence organizations that have worked with me on the bill, including the National Network to End Domestic Violence, the Domestic Violence Legal Empowerment and Appeals Project, the National Center for Victims of Crime, the American Association of University Women, Futures Without Violence, Jewish Women International, Legal Momentum, National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the National Domestic Violence Hotline, and the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence.

I also appreciate the strong support for the bill from law enforcement, including the National District Attorneys Association, the Fraternal Order of Police, the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, and the Major Cities Chiefs Association.

This bill is necessary to clarify Federal law about criminal threats and ensure that those who send them are prosecuted. I urge my colleagues to support it.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3306. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. BLUMENTHAL) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 298, recognizing Connecticut's Submarine Century, the 100th anniversary of the establishment of Naval Submarine Base New London, and Connecticut's historic role in supporting the undersea capabilities of the United States.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3306. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. BLUMENTHAL) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 298, recognizing Connecticut's Submarine Century, the 100th anniversary of the establishment of Naval Submarine Base New London, and Connecticut's historic role in supporting the undersea capabilities of the United States; as follows:

In the second whereas clause in the preamble, strike ''donated land and provided funding'' and insert ''gifted land''.

In the ninth whereas clause in the preamble, strike ''Warfare'' and insert ''Warfighting''.

In the twelfth whereas clause of the preamble, strike ''historic ship Nautilus'' and insert ''Historic Ship NAUTILUS (SSN 571)''.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 11, 2016, at 10 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 11, 2016, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''The Semiannual Monetary Policy Report to the Congress.''

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

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 11, 2016, at 10 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 FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 11, 2016, at 10:15 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Nominations.''

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 11, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct an executive business meeting.

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 11, 2016, at 2:30 p.m.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON REGULATORY AFFAIRS AND FEDERAL MANAGEMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 11, 2016, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Examining Agency Discretion in Setting and Enforcing Regulatory Fines and Penalties.''

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my Marine Corps fellow, Capt. Matt Dalton, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of this legislative session.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to the en bloc consideration of the following nominations under the Privileged section of the Executive Calendar: PN1039, PN1040.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the nominations.

The legislative clerk read the nominations of Morton H. Halperin, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Millennium Challenge Corporation for a term of two years; and Michael O. Johanns, of Nebraska, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Millennium Challenge Corporation for a term of three years.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations en bloc.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I know of no further debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Halperin and Johanns nominations en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nominations; that any related statements be printed in the Record; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of all nominations on the Secretary's desk in the Foreign Service; that the nominations be confirmed; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

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

The nominations considered and confirmed are as follows:

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

IN THE FOREIGN SERVICE

PN573–5 FOREIGN SERVICE nomination of Christopher Nairn Steel, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 10, 2015.

PN830 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (28) beginning Christopher Alexander, and ending Tipten Troidl, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 10, 2015.

PN1085 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (193) beginning Virginia Lynn Bennett, and ending Susan M. Cleary, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 19, 2016.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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

TO ALLOW THE MIAMI TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA TO LEASE OR TRANSFER CERTAIN LANDS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 349, H.R. 487.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 487) to allow the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma to lease or transfer certain lands.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (H.R. 487) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

CALLING ON THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAN TO FULFILL ITS PROMISES OF ASSISTANCE IN THE CASE OF ROBERT LEVINSON

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 365, S. Res. 99.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (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.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment and an amendment to the preamble and an amendment to the title.

(Strike out all after the resolving clause and insert the part printed in italic.)

(Strike the preamble and insert the part printed in italic.)

S. RES. 99

Whereas United States citizen Robert Levinson is a retired agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), a resident of Coral Springs, Florida, the husband of Christine Levinson, and father of their seven children;

Whereas Robert Levinson traveled from Dubai, United Arab Emirates, to Kish Island, Iran, on March 8, 2007;

Whereas, after traveling to Kish Island and checking into the Hotel Maryam, Robert Levinson disappeared on March 9, 2007;

Whereas, in December 2007, Robert Levinson's wife, Christine, traveled to Kish Island to retrace Mr. Levinson's steps and met with officials of the Government of Iran who pledged to help in the investigation;

Whereas, for more than eight years, the United States Government has continually pressed the Government of Iran to provide any information on the whereabouts of Robert Levinson and to help ensure his prompt and safe return to his family;

Whereas officials of the Government of Iran promised their continued assistance to the relatives of Robert Levinson during the visit of the family to the Islamic Republic of Iran in December 2007;

Whereas, in November 2010, the Levinson family received a video of Mr. Levinson in captivity, representing the first proof of life since his disappearance and providing some initial indications that he was being held somewhere in southwest Asia;

Whereas, in April 2011, the Levinson family received a series of pictures of Mr. Levinson, which provided further indications that he was being held somewhere in southwest Asia;

Whereas Secretary of State John Kerry stated on August 28, 2013, ''The United States respectfully asks the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to work cooperatively with us in our efforts to help U.S. citizen Robert Levinson.'';

Whereas, on September 28, 2013, during the first direct phone conversation between the heads of governments of the United States and Iran since 1979, President Barack Obama raised the case of Robert Levinson to President of Iran Hassan Rouhani and urged the President of Iran to help locate Mr. Levinson and reunite him with his family;

Whereas, on August 29, 2014, Secretary of State Kerry again stated that the United States ''respectfully request[s] the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran work cooperatively with us to find Mr. Levinson and bring him home'';

Whereas, on July 14, 2015, the Governments of the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, China, Germany, and Iran agreed to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action;

Whereas, on January 16, 2016, the Government of Iran released five United States citizens detained in Iran, Jason Rezaian of California, Saeed Abedini of Idaho, Amir Mirzaei Hekmati of Michigan, Matthew Trevithick of Massachusetts, and Nosratollah Khosravi-Roodsari;

Whereas, on January 17, 2016, President Obama stated that ''even as we rejoice in the safe return of others, we will never forget about Bob,'' referring to Robert Levinson, and that ''each and every day but especially today our hearts are with the Levinson family and we will never rest until their family is whole again'';

Whereas, on January 19, 2016, White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest stated that the United States Government had ''secured a commitment from the Iranians to use the channel that has now been opened to secure the release of those individuals that we know were being held by Iran. . .to try and gather information about Mr. Levinson's possible whereabouts'';

Whereas, on November 26, 2013, Mr. Levinson became the longest held United States civilian in our Nation's history; and

Whereas the Federal Bureau of Investigation has announced a $5,000,000 reward for information leading to Mr. Levinson's safe return: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved,

That the Senate—

(1) recognizes that Robert Levinson is the longest held United States civilian in our Nation's history;

(2) notes the repeated pledges by and renewed commitment of officials of the Government of Iran to provide their Government's assistance in the case of Robert Levinson;

(3) urges the Government of Iran, as a humanitarian gesture, to act on its promises to assist in the case of Robert Levinson and to immediately provide all available information from all entities of the Government of Iran regarding the disappearance of Robert Levinson to the United States Government;

(4) urges the President and the allies of the United States to continue to raise with officials of the Government of Iran the case of Robert Levinson at every opportunity, notwithstanding ongoing and serious disagreements the United States Government has with the Government of Iran on a broad array of issues, including Iran's ballistic missile program, sponsorship of international terrorism, and human rights abuses; and

(5) expresses sympathy to the family of Robert Levinson for their anguish and expresses hope that their ordeal can be brought to an end in the near future.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendment to the resolution be agreed to; the resolution, as amended, be agreed to; the committee-reported amendment to the preamble be agreed to; the preamble, as amended, be agreed to; that the committee-reported title amendment be agreed to; and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The resolution (S. Res. 99), as amended, was agreed to.

The committee-reported amendment to the preamble in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The committee-reported title amendment was agreed to, as follows:

Amend the title so as to read: ''A resolution calling on the Government of Iran to follow through on repeated promises of assistance in the case of Robert Levinson, the longest held United States civilian in our Nation's history.''.

RECOGNIZING CONNECTICUT'S SUBMARINE CENTURY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 298 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 298) recognizing Connecticut's Submarine Century, the 100th anniversary of the establishment of Naval Submarine Base New London, and Connecticut's historic role in supporting the undersea capabilities of the United States.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask that the Senate proceed to vote on adoption of the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

Hearing none, the question is on agreeing to the resolution.

The resolution (S. Res. 298) was agreed to.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Blumenthal amendment, which is at the desk, be agreed to.

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

The amendment (No. 3306) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To make technical corrections in the preamble)

In the second whereas clause in the preamble, strike ''donated land and provided funding'' and insert ''gifted land''.

In the ninth whereas clause in the preamble, strike ''Warfare'' and insert ''Warfighting''.

In the twelfth whereas clause of the preamble, strike ''historic ship Nautilus'' and insert ''Historic Ship NAUTILUS (SSN 571)''.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I finally ask unanimous consent that the preamble, as amended, be agreed to and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, as amended, reads as follows:

S. RES. 298

Whereas, on March 2, 1867, Congress enacted a naval appropriations Act that authorized the Secretary of the Navy to ''receive and accept a deed of gift, when offered by the State of Connecticut, of a tract of land with not less than one mile of shore front on the Thames River near New London, Connecticut, to be held by the United States for naval purposes'';

Whereas the people of Connecticut and the towns and cities in the southeastern region of Connecticut subsequently gifted land to establish a military installation to fulfil the Nation's need for a naval facility on the Atlantic coast;

Whereas, on April 11, 1868, the Navy accepted the deed of gift of land from Connecticut to establish a naval yard and storage depot along the eastern shore of the Thames River in Groton, Connecticut;

Whereas, between 1868 and 1912, the New London Navy Yard supported a diverse range of missions, including berthing inactive Civil War era ironclad warships and serving as a coaling station for refueling naval ships traveling in New England waters;

Whereas Congress rejected the Navy's proposal to close New London Navy Yard in 1912, following an impassioned effort by Congressman Edwin W. Higgins, who stated that this ''action proposed is not only unjust but unreasonable and unsound as a military proposition'';

Whereas the outbreak of World War I and the enemy use of submarines to sink allied military and civilian ships in the Atlantic sparked a new focus on developing submarine capabilities in the United States;

Whereas October 18, 1915, marked the arrival at the New London Navy Yard of the submarines G–1, G–2, and G–4 under the care of the tender USS OZARK, soon followed by the arrival of submarines E–1, D–1, and D–3 under the care of the tender USS TONOPAH, and on November 1, 1915, the arrival of the first ship built as a submarine tender, the USS FULTON (AS–1);

Whereas, on June 21, 1916, Commander Yeates Stirling assumed the command of the newly designated Naval Submarine Base New London, the New London Submarine Flotilla, and the Submarine School;

Whereas in the 100 years since the arrival of the first submarines to the base, Naval Submarine Base New London has grown to occupy more than 680 acres along the east side of the Thames River, with more than 160 major facilities, 15 nuclear submarines, and more than 70 tenant commands and activities, including the Submarine Learning Center, Naval Submarine School, the Naval Submarine Medical Research Laboratory, the Naval Undersea Medical Institute, and the newly established Undersea Warfighting Development Center;

Whereas in addition to being the site of the first submarine base in the United States, Connecticut was home to the foremost submarine manufacturers of the time, the Lake Torpedo Boat Company in Bridgeport and the Electric Boat Company in Groton, which later became General Dynamics Electric Boat;

Whereas General Dynamics Electric Boat, its talented workforce, and its Connecticut-based and nationwide network of suppliers have delivered more than 200 submarines from its current location in Groton, Connecticut, including the first nuclear-powered submarine, the USS NAUTILUS (SSN 571), and nearly half of the nuclear submarines ever built by the United States;

Whereas the Submarine Force Library and Museum, located adjacent to Naval Submarine Base New London in Groton, Connecticut, is the only submarine museum operated by the United States Navy and today serves as the primary repository for artifacts, documents, and photographs relating to the bold and courageous history of the Submarine Force and highlights as its core exhibit the Historic Ship NAUTILUS (SSN 571) following her retirement from service;

Whereas reflecting the close ties between Connecticut and the Navy that began with the gift of land that established the base, the State of Connecticut has set aside $40,000,000 in funding for critical infrastructure investments to support the mission of the base, including construction of a new dive locker building, expansion of the Submarine Learning Center, and modernization of energy infrastructure;

Whereas, on September 29, 2015, Connecticut Governor Dannel Malloy designated October 2015 through October 2016 as Connecticut's Submarine Century, a year-long observance that celebrates 100 years of submarine activity in Connecticut, including the Town of Groton's distinction as the Submarine Capital of the World, to coincide with the centennial anniversary of the establishment of Naval Submarine Base New London and the Naval Submarine School;

Whereas Naval Submarine Base New London still proudly proclaims its motto of ''The First and Finest''; and

Whereas Congressman Higgins' statement before Congress in 1912 that ''Connecticut stands ready, as she always has, to bear her part of the burdens of the national defense'' remains true today: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commends the longstanding dedication and contribution to the Navy and submarine force by the people of Connecticut, both through the initial deed of gift that established what would become Naval Submarine Base New London and through their ongoing commitment to support the mission of the base and the Navy personnel assigned to it;

(2) honors the submariners who have trained and served at Naval Submarine Base New London throughout its history in support of the Nation's security and undersea superiority;

(3) recognizes the contribution of the industry and workforce of Connecticut in designing, building, and sustaining the Navy's submarine fleet; and

(4) encourages the recognition of Connecticut's Submarine Century by Congress, the Navy, and the American people by honoring the contribution of the people of Connecticut to the defense of the United States and the important role of the submarine force in safeguarding the security of the United States for more than a century.

ORDERS FOR FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2016

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. tomorrow, Friday, February 12; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator MARKEY.

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

The Senator from Massachusetts.

NOMINATION OF ROBERT CALIFF

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I am here to speak in opposition to the nomination of Dr. Robert Califf to be the head of the Food and Drug Administration.

I understand that Leader MCCONNELL has asked that cloture be filed on Dr. Califf's nomination. I understand that. I appreciate it. But we need to have a debate in this country on opioids. While I am disappointed that the majority leader is taking this step, I am committed to continuing to work on this issue, and using Dr. Robert Califf's nomination is the means by which we can have a debate here on the floor of the Senate on these issues.

(Mr. MCCONNELL assumed the Chair.)

I am here to speak about a public health epidemic that every year kills more people in the United States than gun violence or motor vehicle accidents. What does this epidemic look like? Well, it looks like this: Last year 30,000 Americans died of an opioid overdose. More than 1,300 of those were from my home State of Massachusetts. In the city of Brockton, MA, last month, in January, in the span of 48 hours, 40 people overdosed on opioids. I will say that again. In Brockton, in 48 hours, 40 people overdosed on opioids.

Between 2000 and 2013, the rate of death from heroin overdoses nearly quadrupled. The United States is less than 5 percent of the world's population, but we consume 80 percent of the world's opioid pain killers. Drug overdoses are increasing the death rates of young adults in the United States to levels not experienced since the AIDS epidemic more than 20 years ago. These skyrocketing death rates make these young adults the first generation since the time of the Vietnam war to experience higher death rates in early adulthood than the generation that preceded it.

Let's compare what we did as a nation when we confronted other deadly epidemics. A bipartisan majority in Congress funded more than $5 billion to respond to Ebola. We dispatched the medical community and public health experts. We built entire facilities to ensure we stopped the spread of the deadly virus. Today, the Obama administration is asking Congress for $1.8 billion in emergency funding to fight the Zika virus. Imagine if we applied the same commitment, the same urgency, the same level of resources to the prescription drug and heroin epidemic.

Yet, despite this raging epidemic, one would think the Food and Drug Administration—the agency responsible for the safety of all prescription drugs in the United States—would welcome every bit of expert advice it can get from doctors and other public health professionals. In fact, the FDA's own rules call for it to establish an independent advisory committee of experts to assist the agency when it considers a question that is controversial or of great public interest, such as whether to allow a new addictive prescription painkiller to be marketed in the United States. Instead, the FDA has put a sign in its window: No Help Wanted. That is what this nomination of Dr. Robert Califf is all about.

The FDA began turning its back on advisory committees in 2013 when an advisory panel to review the powerful opioid painkiller Zohydro voted 11 to 2 against recommending its approval. But the agency approved the drug anyway, overruling the concerns voiced by experienced physicians on the panel. Those experts criticized the agency for ignoring the growing epidemic fueled by OxyContin—the heavily abused prescription painkiller the FDA first approved back in 1995. They warned about the growing dangers of addiction, of abuse and dependence associated with this entire class of opioid painkillers. Justifiably, the FDA was lambasted for its decision to approve Zohydro by public health experts, doctors, Governors, and Members of Congress. But despite those warnings of the real-world dangers of abuse and dependence on these new, supercharged opioid painkillers, the FDA willfully blinded itself to the warning signs.

In 2014, in the wake of the Zohydro decision, the FDA twice skipped the advisory committee process altogether when it approved the new prescription opioids Targiniq and Hysingla.

Then, in August of 2015, the FDA did it again, this time by bypassing an advisory committee on the question of a new use for OxyContin for children aged 11 to 16. This time the FDA even ignored its own rules that specifically call for advisory committee advice when a question of ''pediatric dosing'' is involved.

At this point, it became clear that the FDA was intentionally choosing to forgo an advisory committee in order to avoid another overwhelming vote recommending against approval of a prescription opioid. And why did they do it? Well, because the FDA would then have had to ignore yet another group of experts in order to continue

its relentless march to put more drugs on the market.

With the OxyContin-for-kids decision, the FDA's reckless attitude toward expert advice on drug safety went too far. Children whose brains are not yet fully developed are especially vulnerable to drug dependency and abuse. Yet the agency focused its so-called safety analysis only on concerns about proper dosing, saying that it needed to tell doctors the proper doses for children who needed the drug. That is just plain wrong. We use experts to determine if child car seats are safe, if toothpaste is safe, and if vaccines are safe. We should also use experts to determine if those opioid painkillers are safe for the children in the United States of America.

We need to immediately reform the Food and Drug Administration's opioid approval process if we want to stop this epidemic of prescription drug and heroin addiction in the United States.

When I placed a hold on the nomination of Dr. Califf to head the FDA, I called on the FDA to commit to convening an advisory panel of outside experts for every single opioid approval question it reviewed. Here is how the FDA responded: It responded by committing to convene outside experts but only for opioids that are not abuse-deterrent. Let's be clear. I want everyone in this Chamber to understand this: ''Abuse-deterrent opioid'' is an oxymoron, like ''jumbo shrimp'' or ''congressional expert.'' There is no such thing. When we hear the term ''abuse-deterrent,'' think of pills that are tamper-resistant. They are supposed to be difficult to crush or chew or cut open or tamper with. But nothing about abuse-deterrent opioid prevents addiction. There is no such thing as abuse deterrence if you are suffering from addiction and have access to the Internet, where you can find out just how easy these painkillers are to manipulate and abuse. Whether an opioid is abuse-deterrent or not hasn't prevented tens of thousands of people who have had their wisdom teeth extracted or experienced lower back pain from getting addicted to these painkillers.

By refusing to convene advisory committees to reform all of its opioid approval decisions, the FDA continues to ignore outside experts who could help stem the tide of tragic deaths and overdoses plaguing this country.

This all started back with the FDA's 1995 approval of the original OxyContin—the moment in history that is widely recognized as the starting point for the prescription opioid and heroin overdose epidemic in the United States. It started with the FDA. The FDA approved the original version of OxyContin—an extended-release opioid—believing that it ''would result in less abuse potential, since the drug would be absorbed slowly and there would not be an immediate 'rush' or high that would promote abuse.'' Since then, the claims that opioid is abuse-deterrent have time and again proven oxymoronic.

FDA's own guidelines recognize the inherent contradiction in the term ''abuse-deterrent,'' explaining:

> It should be noted that [abuse-deterrent] technologies have not yet been proven successful at deterring the most common form of abuse—swallowing a number of intact capsules or tablets to achieve a feeling of euphoria. Moreover, the fact that a product has abuse-deterrent properties does not mean there is no risk of abuse.

That is from the FDA's own guidelines.

In many cases, the FDA approved so-called abuse-deterrent opioids despite warnings from the medical community about the potential for abuse. And when it wasn't turning a blind eye to the warnings of experts, the FDA simply didn't engage them at all in approval of opioids with abuse-deterrent properties. With numerous approvals of so-called abuse-deterrent opioids since 2010, the agency convened advisory committees for less than half of them.

This issue of abuse deterrence is not a hypothetical concern. The new policy announced by the FDA would not have guaranteed an advisory panel for the OxyContin that is on the market today and being sold in tens of millions of doses or for the other recently approved opioids that have raised serious concerns from public health and medical experts from around our country. The FDA is attempting to set up a system where nothing really changes.

We will not solve the prescription drug crisis with an FDA that operates with business as usual and continues to turn its back to external experts. The FDA needs to welcome outside expert advice and must convene expert advisory panels for all opioid approval decisions, period. Until the FDA makes that commitment, I am going to continue to raise my voice in opposition to the nomination of Dr. Califf.

This is an issue that is central in our country. The terrorist phone call that families in America are afraid of getting is not one from overseas; it is that a member of their family has fallen victim to this prescription drug opioid crisis. It is in every city, every town in our country. We have seen a quadrupling of the number of heroin deaths in our country in the last 13 years, and 80 percent of them started with OxyContin, with Percocet, with one of these prescription drugs.

We need the FDA to do the right thing, and until they do, we need to debate out here on the floor what the responsibilities will be of this new FDA Commissioner, because they have been unwilling to change their policy. Until they do, these people and communities all across our country are going to be helpless. They are going to be helpless because families think that if a bottle is given to them by an expert, they can trust it. And when their children die—when their children die—they ask themselves the question: Could I have done more? It starts with the FDA. It starts with MEA, mandatory education for physicians. It starts there. If we don't do this, then those families are still going to be having the same result year after year after year.

I thank the majority leader for sitting and hearing my objections. The majority leader and I have had many conversations about this subject, and I know of his deep concern on this issue. I think this is something that can be corrected. I hope it can be corrected. It must be corrected.

I thank the majority leader for staying to hear my presentation.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:21 p.m., adjourned until Friday, February 12, 2016, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

THE JUDICIARY

ABDUL K. KALLON, OF ALABAMA, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE ELEVENTH CIRCUIT, VICE JOEL F. DUBINA, RETIRED.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

JOHN B. KING, OF NEW YORK, TO BE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION, VICE ARNE DUNCAN.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate February 11, 2016:

THE JUDICIARY

LEONARD TERRY STRAND, OF SOUTH DAKOTA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF IOWA.

FOREIGN SERVICE

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATION OF CHRISTOPHER NAIRN STEEL.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH CHRISTOPHER ALEXANDER AND ENDING WITH TIPTEN TROIDL, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON SEPTEMBER 10, 2015.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH VIRGINIA LYNN BENNETT AND ENDING WITH SUSAN M. CLEARY, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 19, 2016.

MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION

MORTON H. HALPERIN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION FOR A TERM OF TWO YEARS.

MICHAEL O. JOHANNS, OF NEBRASKA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION FOR A TERM OF THREE YEARS.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union 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:

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chair, today, I will vote no on H.R. 3293, the so-called ''Scientific Research in the National Interest'' Act.

This bill is the latest in the House Majority's campaign to undermine science and the scientific community. The scientific peer-based, merit review process that the National Science Foundation (NSF) currently has in place is widely regarded as the ''gold standard'' for funding scientific research. This bill would add unnecessary bureaucratic paperwork to this process, but more troublingly, it would undermine our nation's basic research enterprise. The attempts to insert politics into this process have already caused our nation's scientists to shy away from high-risk, potentially high-reward research that some House members may find controversial.

We must not allow elected officials to arbitrarily override expert scientific review. We have seen this type of stunt time and time again with efforts to undermine climate change science, and today, the target is on basic research. It is time to stop this charade. We should be focusing more on evidence-based, performance-based policymaking, rather than finding a solution in search of a problem.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union 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:

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Chair, I want to state my support for H.R. 3293, the Scientific Research in the National Interest Act. This bill, in an effort to enhance transparency and accountability at the National Science Foundation (NSF), would include a determination by the NSF that any grant or cooperative agreement by the NSF promotes the progress of science by being in the national interest.

Under this bill's broad definitions of what ''is in the national interest'', I expect that for virtually all successful grant applications, the NSF would have no difficulty in making the certification. Section 2(b)(2)(G)'s ''promotion of the progress of science for the United States'' is such a broad justification for determining if research is within the national interest, that it likely covers all current research being funded by the NSF and could cover all future directions that the Foundation would like to explore. Any research that advances the frontiers of knowledge and drives technological innovation promotes the progress of science for the United States.

I would like to point out that all the justifications of Section 2(b)(2) can be construed both broadly and liberally. For example, Section 2(b)(2)(A)'s inclusion of ''increased economic competitiveness in the United States'' could encompass all funding that promotes the progress of engineering, physics, chemistry, biology, astronomy, and mathematics in order to build and strengthen our national capacity for innovation and production.

Section 2(b)(2)(B)'s ''advancement of the health and welfare of the American public'' could include research into biology, life, the natural world, and the environment. Behavioral and social science research could also fall under the ''advancement of the health and welfare of the American public'' justification as well, because behavioral and social science build fundamental knowledge of human behavior, interaction, and social and economic systems that underpin the health and welfare of our society.

Section 2(b)(2)(C)'s ''development of an American STEM workforce that is globally competitive'' could be seen as promoting STEM education at all levels and in all settings, including both formal and informal settings. Having a well-informed workforce that has access to the ideas and tools associated with STEM education serves to enhance the quality of life of all citizens while promoting U.S. economic competitiveness, advancing the health and welfare of the American public, and supporting the national defense.

To reiterate, I believe that Section 2(b)(2) of this bill is to be construed broadly and liberally. I believe that the inclusion of Section 2(b)(2)(G)'s ''promotion of the progress of science for the United States'' likely covers all current and future research engaged in by the NSF. Further, I believe that the fact that the Foundation is provided the discretion to make the determination allows the NSF ample room to continue its desired research. And I expect that for virtually all successful grant applicants, the NSF will have no difficulty in making this determination applaud Chairman SMITH for his work on this important legislation.

HONORING THE LIFE OF IRENE R. CARDAMONE

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Irene R. Cardamone, 90, who passed away on February 2, 2016. Irene was born on October 21, 1925 in Cleveland, Ohio.

Irene graduated from North Royalton High School. She worked as a customer service representative with Insurance Diversified Agency in Solon, Ohio and once had her own catering company, Irene's Catering. Irene's passions included golf, sewing, crafts, and cooking. She was known to be a wonderful baker. She loved to travel, especially to the beach. Irene was a big baseball fan. She loved the Yankees, Derek Jeter, and the Cleveland Indians. Irene was happiest when she was with her wonderful family. She had a quick wit, and never forgot anyone's birthday. She will be remembered by her family and friends as a loving, caring, outgoing, and friendly woman, who always had a smile on her face.

Irene will be deeply missed by her family and friends. She leaves behind three children; Janet Carson (husband Terry), Nancy Vecchio (husband James), and MaryLou Mele (husband Paul); nine grandchildren; Carolyn Osters (Michael), Joseph Cardamone, Andrew Carson (Kelli), April Carson (James Ewing), Salvatore Vecchio (Sheridan), Cara Berg (Ryan), James Vecchio (Christine), Kristin Mele, Nicholas Mele; and 13 great-grandchildren.

Irene was preceded in death by her beloved husband, John S. Sr.; son, John S. Jr.; and sister, Alice Humphrey.

Losses like these are never easy, but we can all take comfort in the fact that Irene led a long and fulfilling life. She will live on in our memory and in the memory of her beautiful family.

TRIBUTE TO FRANCES GARLAND

HON. BOB GOODLATTE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, Frances Garland once stated that she thought of herself first as a housewife and desired to be only a successful mother. Her personal view of her life as it unfolded does not do justice to how much she was appreciated by so many whom she touched, whether family or friends. Frances was one of my longtime friends in Roanoke, Virginia and one of my constituents for the past 23 years until she passed away on January 12 at age 91. The Roanoke community is grieving this loss and we continue to

keep her husband of 72 years, Bob, in our thoughts and prayers.

As someone new to Roanoke in the mid-1970s, Frances and Bob were among the first folks I met when I moved to the Star City with my wife to work for Sixth District Congressman Caldwell Butler. I knew the Garlands for owning and operating Garland's Drug Store in Roanoke's Grandin Village and then came to know them even better because of the role that Bob played as a member of Roanoke City Council and the work that Frances did as a stalwart in the Republican Party. Feeling the tug created by her husband's political service, Frances volunteered in a variety of important capacities—as a precinct captain in Roanoke, for four years as leader of the Virginia Federation of Republican Women (VFRW) in 1972, as one of the first female members of the Republican Party of Virginia's State Central Committee, as an alternate delegate to the 1976 Republican National Convention, and as a Presidential Elector in 1992. Her leadership of the VFRW was instrumental in giving women more important political opportunities throughout the Commonwealth, opportunities that have broadened to this day. She even served three Virginia Governors on the Virginia Commission on the State of Women.

Throughout her 91 years, Frances showed in everything she did that she was committed to being a loving wife and mother, to hard work, and to being a leader who displayed quintessential grace at every turn. My former boss, Congressman Butler, paid tribute to Frances in 1988 on the occasion of her receiving the Governor John N. Dalton Distinguished Service Award at the Virginia Republican State Convention. Congressman Butler said, "We remember her for all the things she has done and all the offices she has held, but we admire her most for her great talent, and for her charm, patience, and quiet dignity with which she has gone about her tasks."

While her tasks on Earth are complete, Frances Garland leaves behind a wonderful family who loved her dearly, a whole host of friends who will miss the renowned get-togethers at the Garland home, and a wide-ranging group of Republicans who will forever remember the invaluable contributions she made to making the party stronger in the Roanoke Valley, the Commonwealth, and our nation. And she did it all through digging in, doing the hard work, and with a talent for having others share in her love of it all.

RECOGNIZING THE RETIREMENT OF ROBERT EDWARD HIGH

HON. MARC A. VEASEY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the retirement of Mr. Robert Edward High and his thirty-seven years of service to the Paris Independent School District. After graduating with a B.S. from Texas A&M University, Mr. High began teaching science at Crockett Junior High School. He has since served in a variety of leadership roles including classroom teacher, coach, elementary and middle school assistant principal, middle school principal, high school principal, personnel director and assistant superintendent.

Mr. High is also active in community and civic affairs. He currently serves as vice-president of the NAACP Branch 6213 and has served as president and past president of the Lamar County Chapter of the American Red Cross. He has also been very involved with the Lamar County Heart Association, Retired Senior Volunteers, Crime Stoppers, March of Dimes, and United Way. He was the first African-American to serve as president of the Lamar County Chamber of Commerce in its 137-year history.

Mr. High's leadership has not gone unnoticed. During his tenure as middle school principal, Crockett Middle School was recognized by Governor Ann Richards as a "Gold Star Partnership School." He has also been named Outstanding Educator of the Year and Administrator of the Year. Additionally, he has received the Martin Luther King African American Heritage Award and the President's Volunteer Service Award under President George W. Bush in 2008.

The NAACP will dedicate the 19th Annual Freedom Banquet in Mr. Robert High's name to commemorate his commitment to education and civil rights in the Paris community and the proceeds of the banquet will support a scholarship in his name.

To celebrate Mr. Robert High's retirement after serving the Paris Independent School District for thirty-seven years, this statement will be submitted on Thursday, February 11, 2016.

HONORING HOUSTON HISPANIC FORUM ON ITS 30TH ANNUAL CAREER AND EDUCATION DAY

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Houston Hispanic Forum for hosting its 30th annual Career and Education Day and for its commitment to the Greater Houston community.

The Houston Hispanic Forum is a community-based, non-profit organization whose mission is to "empower and inspire the success of the large and fast-growing Hispanic community in the Greater Houston area, thereby strengthening the entire community."

This year's Career and Education Day will bring 12,000 middle and high school students from throughout Houston and Harris County and surrounding communities to the George R. Brown Convention Center on February 13 for a day-long event to prepare our students for college and the professional world.

Students and their parents will have the opportunity to speak and learn from experts in over 55 professions, including accounting, journalism, and rocket science. The fair will have over 100 exhibitors, including local and national colleges and universities, trade schools, non-profit organizations, and large companies. Trained experts will be providing valuable assistance on how to apply for federal financial aid, deferred action, and tax consultation.

All of these opportunities and services will be available free of charge.

The economy of the 21st century demands a highly educated workforce. If Houston and Texas are to continue leading our nation in innovation and prosperity, we must educate and train all of our young people, regardless of race, ethnicity, or income, for the new economy. This is why organizations like the Houston Hispanic Forum and events like Career and Education Day are so valuable.

I would like to thank Houston Hispanic Forum President Daniel Contreras and its Board of Directors and staff for all the time and effort putting this special day together.

I would also like to thank our local school districts, colleges and universities for their participation and great efforts they make to provide a world class education to all of Houston's students.

HONORING THE LIFE OF VICTOR S. RUBENSTEIN

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Victor S. Rubenstein, 72, who passed away on Tuesday, February 2, 2016. Victor was born on November 21, 1943 in Youngstown, Ohio, a son of Emmanuel M. and Celia Copeland Rubenstein.

Mr. Rubenstein earned a bachelor's degree in education in 1966 from Youngstown State University, where he was Senior Class president, editor of The Jambar student newspaper, and also YSU's very first "Pete the Penguin" mascot. After graduating from YSU, Victor worked as a junior high school English teacher, publisher and editor of three area weekly newspapers, and as a public-relations director and television host for WYTV.

In 1970, Victor founded Rubenstein Associates, his own marketing and communications agency, beginning a career of remarkable accomplishment. Throughout his career, Victor received over seventy-five awards for excellence in public relations and television production, was appointed to sit on the Governor's Advisory Board to the Ohio Film Bureau, served as the consulting vice-president of marketing for AVI Foodsystems in Warren, OH, and worked as one of the most prominent political consultants in the Mahoning Valley.

Victor had a great love for the Mahoning Valley and his hometown of Youngstown, OH. Victor was known to be a genuine, honest, engaging, and compassionate man. He had an extraordinary love for his family. They were the focal point of his life.

Victor will be deeply missed by his family, friends, and community. He leaves behind his wife, Carolyn Anne, whom he married on December 14, 1978. Together they raised four children; Keith (Susan) of Lake Forest, IL, Kim Rubenstein, Psy.D. (Tom Lundin) of Highland Park, IL, Eric (V.J.), Ph.D., (Lisa, Ph.D.) of Muncie, IN, and Mark (with Ryan Homes) in Charlotte, NC. He also leaves behind four grandchildren Lucille, Sydney, Zachary, and Ella Rubenstein of Lake Forest, IL. He was preceded in death by his parents and several aunts and uncles.

IN MEMORIAM OF THE HONORABLE PAUL MANNES

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Honorable Paul Mannes, an outstanding public servant who, over the course of his 34 years of service as a United States Bankruptcy Judge for the District of Maryland, exemplified the finest qualities of a jurist. Unfortunately, Judge Mannes passed away on January 20, 2016 at the age of 82. He is very much missed by his wife of 58 years, Karen Klein Mannes, and their three sons and daughters-in-law as well as his colleagues on the bench and in the bar.

Born in the District of Columbia on December 25, 1933, Judge Mannes grew up in Chevy Chase, Maryland and went on to Dartmouth, where he majored in philosophy and graduated with honors in 1955. Thereafter, he attended Georgetown University School of Law, where he earned a juris doctor degree in 1958 and a Masters in Law in 1961. After serving as a law clerk to the Honorable Alexander Holtzoff, U.S. District Judge for the District of Columbia, and as an Assistant Corporate Counsel to the District of Columbia, he entered private practice with various law firms. On December 10, 1981, he was sworn in as United States Bankruptcy Judge for the District of Maryland.

During his time on the bench, Judge Mannes published 155 opinions that span more than 500 volumes of the Bankruptcy Reporter. He enjoyed a national reputation in the bankruptcy community as one of America's foremost judges. The Washington Post, for example, praised him in 1991 as the court's ''workhorse.''

In addition to his demanding workload on the bench, Judge Mannes devoted his time to improving the law. In 1987, he was appointed by Chief Justice Rehnquist to the Judicial Conference of the United States Advisory Committee on Bankruptcy Rules and later served as Chairman of the Committee, the first bankruptcy judge to be so honored. He was also active in the National Conference of Bankruptcy Judges, where he served as President from 1992 to 1993, and was a member of the American Bankruptcy Institute, among other professional organizations.

Judge Mannes was also a valuable resource to the Committee on the Judiciary. For example, he testified before the Committee in 1995 and in 2003 on the need for additional bankruptcy judgeships respectively on behalf of the Judicial Conference's Advisory Committee on Bankruptcy Rules and the National Conference of Bankruptcy Judges. He helpfully provided his assistance to Committee staff on both sides of the aisle. He also served on a special advisory group to the National Bankruptcy Review Commission, an independent body created by Congress to study and make recommendations to improve our Nation's bankruptcy laws.

Judge Mannes thoroughly embraced his role as a jurist and served as a mentor to those who were beginning their careers as bankruptcy judges. He and his wife hosted dinners for every new class of newly-appointed bankruptcy judges who attended the judges' orientation seminar at the Federal Judicial Center in Washington, DC. This home-style welcome, which he paid for at his own expense, became a virtual institution that endeared Judge Mannes and his wife to judges from all over the country and enhanced the collegiality of our Nation's bankruptcy bench.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring the life of the Honorable Paul Mannes. He will truly be missed, but his legacy will not soon be forgotten.

A STANDING OVATION FOR INSPIRATION STAGE

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Inspiration Stage Theater Company of Sugar Land for receiving a National Outstanding Performance Award for their January festival performance at the Junior Theater Festival.

Inspiration Stage was founded in 2013, and as the only theater company in Sugar Land, has been attending the Junior Theater Festival since their inception. The performance that won this year's award was a reproduction of Disney's ''The Lion King.'' The 39 cast member performance hosts actors of all ages and was one of the nine selected out of the 115 companies participating at the festival to win the Outstanding Performance Award. The Junior Theater Festival is an annual event that allows student performances of theater companies to be recognized for excellent ability. We are extremely proud of the entire Inspiration Stage staff and cast and can't wait to see what happens next.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Inspiration Stage for winning the National Outstanding Performance Award. Keep up the great work.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JAMES A. HIMES

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, on February 9, 2016, I was unable to be present to cast my vote on the 9/11 Memorial Act (H.R. 3036). Had I been present for roll call No. 64, I would have voted ''aye.''

HONORING THE SERVICE OF PAM BALSLEY

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Mrs. Pam Balsley, a dedicated professional with the Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs, on the occasion of her retirement.

Pam has been an exemplary public servant who has demonstrated the highest standards of professionalism on a daily basis. This Ohio native proudly served in the United States Air Force for 20 years before coming to work at the Department of Veterans Affairs for more than 20 years. Her career in public service has been a testament to the importance of unselfish devotion.

As Pam embarks on a new chapter in life, it is my hope that she may recall with a deep sense of pride and accomplishment the outstanding contributions she has made to the Department of Veterans Affairs, the United States House of Representatives and the people of the United States of America. I would like to send her my best wishes for continued success in her future endeavors, and may her life be filled with health and happiness.

HONORING CAROL STREAM FIRE CHIEF RICK KOLOMAY

HON. PETER J. ROSKAM

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today in recognition of the long and distinguished service of Rick Kolomay on the occasion of his retirement. Chief Kolomay will be concluding his loyal service as Fire Chief of the Carol Stream Fire Protection District after 37 years of service.

Chief Kolomay has served the Carol Stream community for 14 years, and has served as chief since 2009. He was also a member of the Schaumburg Fire Department for 23 years and is a third-generation firefighter.

Throughout his career, his extraordinary leadership has earned him pronounced respect among colleagues and members of the community. Most notably, he helped create an alliance between neighboring fire departments, which improved efficiency and allowed the sharing of resources.

Time and time again, Chief Kolomay has exhibited the characteristics expected of a fireman: enormous sacrifice and courage. Mayor of Carol Stream, Frank Saverino described Chief Kolomay as a ''hands-on guy'' and commented on his devotion to the men of his department saying, ''If they're climbing ladders, he's climbing ladders . . . He's got to be right there with them. He leads by example, and when you lead by example, and it's physical, it's hard''. This is the true definition of a leader and his presence at the fire department will be deeply missed.

Mr. Speaker and Distinguished Colleagues, please join me in honoring Chief Kolomay on this occasion and wish him every happiness in the well deserved respite of his retirement.

RECOGNIZING KENDRA MURRAY FOR HER OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Kendra Murray for

being selected as one of Pennsylvania's top youth volunteers of 2016 by Prudential Spirit of Community Awards.

Kendra is a senior at Meyersdale Area High School, and one of the 29,000 students across the United States to participate in the 21st annual Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program. Kendra helped her high school raise $5,000 to support breast cancer research by sponsoring a ''Flamingo Flocking'' pink flamingo event. Kendra is also the President of her school's student council, organizes community cleanup days along with other school activities and fundraisers.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by Kendra is one we all should strive for. Her willingness to serve her community and Pennsylvania sets her apart as an outstanding individual and I am honored to represent her in the United States Congress. I ask that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Kendra for this achievement and wishing her nothing but continued success.

HONORING CAPTAIN WILLIAM ''BILL'' McDONOUGH FOR HIS WORK IN SUPPORT OF THE PORTSMOUTH NAVAL SHIPYARD FOLLOWING HIS PASSING ON JANUARY 11, 2016

HON. FRANK C. GUINTA

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my sincerest condolences and sympathy to the family of Captain Bill McDonough. Captain McDonough was a former commander of the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, having served as its commander from 1974–1979 when he retired from the U.S. Navy. In the Granite State, Bill was most commonly known as the Washington representative to the Seacoast Shipyard Association (SSA), a post he assumed in 1991.

During many attempts by the Department of Defense to close the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard as part of the Base Realignment and Closure Process, in his role with the SSA Bill led the charge in support of keeping this important base open. He worked with current and former shipyard employees to highlight the important work done on the shipyard in support of the Navy's fleet of submarines. His expertise was sought after by many Members of Congress over the years who looked to Bill for his on the ground knowledge of the shipyard and its workers, and through these joint efforts and under Bill's strong leadership we were able to save our beloved shipyard from closure.

New Hampshire and the shipyard lost a true friend to the community and we will forever be grateful for his hard work and love of the community he held so dear.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FREDERICK DOUGLASS BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate the birthday of Frederick Douglass, I introduce a bill that would establish a bicentennial commission to study ways that the federal government might honor and celebrate the life of Douglass during the bicentennial anniversary of his birth, in 2018.

Frederick Douglass was born into slavery in 1818 on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. He learned basic reading skills from his mistress and continued to teach himself and other slaves to read and write despite the risks he faced, including death. After two attempts, Douglass successfully escaped to New York and became an abolitionist and anti-slavery lecturer. He went on to serve in several administrations, including as a close advisor to President Abraham Lincoln, U.S. Marshal of the District of Columbia under President Rutherford B. Hayes, and District of Columbia Recorder of Deeds under President James Garfield. In 1889, President Benjamin Harrison appointed Frederick Douglass to be the U.S. minister to Haiti. He was later appointed by President Ulysses S. Grant to serve as secretary of the commission of Santo Domingo.

Douglass dedicated his life to achieving justice for all Americans. He lived in the District of Columbia for 23 of his 57 years as a free man and was deeply committed to obtaining equal congressional voting and self-government rights for District residents. His home at Cedar Hill was established as a National Historic Site in Southeast Washington, D.C., and his statue in the United States Capitol is a gift from the 650,000 American citizens of the District of Columbia.

My bill would establish a commission to examine ways the federal government can honor Douglass during the bicentennial anniversary of his birth, including the issuance of a Frederick Douglass bicentennial postage stamp, the convening of a joint meeting or joint session of Congress for ceremonies and activities relating to Frederick Douglass, a rededication of the Frederick Douglass National Historic Site, and the acquisition and preservation of artifacts associated with Frederick Douglass. The Commission would report its findings and recommendations to Congress.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

CELEBRATING THE 350TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF OLD LYME, CONNECTICUT

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 350th Anniversary of The First Congregational Church of Old Lyme and to thank its generations of members for their community building efforts over the past three and a half centuries.

The First Congregational Church of Old Lyme was founded in 1666 in Old Lyme, Connecticut, fifteen years after the Mayflower arrived in North America and has maintained its place as a facet of early American history. Since its founding, the church has been a pioneer in its faith and continues to contribute to the rich history of our region. Its congregation has included many notable Americans including the Noyes, who were original trustees of Yale University, and Samuel Holden Parsons, who led his regiment in the Battle of Bunker Hill during the American Revolution. Over the decades the church dealt with disaster and growth, and the church meetinghouse was rebuilt many times. The current meetinghouse is a landmark and an icon in the region and has served as inspiration for many artists from the area.

Today, The First Congregational Church of Old Lyme has grown to include almost a thousand members in its congregation. These members participate in efforts all over the world to improve the lives of others. From local Habitat to Humanity efforts, to establishing partnerships with churches in South Africa, to building interfaith relationships in southeastern Connecticut, the First Church of Old Lyme has built a legacy of service and community that will continue for many decades to come.

I ask my colleagues to please join me in wishing the First Congregational Church of Old Lyme a joyous celebration of their 350th Anniversary.

H–GAC 2015 PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS AWARD

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Richmond, Texas for earning the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H–GAC) 2015 Parks and Natural Areas Award.

The H–GAC Areas Award projects, like the one done by Richmond, help promote positive projects for the surrounding parks and natural areas. The City of Richmond received Special Recognition in the Planning Process competition. This project consists of a strategic design and progression of a communitywide trail network developed by the city of Richmond. We are extremely proud of the city of Richmond and thank them for their commitment to improving the quality of life for its residents.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations to Richmond for receiving this award and helping to strengthen our community.

HONORING CHARLES WOOLLETT IN CELEBRATION OF HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. FRANK C. GUINTA

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my congratulations to Charles Woollett in celebration of his upcoming 100th birthday on March 12, 2016.

As he reflects on the great memories that have highlighted the past hundred years, and his life with his wife Lucille and daughters Ruth and Mary, I know he will think fondly on all that he's accomplished. As a resident of the Town of Alton, and a member of the United States Army during World War II, he has had a positive impact on both New Hampshire and the United States of America, and I thank him for his service to his community and our great country.

It is with great admiration that I congratulate Mr. Woollett on achieving this wonderful milestone, and wish him the best on all future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING GRADUATING SENIOR BUFFALO STATE BENGALS BASKETBALL PLAYERS, DERRICK FERNANDEZ, LUKE JENKINS, KEVIN MARMOLEJOS, AND AKEEM WILLIAMS

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize four exceptional members of the senior class at Buffalo State College, Derrick Fernandez, Luke Jenkins, Kevin Marmolejos, and Akeem Williams. These students are known as leaders among their peers and teammates as members of the Buffalo State men's basketball team. I commend these young men for their scholastic and athletic dedication, and congratulate them as their college careers come to a close.

Coming from the borough of the Bronx in New York City, Derrick attended Herbert H. Lehman High School and majored in Sociology. Derrick played the position of guard during his time on the Buffalo State basketball team.

Luke Jenkins came to Buffalo State from his hometown of Slingerlands, New York. A graduate of Bethlehem High School, Luke played forward for the Buffalo State Bengals. He will be earning a degree in Criminal Justice.

Kevin Marmolejos is a graduate of Beach Channel High School and a native of Woodhaven, New York. During his time at Buffalo State, Kevin played guard and his major was Individualized Studies.

Akeem Williams graduated from White Plains High School and made his way to Buffalo State from White Plains, New York. He studied Criminal Justice and played in the position of forward on the Buffalo State basketball team.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing my colleagues to join me in recognizing these outstanding Buffalo State Bengals and in congratulating them as they obtain their undergraduate degrees. As an alumnus of Buffalo State, I will be proud to call them fellow alumni. I wish them all the best in their future endeavors and am confident they will achieve success.

THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE YOLANDA ADAMS MORNING SHOW

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, today I stand in celebration of my good friend Yolanda Adams on this the 10th anniversary of her radio show.

Yolanda Adams rose to fame as one of Gospel Music's greats making her debut in 1988 with the acclaimed and uplifting Just As I Am album.

Since then Yolanda has been wowing gospel audiences all over the world.

Following an illustrious musical career, Yolanda began the Yolanda Adams Morning Show.

Yolanda simply connects with listeners by bringing her warm, embracing spirit to the airwaves in a playful blend of contemporary music, news, interviews, and daily features that are entertaining and inspiring.

The Yolanda Adams Morning Show is the longest running inspirational morning drive radio show of its kind.

Currently in over 40 markets. The show has over 5 million in listening audience every morning.

Yolanda and her Co-hosts Anthony Valary, and Marcus D. Wiley have made it about love and comradery make it about more than just a morning show . . . it's a celebration of friends and family.

It is with endearing sentiment that I celebrate The Yolanda Adams Morning Show, and I look forward to 10 more years of un-matched laughter, spirituality, and celebration on the radio waves.

ELECTRIFY AFRICA

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to support passage of the Electrify Africa Act. This bipartisan legislation will build a brighter future for more than 600 million Africans by improving their access to reliable electricity.

During the last several decades, development gains in impoverished communities throughout the continent have been dramatically undercut by prevailing practices for accessing light and cooking fuel—practices that have damaged one's health and safety, degraded the environment, or have inefficiently used scarce resources.

By investing in electricity and by encouraging the private sector to do the same, this legislation will help save lives, provide education and medical services, bolster communities, and improve economic development.

As the Ranking Member of the State Department and Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee, I applaud Congress' passage of this critical legislation, and I look forward to working with the Administration on its implementation.

IN RECOGNITION OF STAG & DOE RESTAURANT AND TAVERN'S SELECTION AS THE ROWAN COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2015 CHAMBER CHAMPION SMALL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Stag & Doe Restaurant and Tavern, located in China Grove, North Carolina, for its selection as the Rowan County Chamber of Commerce 2015 Chamber Champion Small Business of the Year. Stag & Doe is a fixture within Rowan County and this selection illustrates the profound impact the restaurant has had on our community for generations.

Established in 1953 by Dan Morton, Stag & Doe was styled after an English Pub that would be dedicated to providing customers a welcoming environment where people could enter as strangers and leave as friends. While many things have changed at Stag & Doe since 1953, it has never lost its family-owned, hometown atmosphere. Stag & Doe is still known today as one of the best places in Rowan County to go to for a great steak or the freshest seafood in the region.

In addition to providing a fantastic dining experience that attracts folks from all across the region, the restaurant's owners, the Morton family, have been actively involved in the community's development for decades. From opening up Stag & Doe for countless local events to being the driving force behind building support for a new interchange off Interstate 85 that would have a lasting impact on southern Rowan County, Gary Morton continues the legacy of community service that was started over 60 years ago. Stag & Doe is the embodiment of what a small business should be, and this award is truly a testament to the appreciation the restaurant has so rightfully earned from our community.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating the Morton family and the Stag & Doe staff for earning this prestigious award, and wishing them well as they continue to serve the people of Rowan County, North Carolina some of the finest food our area has to offer.

RECOGNIZING GRADUATING SENIOR BUFFALO STATE BENGALS BASKETBALL PLAYERS, CLARISA MATIAS, BRITT PERRY, KRYSTAL WATSON, AND JORDAN YASTREMSKI

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Clarisa Matias, Britt Perry, Krystal Watson, and Jordan Yastremski, graduating seniors on the Buffalo State women's basketball team. During their collegiate careers, these young women have proven to be talented and dedicated scholars and athletes. Their achievements on and off the court are worthy of praise.

From Buffalo, New York, Clarisa Matias graduated from Holy Angels High School and

majored in Biology at Buffalo State. Clarisa played the position of guard during her years on the basketball team.

Prior to her time playing guard for the Bengals, Britt Perry earned her high school diploma from Hutch Tech High School. She is a Buffalo native who chose to enroll at Buffalo State and will earn a degree in Health and Wellness.

Krystal Watson will graduate with a Business degree and played forward during her time on the Buffalo State basketball team. Her hometown is Buffalo, New York, and she attended Sacred Heart High School.

Hailing from Bath, New York, Jordan Yastremski traveled to Buffalo State from Bath-Haverling High School. She studied Criminal Justice and played the position of forward for the Bengals.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for allowing my colleagues to join me in recognizing these extraordinary Buffalo State Bengals and in congratulating them as they obtain their undergraduate degrees. As an alumnus of Buffalo State, I will be proud to call them fellow alumni. Their commitment and ambition will propel them to success, and I wish them all the best in their future endeavors.

THE GLOBAL ZIKA EPIDEMIC

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, in 1947, in a remote area of Uganda, scientists discovered a previously unknown virus among the rhesus monkey population. They called it the Zika virus for the forest in which it was found. It is endemic to Africa and Southeast Asia.

Scientists know that the Zika virus, like dengue fever and chikungunya, is spread almost exclusively through the bite of an Aedes species mosquito, an aggressive daytime biter. These mosquitoes had been significantly diminished in this hemisphere, certainly in the United States, until the recent resurgence of dengue and chikungunya disease. We know a great deal about these disease vectors, but there is much scientists admit they don't know about the Zika virus itself.

Lack of knowledge and misinformation has stoked apprehension and fear among many.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) some of the reasons we don't know more about this disease include:

A relatively small proportion (about 1 in 4) of infected people develop symptoms;

A virus that is only detectable for a few days in infected people's blood;

The failure of current tests to definitively distinguish Zika from similar viruses, such as dengue and chikungunya.

The WHO recommends that all people in areas with potentially infected mosquitoes, especially pregnant women, wear protective clothing and repellants and stay indoors to the extent possible with windows closed or screened. Pregnant women are urged to postpone travel to affected areas or to diligently protect against mosquito bites if travel is unavoidable.

Currently no therapeutics exist to treat Zika virus nor is there a vaccine—but that gap need not be forever. One of our witnesses at yesterday's hearing—Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director of NIH's allergy and infectious diseases institute explained the scope of NIH research on the Zika virus as well vector control. Lessons learned from years of malaria vector control have applicability to Zika. Our two other distinguished witnesses included Dr. Thomas Frieden and Ariel Pablos-Mendez, Assistant Administrator for Global Health at USAID.

The U.S. Government has for quite some time promoted such tactics as insecticide-laced mosquito nets, window and door screens, small pool and container drainage and the use of strong but safe pesticides to eradicate mosquitoes. However, our programs largely are tailored for developing countries. With the reemergence of dengue fever and chikungunya in the southern United States, we have to step up our domestic efforts to control mosquitoes before warmer weather leads to an explosion of the mosquito population during an imminent epidemic in the homeland.

According to Luiz Alberto Figueiredo Machado, Ambassador of Brazil to the United States, the Brazilian government has deployed 220,000 troops and 300,000 health agents to fight the vector of the infection by visiting communities to educate the population and help eliminate all mosquito breeding grounds.

Experts cite possible links with the Zika infection of pregnant mothers and disorders affecting their unborn children, although they—including our witnesses yesterday—are quick to point out that no definitive proof of such a linkage.

According to Brazil's Ambassador Machado, "Microcephaly in newborn babies can also be caused by a number of other diseases. Health experts are dealing with something new: the link between Zika and microcephaly is unprecedented in the scientific literature and requires in-depth studies and analyses. . . ."

In fact, in announcing the administration's proposal for a supplemental sum of $1.8 billion to fund efforts to combat the Zika virus, the White House statement said there "may" be a connection between the Zika virus and disorders experienced by newborns in affected countries.

Dr. Marcos Espinal, Director of Communicable Diseases and Health Analysis at the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), said there is a broad spectrum of impacts for microcephaly.

A fact sheet on microcephaly in Boston Children's Hospital notes that "Some children with microcephaly have normal intelligence and experience no particular difficulty with schoolwork, physical activity, relationships or any other aspect of their lives. However, many children with the disease—especially those with more severe cases—face: mild to significant learning disabilities, impaired motor functions, difficulty with movement and balance, speech delays."

In the meantime, we must work harder to prevent maternal infections and devise compassionate ways to ensure that any child born with disabilities from this or any other infection is welcomed, loved and gets the care he or she needs. USAID's Ariel Pablos-Mendez testified yesterday that we need to expand "best practices for supporting children with microcephaly." In like manner, parents of children with disabilities need to be tangibly supported.

Ana Carolina Cáceres, a Brazilian journalist born with microcephaly, told the BBC's Ricardo Senra in a February 5 interview that the condition "is a box of surprises. You may suffer from serious problems or you may not . . . On the day I was born, the doctor said I had no chance of survival. 'She will not walk, she will not talk . . .' But he—like many others—was wrong. I grew up, went to school, went to university. Today I am a journalist and I write a blog . . . People need to put their prejudices aside and learn about this syndrome."

The hearing yesterday looked into the implications of the current and long-term threat from the Zika virus, and we assembled expert infectious health leaders from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institutes of Health and the U.S. Agency for International Development to help us do so.

For more than four years, I have been urging passage of my bill the End Neglected Tropical Diseases Act—H.R. 1797. The full Foreign Affairs Committee approved it last month. Since 2011, we've accelerated our discussions on the need for more study and funded efforts to identify tropical diseases and find diagnostics, vaccines and treatments of such illnesses.

At that time, West Nile virus was quietly making its way across the globe, including the United States, from its origins in East Africa.

Ebola virus, first discovered in a remote area of Central Africa in 1976, caused a global health crisis only two years ago.

For the second consecutive year, the administration has slashed funding for global health accounts in the budget proposal released this week, including a 19 percent cut for global program on tuberculosis—the world's leading infectious disease killer. Additionally, the administration is being short-sighted with regard to Neglected Tropical Diseases, cutting that program by nearly 15 percent. In the face of the waves of infectious disease epidemics in recent years, including multi-drug resistant tuberculosis, West Nile virus, Ebola and now Zika, the administration's habitual disregard of the increasing danger from infectious diseases is simply inexplicable.

Zika has now joined the ranks of previously little-known diseases that have created global alarm.

Before the next explosive health crisis appears, we must provide sufficient resources to the study of tropical diseases. H.R. 1797 authorizes the creation of Centers of Excellence to study every aspect of these dreaded diseases.

Zika virus is the latest crisis but won't be the last.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ELLEN L. STOVALL

HON. CHARLES W. BOUSTANY, JR.

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mourn the passing of Ellen Lewis Stovall, but more importantly, to celebrate the life of a cancer advocate and pioneer. During a 44 year period, Ellen defeated cancer on 3 separate occasions and advocated for improved cancer treatment for more than 30 years.

At 24 years old, just weeks after giving birth to her son, Ellen was diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma and told she had less than a

20 percent chance of survival. Against the odds, Ellen beat cancer and went on to found a support group for young cancer survivors at Georgetown University Hospital. During this time is when she became a strong advocate for the term cancer ''survivor'' as opposed to ''victim,'' as the key to a new way of thinking about the disease.

In 1988, she was elected to the board of the National Coalition of Cancer Survivorship, where she later served as President and CEO. Ellen's contributions to the cancer treatment community are too numerous to count. Among various positions with the National Cancer Institute, American Association for Cancer Research, and the American Society of Clinical Oncology, she was appointed to the NCI's National Cancer Advisory Board by President Clinton in 1992. She later served as Vice President of the Institute of Medicine's National Cancer Policy Board and went on to become a founding member of the board's successor—the National Cancer Policy Forum.

As a doctor, I recognize the countless contributions Ellen made to the cancer treatment community. Her relentless advocacy of a more patient-centered approach to cancer survivors made her a pioneering figure in cancer treatment. I had the privilege of working with Ellen and Representative LOIS CAPPS (D–CA) to introduce the PATH Act providing a cancer treatment roadmap for patients. Ellen will be missed, not only by those of us who were fortunate enough to call her a friend, but also by the countless cancer survivors whose lives she has positively impacted. I ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing her many years of dedication to improving the lives of her fellow cancer survivors.

HONORING COMMUNITY CHAMPION CHARLIE SCHMITZ

HON. MIKE KELLY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize one of my constituents from Western Pennsylvania, Mr. Charles Schmitz. Mr. Schmitz, known as 'Charlie' by many, was originally from New York City but now calls his ranch in Crawford County home.

Charlie gallantly served in our nation's military and spent three years in combat. He is a decorated Vietnam War veteran who continues to serve those around him with his selfless personality and admirable actions.

During his service, Charlie sustained injuries which had a significant impact on his life and ultimately motivated the next part of his journey. In 1993, Charlie founded the WCJ Ranch, a Pennsylvania non-profit that provides regulated licensed shooting and hunting grounds free of charge to Combat Disabled Veterans, Disabled Veterans and Inexperienced Youth Hunters. In order to benefit as many veterans as possible, WCJ Ranch collaborates with other organizations such as the Paralyzed Veterans of America and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

For twenty-three successful hunting seasons, Charlie has served as the ranch's founder, field guide and outfitter. Charlie has welcomed countless veterans regardless of their physical challenges, and provided them with the opportunity to hunt safely and enjoy the great outdoors to the fullest extent among other veterans. WCJ Ranch personalizes each and every hunt by accommodating the hunter's physical abilities. There are several handicapped-accessible deer and turkey blinds, accessible by wheelchair as well as specially-outfitted trails and bridges. Facilities are continuously being adapted and upgraded to accommodate the ever-changing needs of the hunters. Charlie adds new stands and special facilities every year for repeat hunters who frequent WCJ Ranch to ensure they have new areas to explore each time they visit.

Everyone who has had the privilege of visiting WCJ Ranch has walked away changed for the better and sure of one thing—it's not just about the hunt. It's the overall experience which creates memories that last a lifetime. The camaraderie between the hunters and the staff leads to close bonds and beneficial relationships. It is the welcoming environment that Charlie has created where everyone feels safe and as if they belong.

Charlie has displayed an unwavering commitment to the veterans' community and those in need. He used his personal experience and what helped him heal following his time in combat, and decided to create a similar outlet for other veterans where they could find peace. Charlie is an honorable man whose dedication continues to make a positive difference in the lives of so many.

RECOGNIZING THE OZONA LIONS 7TH GRADE MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. WILL HURD

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Ozona Lions 7th grade men's basketball team on winning the 2016 District Tournament in Eldorado, Texas.

The Lions, undefeated for the entire season, were behind for most of the championship game. It wasn't until the last two minutes that they secured the lead. Despite team injuries and illnesses, they were able to band together to secure the win. I would also like to give special recognition to Head Coach John Esparza, who led the Lions to victory. I look forward to seeing these young men develop into outstanding leaders in the community. On behalf of the 23rd Congressional District of Texas, congratulations to the Lions.

H–GAC 2015 PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS AWARD

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Sugar Land, Texas for earning the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H–GAC) 2015 Parks and Natural Areas Award.

The H–GAC Areas Award projects, like the one done by Sugar Land, help promote positive projects for the surrounding parks and natural areas. The City of Sugar Land won in the On-the-Ground Projects Under $500K competition. This project consists of a convenient, one-of-a-kind playground that can serve kids in different age groups and all capabilities. We are extremely proud of the city of Sugar Land and thank them for their commitment to improving the quality of life for its residents.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations to Sugar Land for receiving this award and helping to strengthen our community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I am not recorded on Roll Call Number 64 from February 9, 2016. As a cosponsor of H.R. 3036, the National 9/11 Memorial at the World Trade Center Act, introduced by Rep. TOM MACARTHUR of New Jersey, I would have voted Yes on Roll Call Number 64.

HONORING MICHAEL RILEY FOR HIS LEADERSHIP AT THE MOTOR TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION OF CONNECTICUT

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor President of the Motor Transport Association of Connecticut (MTAC), Michael Riley, upon his retirement. For just under three decades Mike has represented the commercial trucking interests of almost 1,400 member companies as a trusted and respected advocate.

From 1979 to 1987, before his involvement with MTAC, Mike was an executive assistant to Senator Christopher Dodd and he used that experience to work with lawmakers and Connecticut administration officials to improve the regulatory structure surrounding the trucking industry. These efforts resulted in achievements like the installation of weight station bypass systems, online permit processes, and important legislation to define ''independent contractors'' who work in the industry.

Mike's work at MTAC has tangibly increased the safety of Connecticut road users, as he led efforts to create a consortium for testing the use of controlled substances and alcohol abuse among drivers. Since 1989, and in conjunction with Gregory & Howe, MTAC has helped create the largest testing program in the state, so successful that even non-truck drivers from member companies are part of the program.

Mike's focus on safety extended to spearheading a commercial lines insurance program, which offers property and casualty insurance for members. The success of this venture is demonstrated by its size and support within the industry. Indeed the fund has become large enough in recent years to pay significant workers compensation dividends back to participating companies, showing what

a sustainable and robust program Mike has developed.

Please join me in congratulating Mike for the significant impact he has made on the state of Connecticut, and wishing him an enjoyable and well-earned retirement.

RECOGNIZING IGNACIO GAMBOA, JR.

HON. WILL HURD

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and service of Mr. Ignacio Gamboa, Jr.

Mr. Gamboa passed away on December 23rd, 2015. He was a decorated veteran and fought heroically in both the Second World War and the Korean War. Among his Army decorations are three Asiatic Pacific Medals, the WWII Victory Medal, the Army Occupation Medal with the Japan Clasp, the Korean Service Medal with two Bronze Service Stars, the Philippines Liberation Medal with one Bronze Service Medal, and the U.N. Service Medal.

Mr. Gamboa was a notable and honorable citizen of Devine, Texas, and was highly involved in the Knights of Columbus and the Devine Housing Authority, upon which he served on the Board of Directors. He worked at Kelly Air Force Base for over 30 years and served as an elections judge for many of those years. He also enjoyed volunteering with the St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Devine. On behalf of the 23rd Congressional District of Texas, I thank Mr. Ignacio Gamboa, Jr. for his dedication and service to United States. May he rest in peace.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF MR. AND MRS. WILLIAM HUGO PARKMAN

HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the lives of Mr. Hugo Parkman and Mrs. Doris Parkman.

Residents of Palmetto, Georgia, Mr. Parkman passed away on November 20, 2012, and Mrs. Parkman passed away last Sunday, February 7, 2016.

Mr. Parkman served on the USS *Finback* during World War II and became bunk-mates with future President George H.W. Bush after President Bush's plane was shot down over the Pacific. Mrs. Parkman was the first member of her family to attend college, enrolling in Alabama College. She then went to missionary school in Kentucky to study religious education where she met her life-long partner, Hugo.

Together, Mr. and Mrs. Parkman served as Southern Baptist missionaries in Makati, Philippines, establishing a church and serving everywhere they went.

Throughout their travels, family always came first for Mr. and Mrs. Parkman who are survived by their six children, 15 grandchildren, and ten great grandchildren. They will truly be missed.

H–GAC 2015 PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS AWARD

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Missouri City, Texas for earning the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H–GAC) 2015 Parks and Natural Areas Award.

The H–GAC Areas Award projects help promote positive projects for the surrounding parks and natural areas. The Missouri City SOWING Project Community Garden won in the Policy Tools category. This project, done by Men for Change, Inc., promotes a healthy lifestyle for people of all ages through informing families on proper nutrition and the importance of a balanced diet. We are extremely proud of Missouri City and thank them for their commitment to improving the quality of life for its residents.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations to Missouri City for receiving this award and helping to strengthen our community.

HONORING REV. DR. ROBERT E. HAMLIN, SR.

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, for two decades Rev. Dr. Robert E. Hamlin, Sr. has served as a faith leader and dedicated community member as Senior Pastor of the historic Second Baptist Church of Doylestown, Pennsylvania.

A native of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Reverend Hamlin was first licensed to preach at McKinley Memorial Baptist Church in Willow Grove, Pennsylvania under the leadership of Rev. Lowell M. McCown, Sr. in 1994. In February of 1996, he was installed as the Pastor of the Second Baptist Church of Doylestown and, under his leadership, the congregation has grown in both size and spirit. Already one of Bucks County's most historic churches, Reverend Hamlin has strengthened and continued Second Baptist's important role in our area. His commitment to minister to the wide and diverse community he serves has provided for the spiritual development and earthly needs of the surrounding communities.

As a past moderator of the Suburban Baptist Association and member of the Board of Directors of several local, national and internationally based organizations, Reverend Hamlin's ministry is one that has impacted thousands not only in Bucks County, but around the world.

On this, Rev. Dr. Robert E. Hamlin, Sr.'s 20th Pastoral Anniversary, we recognize his continued commitment to the betterment of his congregation and community. I join with the members of the Second Baptist Church of Doylestown in recognition of this achievement and in sending best wishes for many more years to come.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 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 $19,005,359,240,744.60. We've added $8,378,482,191,831.52 to our debt in 6 years. This is over $7.5 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

SUPPORT FOR ACCESS TO EPINEPHRINE FOR IN-FLIGHT EMERGENCIES

HON. PETER WELCH

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my strong support for access to epinephrine for in-flight emergencies, commonly administered by epinephrine auto-injector (EAI) and want to commend Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. MALONEY of New York and Mr. HANNA of New York for their amendment and their leadership in the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, working to ensure that Emergency Medical Kits (EMKs) are appropriate to meet the emergency needs of both adult and child passengers. Epinephrine Auto-Injectors are the primary method for treatment of anaphylaxis emergencies and the best way to address anaphylactic events. Due to the ease and safety of use of epinephrine auto injectors for many travelers with diagnosed and undiagnosed allergies, air carriers should consider stocking auto-injectable epinephrine for use in adults and children.

HAPPY 34TH TO THE FORT BEND BOYS CHOIR

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Fort Bend Boys Choir for celebrating 34 years of hard work and musical talent.

From its inception in 1982, the talent of the Fort Bend Boys Choir has been impressive. They have performed across the country at high profile events like the Olympic Festival in 1986 and President George Bush's inauguration in 1989. They were also chosen to perform at the National Christmas Tree Lighting in 2001, which resulted in a nomination for a news Emmy award. Over the 34 years that the organization has grown, the Fort Bend Boys Choir started off at only 45 members and now consists of five ensembles with 200 members total. Typically, the different choirs consist of younger boys in age, ranging from 6–14 years old. These young boys have accomplished so

much and their hard work shows through the many achievements they have earned.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, we celebrate the Fort Bend Boys Choir on their 34th anniversary and look forward to enjoying their music for another 34 years.

A PLEA TO MY COLLEAGUES ON THE FAA BILL

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, today I want to talk about flight 3407 that crashed in Buffalo, New York, seven years ago tomorrow. This plane crashed in sight of the runway on an icy February night.

We learned that the pilot and the co-pilot had never been trained or flown into any icy situations. The young woman co-pilot had flown the night before from Seattle. She was so poorly paid, around $13,000 a year, that she could not afford a motel room to sleep overnight. She instead, slept on the floor in the pilot's lounge. On the black box, before the crash, you could hear them both yawning.

On that plane were two of the best musicians in the United States, a woman who was an expert on Rwanda and the genocide there, and one of the top anthropologists. They died because these pilots had neither knowledge nor experience to fly in those conditions.

The families of the people who died on that plane have selflessly come to D.C. time and again, working to get regulations passed for seven years on how much training the pilot and the co-pilot have to have, and to ensure they have enough flying hours between them.

Now, we're facing an FAA bill with an amendment that would undo those safety regulations. I implore my colleagues not to let that amendment pass or weaken the regulations that protect the flying public and reverse the competency of pilots who hold the lives of those we love in their hands.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. RONALD REED

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Ronald Reed of Taylor, Michigan. A Vietnam veteran and retiree of General Motors, where he spent 42 years, Mr. Reed has been donating blood since his early days as a young Marine in Okinawa, Japan.

During the last 35 years, Ronald has donated blood nearly 200 times—impacting the lives of close to 600 people. Each blood donation has the ability to touch up to three lives, and his selflessness is an inspiration for all of us. Few Americans can say they have touched that many lives.

Blood donations here in the United States are incredibly important, and we face a constant struggle to prevent shortages of available blood. The average able donor gives about 1.2 times annually. If others followed the leadership of Mr. Reed and gave two or more times a year, we would not face the frightening need particularly in times of bad weather and holidays. Mr. Reed's above and beyond level of donation is truly remarkable and deserves recognition.

When it comes to his service to his fellow man, Ronald is an extremely modest man. He says he simply gives because he can. In my opinion, Mr. Reed fully embodies the American spirit as both a veteran and a hard and loyal worker, giving his own blood to help those in his community.

A volunteer at a Riverview Red Cross location in 2011 observed that Ronald is ''an unsung hero''. It is for this reason Mr. Speaker, that I ask my colleagues today to join me in honoring Ronald Reed for his generous contributions. I thank him not only for his overwhelming donation of blood, but also for his years of service in the auto industry as a millwright, as well as his service to our country as a Marine.

MAKING AN IMPACT—ONE MISSION AT A TIME

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Reverend Drew Wood, pastor at St. Laurence Catholic Church in Sugar Land, TX for being honored at Catholic Charities' Mission of Love Gala.

The annual Mission of Love Gala recognizes Catholic Charities of the Fort Bend County area. Reverend Wood has served as pastor of St. Laurence since 1998. He was ordained as a Priest at St. Mary's Seminary, and worked in various roles within the Diocese of the Galveston-Houston area including as the Vocations Director and Vice Chancellor. At St. Laurence, Reverend Wood found a calling in the lives of young people within the church. Due to his work chaperoning Teen Mass at conferences, Reverend Wood created a yearly retreat of his own, Heart of Worship, hosted at St. Laurence, where spiritual activities like speakers, worship, and mass impact young people's lives. Thank you to Reverend Drew Wood for the impact he has made on the lives of the Sugar Land residents.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Reverend Wood. We thank you for providing spiritual guidance to the parishioners at St. Laurence. We can't wait to see what you do next.

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

Senate agreed to the conference report to accompany H.R. 644, Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S833–S884

Measures Introduced: Eighteen bills were introduced, as follows: S. 2540–2557. **Pages S874–75**

Measures Reported:

Special Report entitled "Fighting Fraud: U.S. Senate Aging Committee Identifies Top 10 Scams Targeting our Nation's Seniors". (S. Rept. No. 114–208)

S. 483, to improve enforcement efforts related to prescription drug diversion and abuse, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. **Page S874**

Measures Passed:

Miami Tribe of Oklahoma: Senate passed H.R. 487, to allow the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma to lease or transfer certain lands. **Page S881**

Robert Levinson: Senate agreed to S. Res. 99, calling on the Government of Iran to follow through on repeated promises of assistance in the case of Robert Levinson, the longest held United States civilian in our Nation's history, after agreeing to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, and the committee amendment to the title. **Pages S881–82**

Connecticut's Submarine Century: Committee on Armed Services was discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 298, recognizing Connecticut's Submarine Century, the 100th anniversary of the establishment of Naval Submarine Base New London, and Connecticut's historic role in supporting the undersea capabilities of the United States, and the resolution was then agreed to, after agreeing to the following amendment proposed thereto: **Pages S882–83**

McConnell (for Blumenthal) Amendment No. 3306, to make technical corrections in the preamble. **Pages S882–83**

Conference Reports:

Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act: By 75 yeas to 20 nays (Vote No. 22), Senate agreed to the conference report to accompany H.R. 644, to reauthorize trade facilitation and trade enforcement functions and activities. **Pages S836–46**

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

By 73 yeas to 22 nays (Vote No. 21), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn, having voted in the affirmative, Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the conference report to accompany the bill. **Page S840**

Califf Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Robert McKinnon Califf, of South Carolina, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services. **Pages S869–70**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, and pursuant to the unanimous-consent agreement of Thursday, February 11, 2016, a vote on cloture will occur at 5:30 p.m., on Monday, February 22, 2016. **Pages S869–70**

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nominations:

By a unanimous vote of 93 yeas (Vote No. EX. 23), Leonard Terry Strand, of South Dakota, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Iowa. **Pages S848–50, S884**

Morton H. Halperin, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Millennium Challenge Corporation for a term of two years.

Michael O. Johanns, of Nebraska, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Millennium Challenge Corporation for a term of three years. **Pages S881, S884**

Routine lists in the Foreign Service.

Pages S881, S884

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

Abdul K. Kallon, of Alabama, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit.

John B. King, of New York, to be Secretary of Education. Page S884

Messages from the House: Page S874

Measures Referred: Page S874

Additional Cosponsors: Pages S875–76

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: Pages S876–80

Additional Statements: Pages S871–74

Amendments Submitted: Page S880

Authorities for Committees to Meet: Pages S880–81

Privileges of the Floor: Page S881

Record Votes: Three record votes were taken today. (Total—23) Pages S840, S846, S850

Adjournment: Senate convened at 9:30 a.m. and adjourned at 6:21 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Friday, February 12, 2016. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S883.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

ZIKA SUPPLEMENTAL REQUEST

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies concluded a hearing to examine emerging health threats and the Zika supplemental request, after receiving testimony from Tom Frieden, Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Anthony S. Fauci, Director, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, National Institutes of Health, both of the Department of Health and Human Services.

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST AND FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

Committee on Armed Services: Committee concluded a hearing 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, after receiving testimony from General Carter F. Ham, USA (Ret.), Chairman, Thomas R. Lamont, Vice Chairman, and General James D. Thurman, USA (Ret.), and Sergeant Major of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III, USA (Ret.), both a Commissioner, all of the National Commission on the Future of the Army, all of the Department of Defense.

SEMIANNUAL MONETARY POLICY REPORT TO THE CONGRESS

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the semiannual Monetary Policy Report to the Congress, including H.R. 2209, to require the appropriate Federal banking agencies to treat certain municipal obligations as level 2A liquid assets, after receiving testimony from Janet L. Yellen, Chair, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

BUDGET

Committee on Finance: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017, after receiving testimony from Sylvia M. Burwell, Secretary of Health and Human Services.

NOMINATIONS

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee concluded a hearing 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, who was introduced by Senator Grassley, and Marcela Escobari, of Massachusetts, to be an Assistant Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, after the nominees testified and answered questions in their own behalf.

SETTING AND ENFORCING REGULATORY FINES AND PENALTIES

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management concluded a hearing to examine agency discretion in setting and enforcing regulatory fines and penalties, after receiving testimony from Jordan Barab, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration; and Susan Shinkman, Director, Office of Civil Enforcement, Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance, Environmental Protection Agency.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 483, to improve enforcement efforts related to prescription drug diversion and abuse, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute; and

S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee held closed hearings on intelligence matters, receiving testimony from officials of the intelligence community.

Committee recessed subject to the call.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 19 public bills, H.R. 4532–4550; and 4 resolutions, H. Con. Res. 115 and H. Res. 612–614 were introduced. **Pages H773–74**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H775–76**

Reports Filed: There were no reports filed today.

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Loudermilk to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H713**

Recess: The House recessed at 10:48 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H718**

Joint Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies—Appointment: Pursuant to S. Con. Res. 28, 114th Congress, and the order of the House of January 6, 2015, the Chair announced the Speaker's appointment of the following Members on the part of the House to the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies: Representatives Ryan (WI), McCarthy, and Pelosi. **Page H721**

Consideration of Suspension: Agreed by unanimous consent that the Speaker be authorized to entertain motions to suspend the rules as though under clause 1 of rule 15 relating to H.R. 757, to improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, any time through the legislative day of Friday, February 12, 2016. **Page H721**

Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act—Rule for consideration: The House agreed to 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, by a recorded vote of 237 ayes to 174 noes, Roll No. 78, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 237 yeas to 178 nays, Roll No. 77. **Pages H722–28, H749–50**

Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act: The House passed H.R. 3442, to provide further means of accountability of the United States debt and promote fiscal responsibility, by a recorded vote of 267 ayes to 151 noes, Roll No. 76. **Pages H728–49**

Rejected the Doggett motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Ways and Means with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with amendments, by a recorded vote of 179 ayes to 238 noes, Roll No. 75. **Pages H747–48**

Agreed to:

Grijalva amendment (No. 1 printed part A of H. Rept. 114–420) that requires the Secretary of the Treasury's report to also include historical levels of federal revenue, including corporate and individual federal income taxes as a percent of gross domestic product; **Page H736**

Huelskamp amendment (No. 2 printed part A of H. Rept. 114–420) that requires the Secretary of the Treasury to provide weekly reporting of extraordinary measures and projected exhaustion date upon notification the debt limit has been reached; **Pages H737–38**

Newhouse amendment (No. 3 printed part A of H. Rept. 114–420) that directs the Secretary of the Treasury to include in the debt report to Congress whether the President recommends that Congress adopt a balanced budget amendment to control the accumulation of future debt; **Pages H738–39**

Messer amendment (No. 6 printed part A of H. Rept. 114–420) that requires the Secretary to report on extraordinary measures the Treasury Department intends to use if the debt limit is not lifted, project how long such measures will fund the federal government, and project the administrative costs to the Treasury Department associated with taking such actions; and **Pages H741–42**

Duffy amendment (No. 5 printed part A of H. Rept. 114–420) that requires the Secretary of the

Treasury to notify Congress whether it is able to pay only principal and interest on the national debt, as opposed to other obligations, in the event that the debt limit is reached (by a recorded vote of 240 ayes to 176 noes, Roll No. 72). **Pages H740–41, H744–45**

Rejected:

Kelly (IL) amendment (No. 4 printed part A of H. Rept. 114–420) that sought to require the Secretary of the Treasury's report to also include an economic forecast of the negative consequences of failing to raise the debt limit, including costs associated with public health and safety (by a recorded vote of 184 ayes to 234 noes, Roll No. 71);

Pages H739–40, H744

Grijalva amendment (No. 7 printed part A of H. Rept. 114–420) that sought to require the Secretary of the Treasury's report to also include individual salary and wage information, as well as projections of consumer spending and the impact of spending cuts on gross domestic product (by a recorded vote of 171 ayes to 245 noes, Roll No. 73); and

Pages H742–43, H745–46

Takano amendment (No. 8 printed part A of H. Rept. 114–420) that sought to require the report to include the impact the threat of default would have on the economy, including, but not limited to, the impact on the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), interest rates, employment, household wealth, and retirement assets (by a recorded vote of 190 ayes to 227 noes, Roll No. 74). **Pages H743–44, H746**

Agreed that the Clerk be authorized to make technical and conforming changes to reflect the actions of the House. **Page H750**

H. Res. 609, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 3442) and (H.R. 3293) was agreed to yesterday, February 10th.

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate today appears on page H728.

Quorum Calls—Votes: One yea-and-nay vote and seven recorded votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H744, H745, H745–46, H746, H748, H748–49, H749 and H750. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Committee Meetings

IMPACTS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY'S ACTIONS ON THE RURAL ECONOMY

Committee on Agriculture: Full Committee held a hearing to consider the impacts of the Environmental Protection Agency's actions on the rural economy. Testimony was heard from Gina McCarthy, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency.

FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE: ARE WE PREPARED?

Committee on Agriculture: Subcommittee on Livestock and Foreign Agriculture held a hearing entitled "Foot and Mouth Disease: Are We Prepared?". Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

APPROPRIATIONS—INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government held a budget hearing on the Internal Revenue Service. Testimony was heard from John A. Koskinen, Commissioner, Internal Revenue Service.

U.S. ENGAGEMENT IN CENTRAL AMERICA

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs held an oversight hearing entitled "U.S. Engagement in Central America". Testimony was heard from William Brownfield, Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs; Elizabeth Hogan, Acting Assistant Administrator, Latin America and Caribbean Bureau, U.S. Agency for International Development; and Francisco Palmieri, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Central American and Caribbean, Bureau of Western Hemisphere.

APPROPRIATIONS—OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies held a budget hearing on Office of the Secretary, Department of Agriculture. Testimony was heard from the following Department of Agriculture officials: Thomas Vilsack, Secretary; Robert Johansson, Chief Economist; and Michael Young, Budget Officer.

APPROPRIATIONS—BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development held a budget hearing on Bureau of Reclamation. Testimony was heard from Estevan R. Lopez, Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation.

FISCAL YEAR 2017 BUDGET REQUEST FOR ATOMIC ENERGY DEFENSE ACTIVITIES

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Strategic Forces held a hearing entitled "Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Request for Atomic Energy Defense

Activities''. Testimony was heard from Frank Klotz, Administrator, National Nuclear Security Administration; Monica Regalbuto, Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management, Department of Energy; and Joyce Connery, Chairwoman, Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board.

CARRIER AIR WING AND THE FUTURE OF NAVAL AVIATION

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces held a hearing entitled ''Carrier Air Wing and the Future of Naval Aviation''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Communications and Technology concluded 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''. H.R. 2666, H.R. 1301, and the ''Small Business Broadband Deployment Act'' were forwarded to the full committee, without amendment.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Energy and Power concluded 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 involving the W. Kerr Scott Dam; H.R. 4416, to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving the Jennings Randolph Dam; and H.R. 4434, to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving the Cannonsville Dam. H.R. 3021, H.R. 3797, the ''Blocking Regulatory Interference from Closing Kilns (BRICK) Act'', H.R. 4444, H.R. 2984, H.R. 4427, H.R. 4238, H.R. 2080, H.R. 2081, H.R. 3447, H.R. 4416, and H.R. 4434 were forwarded to the full committee, without amendment.

THE FUTURE OF HOUSING IN AMERICA: EXAMINING THE HEALTH OF THE FEDERAL HOUSING ADMINISTRATION

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance held a hearing entitled ''The Future of Housing in America: Examining the Health of the Federal Housing Administration''. Testimony was heard from Edward L. Golding, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Housing, Department of Housing and Urban Development.

SHORT-TERM, SMALL DOLLAR LENDING: THE CFPB'S ASSAULT ON ACCESS TO CREDIT AND TRAMPLING OF STATE AND TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit held a hearing entitled ''Short-term, Small Dollar Lending: The CFPB's Assault on Access to Credit and Trampling of State and Tribal Sovereignty''. Testimony was heard from Greg Zoeller, Attorney General, State of Indiana; David Silberman, Acting Deputy Director, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection; and public witnesses.

IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL OVERSIGHT: IMPLEMENTATION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Iran Nuclear Deal Oversight: Implementation and Its Consequences''. Testimony was heard from Stephen D. Mull, Lead Coordinator for Iran Nuclear Implementation, Department of State; and John Smith, Acting Director, Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of the Treasury.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE; JORDAN: A KEY U.S. PARTNER

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa held a 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''. H. Res. 148 was forwarded to the full committee, as amended. Testimony was heard from Gerald M. Feierstein, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, Department of State; Paige Alexander, Assistant Administrator, Bureau for the Middle East, U.S. Agency for International Development; and Fatema Z. Sumar, Regional Deputy Vice President, Europe, Asia, the Pacific and Latin America, Department of

Compact Operations, Millennium Challenge Corporation.

THE FUTURE OF U.S.-TAIWAN RELATIONS

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific held a hearing entitled ''The Future of U.S.-Taiwan Relations''. Testimony was heard from Susan A. Thornton, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Department of State; and public witnesses.

THE FUTURE OF IRANIAN TERROR AND ITS THREAT TO THE US HOMELAND

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence held a hearing entitled ''The Future of Iranian Terror and Its Threat to the US Homeland''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

IMPROVING THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY'S BIOLOGICAL DETECTION AND SURVEILLANCE PROGRAMS

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications held a hearing entitled ''Improving the Department of Homeland Security's Biological Detection and Surveillance Programs''. Testimony was heard from Kathryn Brinsfield, Assistant Secretary, Office of Health Affairs, Department of Homeland Security; Reginald Brothers, Under Secretary for Science and Technology, Department of Homeland Security; and Chris P. Currie, Director, Emergency Management, National Preparedness and Critical Infrastructure Protection, Homeland Security and Justice Team, Government Accountability Office.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on the Judiciary: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 759, the ''Recidivism Risk Reduction Act''; and H.R. 2947, the ''Financial Institution Bankruptcy Act of 2015''. H.R. 759 and H.R. 2947 were ordered reported, as amended.

IS THE INVESTOR VISA PROGRAM AN UNDERPERFORMING ASSET?

Committee on the Judiciary: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Is the Investor Visa Program an Underperforming Asset?''. Testimony was heard from Nicholas Colucci, Chief, Immigration Investor Program, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services; Rebecca Gambler, Director, Homeland Security and Justice Issues, Government Accountability Office; and public witnesses.

RESOLVING ISSUES WITH CONFISCATED PROPERTY IN CUBA, HAVANA CLUB RUM AND OTHER PROPERTY

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property, and the Internet held a hearing entitled ''Resolving Issues with Confiscated Property in Cuba, Havana Club Rum and Other Property''. Testimony was heard from Kurt Tong, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs, Department of State; Mary Denison, Commissioner for Trademarks, Patent and Trademark Office; and public witnesses.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Federal Lands held a 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''. Testimony was heard from Representatives Blackburn; Clyburn; and Turner; Stephanie Toothman, Associate Director, Cultural Resources, Partnerships and Science, National Park Service; and public witnesses.

IRS: REVIEWING ITS LEGAL OBLIGATIONS, DOCUMENT PRESERVATION, AND DATA SECURITY

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''IRS: Reviewing Its Legal Obligations, Document Preservation, and Data Security''. Testimony was heard from the following Internal Revenue Service officials: Terry Milholland, Chief Technology Officer; Jeff Tribiano, Deputy Commissioner, Operations; and Ed Killen, Director of Privacy, Governmental Liaison, and Disclosure.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 4489, the ''FAA Leadership In Groundbreaking High-Tech Research and Development Act''. H.R. 4489 was ordered reported, as amended.

EXPORT CONTROL REFORM: CHALLENGES FOR SMALL BUSINESS? PART II

Committee on Small Business: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Export Control Reform: Challenges for Small Business? (Part II)''. Testimony was heard from Kevin J. Wolf, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry

and Security, Department of Commerce; and Brian Nilsson, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Defense Trade Controls, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Full Committee held a markup on Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Views and Estimates of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure; and H.R. 4441, the ''Aviation Innovation, Reform, and Reauthorization Act''. H.R. 4441 was ordered reported, as amended.

CHOICE CONSOLIDATION: IMPROVING VA COMMUNITY CARE BILLING AND REIMBURSEMENT

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Subcommittee on Health held a hearing entitled ''Choice Consolidation: Improving VA Community Care Billing and Reimbursement''. Testimony was heard from Randall B. Williamson, Director, Health Care, Government Accountability Office; Gary K. Abe, Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Audits and Evaluations, Office of Inspector General, Department of Veterans Affairs; Baligh Yehia, M.D., Assistant Deputy Undersecretary for Health for Community Care, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs; and public witnesses.

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017

Committee on Ways and Means: Full Committee held a hearing on President Obama's budget proposals for fiscal year 2017. Testimony was heard from Jacob J. Lew, Secretary, Department of the Treasury.

Joint Meetings

ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Commission concluded a hearing to examine an update on the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, focusing on religious freedom, anti-Semitism, and rule of law, after receiving testimony from Michael Georg Link, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Vienna, Austria.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2016

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on Office of the Inspector General, 9:30 a.m., 2362–A Rayburn.

Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Readiness, hearing entitled ''Department of the Air Force 2017 Budget Request and Readiness'', 8 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled ''Assessing the Development of Afghanistan National Security Forces'', 10:30 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled ''Outbreaks, Attacks, and Accidents: Combatting Biological Threats'', 9 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Friday, February 12

Senate Chamber

Program for Friday: Senate will be in a period of morning business.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

9 a.m., Friday, February 12

House Chamber

Program for Friday: Consideration of H.R. 2017—Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act (Subject to a Rule). Consideration of the following measure under suspension of the rules: Concur in the Senate Amendment to H.R. 757—North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016.

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