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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 29, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MAC THORNBERRY 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 1:50 p.m.

WE MUST UPDATE OUR WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, every day we are reminded by current events of how essential water and sanitation are to our very existence, whether it is Flint, Michigan, droughts in California, or the challenges of safe drinking water and sanitation for underdeveloped countries. This dominates the news and is at the root of an increasing number of conflicts, which will become only more serious.

Water policy is one of the most critical areas that this Congress ought to be able to address on a bipartisan basis. The facts are stark, opportunities vivid, and public support is strong.

That is why I have spent a great deal of time focusing on issues of water and sanitation since I first came to Congress. Legislation for international water and sanitation is critical not just for humanitarian reasons, but to protect the environment. It helps avoid conflict within societies and between nations because of water scarcity or shared river basins.

I have worked on legislation reforming flood insurance, rewriting the Corps of Engineers' outdated principles and guidelines that should inform their practices on water infrastructure and environmental management, and I have worked for a decade on the creation of a water trust fund. Unlike surface transportation, which has a highway trust fund and a source of revenue, the Federal Government has no similar mechanism for water and sanitation.

The status of our water infrastructure is appalling and getting worse, while support from the Federal Government has been in decline. In fact, there has been a slow, steady retreat on water infrastructure spending since the Carter administration.

The American Society of Civil Engineers has rated our water infrastructure a D. We have almost 170,000 drinking water systems around the country. While the useful life of pipes can be sometimes up to 100 years, we have facilities that date back to the 1800s.

A water main breaks every 2 minutes. The American Water Works Association anticipates the need of a trillion dollars, over the next 25 years, to replace the most critical of more than a million miles of pipe, while congressional appropriations have declined to less than $1.5 billion a year, a tiny fraction of our needs.

The total mileage of sewer mains in the United States is unknown, but it is probably between 700,000 and 800,000 miles. Many of these pipes were installed right after World War II and are approaching the end of their useful life. The sewer systems with aging pipes and inadequate capacity mean almost a trillion gallons of untreated sewage each year that is discharged into our waterways.

The total needs over the next 20 years for both sewer and water are almost beyond our comprehension, but the current spending, it is clear, is completely inadequate. The public and the scientists are finding more problems, which will argue for even higher standards.

That is why I have developed bipartisan legislation for the creation of a water trust fund. I have been working on this for years with different bipartisan partners. Given that there appears to be little appetite now in Congress for any tax or fee increase, I have adjusted the bill so that the revenue comes from voluntary participation by companies that have a keen interest in clean drinking water and adequate sanitation—indeed, their very business depends on it.

They would be able, for a tiny fee, to voluntarily identify as being supportive of the water trust fund. A little seal of approval would raise several billion dollars a year. This could be used to deal with the problems of low-income ratepayers that make it hard for overall rates to be increased and to leverage more investment at a time of remarkably low costs of borrowing. We could have significant investment to deal with some of our greatest problems.

This is by no means the entire answer to the looming crisis, but we shouldn't wait for the next Flint or the problems in drought-stricken California or some other municipal breakdown. We should start now.

I urge people to cosponsor my bipartisan water trust fund legislation, H.R. 4468. Let's get started.

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OPIOID AND HEROIN ABUSE

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, on December 22, 2015, Zachary Paul-Allen Greenough, a veteran of the U.S. Army, lost his life to an accidental overdose of heroin in the city of West Haven, Connecticut.

The press accounts after his death, unfortunately, tell a story that is far too common in this country. During the time that he served in the Army, he suffered an injury, which caused great pain and resulted in the prescription of painkillers. That pathway started, which led to an opioid addiction and, unfortunately, him losing his life on December 22 to an overdose of heroin.

The Centers for Disease Control tells us that, in 2014, 27,000 Americans suffered accidental overdose deaths across the country, a drastic increase from 2013. This trend is happening again all across the country.

In the State of Connecticut, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner reported its statistics for 2015, which showed that 723 individuals lost their life, including Mr. Greenough, to overdoses of heroin and opioids. Again, this is a trend line which shows that it was a 20 percent increase from the year before.

We are in the midst right now of a problem that is sweeping across the country, that is affecting States that are Republican and Democrat, blue and red, and we as a Nation need to get all hands on deck and come to grips with it.

President Obama, in his budget that he submitted a few weeks ago, made a promising start. He proposed $1.1 billion in new funding to law enforcement, to folks who are involved in treatment, whether it is detox centers or treatment programs, or whether it is programs for education and prevention; because we know, from talking to people in the field, you need to get early and quickly to young people to make sure that they understand that this pathway, which has exploded across the country, is something that people need to know about and to avoid.

In New London, Connecticut, over the course of 2 days in February, we had a summit involving law enforcement, healthcare providers, and others. We had the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy from the White House, Michael Botticelli, come in. Again, the good news is that there is a lot of good work that is being done at the local level—not just in New London County, Connecticut, but all across the country—where people understand that this is a problem that requires everyone working together in all those factions and all those sectors.

But the fact of the matter is that President Obama's proposal is not until 2017. We need help now. We need to get an emergency appropriation, just as we would if there were a hurricane or an earthquake or a wildfire that was sweeping across different regions of this country.

We need to understand that emergency appropriations for our military, which the Speaker and I will be voting on together in the Committee on Armed Services, that this problem which is affecting thousands of families and resulting in fatalities for people, again, who follow a pathway that, through legally prescribed medications, needs to be addressed, and we need to get those resources out to people as soon as possible.

I have a bill in the House that tracks a bill sponsored by Senator SHAHEEN in New Hampshire, another State that has been hit hard by the problem. The bill provides $600 million of emergency assistance—again allocated to police, providers, education, and prevention—and this week they will begin consideration in the U.S. Senate. It has been endorsed by law enforcement groups. It has been endorsed by people who are in the field dealing with this problem, who are dealing with families who can't get beds in detox centers, who can't get beds in treatment facilities, with police departments that are trying to get Narcan, a miracle drug, so that they can save lives. But the fact of the matter is we need everybody involved, particularly the Congress, to help communities solve this problem.

Last week the National Governors Association—Republicans and Democrats—convened in Washington, D.C., to talk about their priorities. This emergency funding was their number one request to Congress because they are the ones on the front lines who are being confronted and forced to deal with this issue.

We have an opportunity to listen to the people who know what they are talking about, to just drain away the politics and the partisanship and understand that veterans, people living in rural communities, people living in suburban communities, people living in urban areas of our country are getting hit with this problem. Just like any other disaster, we as a Nation need to come together to address it now and not wait for 2017—now—to pass this measure.

We can do more in terms of reforming the protocols, as the VA and DOD and the civilian healthcare sector, frankly, have gone too far in terms of overprescribing. We can do more about the disposal of drugs. Walgreens, to their credit, has set up disposal sites all across the country where people can come in with excess opioids to get rid of them safely.

The fact of the matter is that the willingness is there but the resources are not to deal with a problem of this magnitude. Let's pass the Shaheen-Courtney measure. Let's get emergency funding to the folks who need that help and who are ready. They are on standby. They are there to help those families and those individuals who need the help that we, as Americans, should come together and support.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 11 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

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

PRAYER

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

Merciful Lord, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

At the beginning of a new workweek, we use this moment to be reminded of Your presence and to tap the resources needed by the Members of this people's House to do their work as well as it can be done. May they be led by Your Holy spirit in the decisions they make.

May their faith in You deliver them from tensions that might tear the House apart and from worries that might wear them out.

All this day and through the week, may they do their best to find solutions to pressing issues facing our Nation. Please hasten the day when justice and love shall dwell in the hearts of all peoples and rule the affairs of the nations of Earth.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina 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.

SOUTH CAROLINA RECOGNIZED AS A TOP EXPORTER

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful today to recognize the State of South Carolina being named by Foreign Direct Investment magazine for its superior achievement in foreign direct investment.

South Carolina was identified for leading the Nation in foreign direct investment and also being the top State for expansion. The probusiness climate, superior workforce being trained by technical colleges, and quality of life make South Carolina the natural choice for any business looking to locate or expand, creating jobs, as done by Dr. Susan Windsor of Aiken Technical College.

In 2015, South Carolina was also recognized for their record-breaking total export sales. It was the top Southeastern State.

For the second consecutive year, the State was the top exporter in America for cars and tires. It is home to BMW, Volvo, Michelin, Bridgestone, Boeing, and more. Many of these businesses are located in the Second District, and I am honored to serve them in Congress.

I appreciate Governor Nikki Haley, Secretary of Commerce Bobby Hitt, along with the State legislative leaders, Senate President Hugh Leatherman and Speaker Jay Lucas, and the State's Chamber of Commerce and economic development organizations, who work tirelessly to create job opportunities.

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

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 3 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1545

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia) at 3 o'clock and 45 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

MODERNIZATION OF TERMS RELATING TO MINORITIES

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (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.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4238

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

SECTION 1. MODERNIZATION OF TERMS RELATING TO MINORITIES.

(a) OFFICE OF MINORITY ECONOMIC IMPACT.—Section 211(f)(1) of the Department of Energy Organization Act (42 U.S.C. 7141(f)(1)) is amended by striking ''a Negro, Puerto Rican, American Indian, Eskimo, Oriental, or Aleut or is a Spanish speaking individual of Spanish descent'' and inserting ''Asian American, Native Hawaiian, a Pacific Islander, African American, Hispanic, Puerto Rican, Native American, or an Alaska Native''.

(b) MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISES.—Section 106(f)(2) of the Local Public Works Capital Development and Investment Act of 1976 (42 U.S.C. 6705(f)(2)) is amended by striking ''Negroes, Spanish-speaking, Orientals, Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts'' and inserting ''Asian American, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islanders, African American, Hispanic, Native American, or Alaska Natives''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RUSH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to consider H.R. 4238, a bill to amend the Department of Energy Organization Act and the Local Public Works Capital Development and Investment Act of 1976 to modernize terms in the original legislation relating to minorities.

This bill replaces offensive terms relating to minorities found in decades-old energy legislation. I want to thank GRACE MENG for being the lead on this commonsense piece of legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend my colleague from the great State of New York (Ms. MENG) for her work in bringing forth H.R. 4238, a bill 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.

Mr. Speaker, this commonsense bill received unanimous bipartisan support when it came before both the Energy and Power Subcommittee, on which I serve as the ranking member, and when it came before the full Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. Speaker, words matter. This bill strikes outdated, offensive terms related to minorities out of the Federal statute that can be found in the Department of Energy Organization Act and the Local Public Works Capital Development and Investment Act of 1976.

Mr. Speaker, this is a straightforward bill that helps bring these statutes up to modern times and into the 21st century, at least as far as getting rid of these offensive terms is concerned.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. MENG).

Ms. MENG. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that H.R. 4238 has made it to the House floor today.

As you know, this bill will strike the term ''Oriental'' from Federal law in the last two places it is used to refer to a person. This legislation is long overdue, and I am thankful for your consideration and, I hope, passage of it.

I would like to thank my colleague and friend, Representative ED ROYCE, for being an original author of this bill with me, as well as every member of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus.

I would also like to thank Representative BUTTERFIELD and Representative SÁNCHEZ, chairs of the Congressional Black Caucus and Congressional Hispanic Caucus, respectively, for cosponsoring this legislation.

I would also like to personally thank Chairman UPTON and Ranking Member PALLONE for shepherding this legislation through the Energy and Commerce Committee, as well as Representatives WHITFIELD and RUSH, who moved it through the Energy and Power Subcommittee.

We are all aware that there are chapters of American history that are not perfect. This very body, for example, once found it appropriate to pass laws such as the Chinese Exclusion Act and the Geary Act. But we also found it appropriate to repeal them. Times change, what is acceptable changes, and this Congress more often than not yields to that change.

Toward that end, the time has come to repeal certain terms from Federal law that many in the Asian American community would find offensive. In the same way I would not want either of my children to be referred to as ''Orientals'' by their teachers at school, I hope we can agree that such terms no longer deserve a place in Federal law.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for allowing this legislation to the floor for a vote today. I urge all of my colleagues to support this important measure.

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

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank once again Ms. GRACE

MENG for bringing this important issue to the attention of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

I would urge all Members to support this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in support of H.R. 4238, which was introduced by my colleague, the gentlewoman from New York, Representative MENG.

Racism and discrimination have no place in America today. We are a nation of immigrants that is proud of its diversity.

Despite our society's progression and growth over the last 100 years, the Federal Code still contains language on ethnicity that is antiquated, and, quite frankly, inappropriate. For example, the term ''Orientals'' is offensive, especially so when referring to the vibrant Asian American community. Using this term in federal law lends it a legitimacy it doesn't deserve.

I strongly believe that when we get the chance, we should correct the mistakes of the past. This bill goes a long way towards correcting our mistakes.

H.R. 4238 eliminates outdated, disrespectful terms from federal law and replaces them with terms, such as ''Asian American,'' ''Alaska Natives,'' and ''Hispanic,'' that are more appropriate for our times and in keeping with our values.

Last year, Representative MENG and I successfully amended H.R. 8 to strike these derogatory terms, which did not move in the Senate. As an original cosponsor of this standalone bill, I'm very happy that she and I are closer to having this language signed into law and these terms removed for good.

Deleting inappropriate terms from the U.S. Code is a simple, yet important, way of demonstrating respect for our Nation's diversity.

I strongly support this bill and urge my colleagues in the House to vote in support of it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4238.

The question was taken.

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

EPS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2016

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4444) to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to exclude power supply circuits, drivers, and devices designed to be connected to, and power, light-emitting diodes or organic light-emitting diodes providing illumination from energy conservation standards for external power supplies, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4444

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 ''EPS Improvement Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. APPLICATION OF ENERGY CONSERVATION STANDARDS TO CERTAIN EXTERNAL POWER SUPPLIES.

(a) DEFINITION OF EXTERNAL POWER SUPPLY.—Section 321(36)(A) of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6291(36)(A)) is amended—

(1) by striking the subparagraph designation and all that follows through ''The term'' and inserting the following:

''(A) EXTERNAL POWER SUPPLY.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The term''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(ii) EXCLUSION.—The term 'external power supply' does not include a power supply circuit, driver, or device that is designed exclusively to be connected to, and power—

''(I) light-emitting diodes providing illumination;

''(II) organic light-emitting diodes providing illumination; or

''(III) ceiling fans using direct current motors.''.

(b) STANDARDS FOR LIGHTING POWER SUPPLY CIRCUITS.—

(1) DEFINITION.—Section 340(2)(B) of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6311(2)(B)) is amended by striking clause (v) and inserting the following:

''(v) electric lights and lighting power supply circuits;''.

(2) ENERGY CONSERVATION STANDARD FOR CERTAIN EQUIPMENT.—Section 342 of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6313) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(g) LIGHTING POWER SUPPLY CIRCUITS.—If the Secretary, acting pursuant to section 341(b), includes as covered equipment solid state lighting power supply circuits, drivers, or devices described in section 321(36)(A)(ii), the Secretary may prescribe under this part, not earlier than 1 year after the date on which a test procedure has been prescribed, an energy conservation standard for such equipment.''.

(c) TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.—

(1) Section 321(6)(B) of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6291(6)(B)) is amended by striking ''(19)'' and inserting ''(20)''.

(2) Section 324 of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6294) is amended by striking ''(19)'' each place it appears in each of subsections (a)(3), (b)(1)(B), (b)(3), and (b)(5) and inserting ''(20)''.

(3) Section 325(l) of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6295(l)) is amended by striking ''paragraph (19)'' each place it appears and inserting ''paragraph (20)''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RUSH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to bring to the floor today H.R. 4444, the EPS Improvement Act of 2016.

I want to give special thanks to our colleagues, RENEE ELLMERS of North Carolina, DIANA DEGETTE of Colorado, MIKE POMPEO of Kansas, DORIS MATSUI of California, and Mr. CHARLES DENT of Pennsylvania, for their work on this piece of legislation.

I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. ELLMERS).

Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina. I thank the chairman for yielding on this specific issue and for leading our subcommittee of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4444, the EPS Improvement Act of 2016. This bipartisan bill would provide certainty to North Carolina lighting manufacturers that provide over 3,000 jobs in my home State. H.R. 4444 will resolve the underlying issues of the Department of Energy External Power Supply rule.

In 2005, Congress directed the Department of Energy to develop energy efficiency standards for external power supplies. The DOE initially stated that products intended to be covered by these standards ''convert household electric current into DC or lower voltage AC to operate consumer products such as a laptop computer or a smartphone.''

Years after the passage of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, new technologies such as OLED and LED drivers were introduced into the marketplace. While the development of these drivers increased energy efficiency, it has also caused uncertainty in the manufacturing sector. This is because DOE roped in drivers as products to also be covered under the EPS rule.

DOE is now attempting to regulate a product that was not in the marketplace at the time Congress initially directed the Department to set external power supply standards. Both manufacturers and the energy efficiency community agree that this was and is not the intent of Congress.

DOE has continued with this misguided rule despite the distinct difference in the design and use of LED drivers to that of the design and use of EPS. One example demonstrating the difference is that EPS uses single-stage power conversion while LED drivers use a two-stage power conversion.

Thankfully, H.R. 4444 is a promanufacturing, proconsumer piece of legislation that resolves this problem. It will exclude certain technologies from being included in other broad rulemakings.

I would like to thank my colleagues, Representatives DEGETTE, POMPEO, MATSUI, and DENT for their leadership on this important issue.

Additionally, I would like to thank Chairman WHITFIELD and the Energy and Power Subcommittee staff for their time and efforts in advancing this legislation.

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend my colleagues on the Energy and Commerce Committee—Mrs. ELLMERS and Ms. DEGETTE, in particular—as well as all of my other colleagues who worked on H.R. 4444, the EPS Improvement Act of 2016.

This bipartisan piece of legislation would exclude the drivers that power light-emitting diodes, commonly known as LEDs, and direct-current ceiling fans from DOE's energy conservation standards for external power supplies.

Mr. Speaker, in the Energy Policy Act of 2005, Congress directed DOE to establish conservation standards for external power supplies used to convert household electric current into DC current or lower voltage AC current.

At the time, external power supplies were almost exclusively the kind of wall chargers used to power laptops, cell phones, and other similar consumer devices.

□ 1600

Mr. Speaker, in 2005, LED lighting was in its infancy stages. LED lamps were not even on the market then, nor were they available in 2007, when Congress amended the definition of external power supply in the Energy Independence Act of 2007.

However, in just over a decade, Mr. Speaker, LED and other high-efficiency, solid-state lighting products have become widely available. These lights provide significant energy-efficiency cost savings to consumers when compared with traditional light bulbs.

LEDs get swept up in the energy conservation standards for external power supplies because they are powered by solid-state lighting drivers that bear superficial similarities to the kind of chargers that Congress directed DOE to set standards for.

Now, Mr. Speaker, one might ask, if these LEDs are so efficient, how is it that their drivers cannot meet the energy conservation standards for external power supplies?

Well, this is simply because in order to comply with the standards, an external power supply must be tested when it is disconnected from the object it is powering.

For example, Mr. Speaker, a laptop power supply would have to be tested when it is disconnected from the laptop. LED drivers are not designed to operate when disconnected from LEDs, and so they cannot be tested in the same way as other external power supplies.

This means that even though they are indeed very energy efficient, they cannot comply with the standards. The same is true of a new generation of energy-efficient ceiling fans.

Mr. Speaker, to be sure, this legislation still holds these devices accountable to energy and conservation standards. H.R. 4444 makes DOE's authority to prescribe separate energy and conservation standards for LED drivers explicit.

Ceiling fans with the direct current motors would still be required to meet DOE energy conservation standards for ceiling fans.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on the bill before us.

I ask unanimous consent to yield the balance of my time to the gentlewoman from Colorado (Ms. DEGETTE), and that she may control that time.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers other than myself, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to add my thanks to those of my colleague, Mrs. ELLMERS. I want to also thank Chairman UPTON, Ranking Member PALLONE. I want to thank Chairman WHITFIELD and Ranking Member RUSH, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. POMPEO, Mr. DENT, and Mrs. CAPPS, all for supporting this important measure.

This bill updates the DOE's energy conservation standards to keep with the innovations that have taken place over the last decade in household and commercial lighting.

While the latest lighting may look similar on the exterior, it actually runs on new and exciting technology. Frankly, as you have heard from the other speakers, we need to update our regulatory scheme to keep these innovations going.

Specifically, when the Energy and Commerce Committee wrote the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 2005, it directed the Department of Energy to develop a conservation standard for external power supply products.

Because of the inadvertently broad definition we created for external power supplies, emerging LED drivers were swept up into a standard that, as you have heard so eloquently from the other speakers, just doesn't make any sense.

That means that, although LED drivers are highly energy-efficient, they can't meet the EPS conservation standard, and their ability to compete in the competitive lighting market is now an open question.

Now, this might seem like a technicality, but in the real world, this bill is vitally important. Just last week, for example, General Electric and JPMorgan Chase rang the closing bell at the New York Stock Exchange to announce a deal for the world's largest single-order installation of LED lighting.

GE will install LED lighting at 5,000 JPMorgan Chase bank branches this year, which will cut the bank's lighting bill in half. But unless we pass this bill quickly, the new lighting at JPMorgan Chase locations technically won't meet basic efficiency standards.

It is urgent that we pass this bill now and that we pass it quickly through the other body because these new efficiency standards are going into effect. And while everybody agrees LED lighting is important, we are still coming against the letter of the law.

And so that is why I want to thank everybody on both sides of the aisle for realizing how incredibly important this is.

By passing the EPS Improvement Act of 2016, we will let the LED lighting revolution continue. We will help lower energy prices for every American business and household, and will continue our goal of more and more efficient energy.

Mr. Speaker, if my friend across the aisle still has no speakers, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS).

Mrs. CAPPS. I thank my colleague for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4444. This overdue legislation is critically important to ensure that the innovation and implementation of LED technologies continues.

Our Nation has made great strides toward the production of accessible and affordable clean energy. To continue this momentum, we must do all we can to embrace and support technologies that strive to improve energy efficiency.

In so doing, we must support efforts toward greater energy efficiency by supporting technologies that use fewer resources for the same or better results. This allows us to balance our energy consumption with the need to protect the global environment. And that is exactly what this bill does.

When it comes to the lighting sector, LED technologies are at the forefront of meeting the efficiency demand. This technology is drastically reducing the energy required to provide light in both residential and industrial settings throughout the country and around the world.

While the reach of this technology is amazingly broad, LEDs are incredibly important to my district as well. There is a long history of researching, developing and innovating LEDs technologies in academia, industry, and nonprofits along the central coast of California.

The University of California Santa Barbara continues to lead the way in research to improve upon the light-emitting diodes, or LEDs, as we know them.

Furthermore, UCSB is fortunate to employ one of the leading researchers in the world, Dr. Shuji Nakamura, who was awarded the Nobel Prize for his work on LEDs.

And Cree Lighting, which translates this research into employable technologies has a facility in my district where they are continuing to develop cutting-edge applications for LEDs.

The promise of this technology really is a game changer. In fact, the Institute for Energy Efficiency at UC Santa Barbara has worked with the nonprofit Unite for Light to provide reading lights to people across the world, replacing dangerous kerosene lamps still

used in places where electricity is not available with solar charged LED reading lights.

You know, I have one of these little reading lights in my home. They are about 12 inches tall. This is Unite for Light. Instead of a power cord plugging into the wall, they have two little solar panels at the base.

If you set them in the sunlight during the day, then you have the ability in the evening, then a child in a Third World country, or some person who needs to do work or homework at night, can take this little lamp, reading light, and use it to further their employment, their education until we get the infrastructure in place to do that itself.

So there is no doubt that LEDs are an important technology to change lighting, as we know it, providing an accessible and efficient source of illumination.

H.R. 4444 ensures that the important research and development of LED technologies, such as the activities in my district, will be able to continue and that LEDs will be able to efficiently light the world around us.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, having no other speakers, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

I want to thank all of those involved in bringing forth this legislation. We are all excited about it.

It does teach each one of us a lesson, though, and that is, sometimes we pass legislation, and we use language a little bit too broad; and the regulatory agencies take that and run. And now we see them trying to regulate something that was not even in existence when the 2005 Energy Policy Act was adopted.

I don't think that many Members of Congress or the American people ever thought that the Department of Energy would be setting efficiency standards for ceiling fans, for microwave ovens, refrigerators.

It reminds me of that Dire Straits song, and I hope you all liked them as much I did, but they had this song entitled ''Money for Nothing'' and the chicks are free. They talked about the importance of moving microwave ovens, refrigerators, and color TVs.

We find ourselves today living in a world in which everything is so micromanaged, and this is an example of that action. We understand we need regulations, but I am glad that we have a group of Democrats and Republicans coming together with common sense to say to the Department of Energy, hey, we need some balance here.

I would urge passage of this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4444.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ENERGY AND MANUFACTURING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4583) to promote a 21st century energy and manufacturing workforce, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4583

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

SECTION 1. ENERGY AND MANUFACTURING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Energy (in this Act referred to as the ''Secretary'') shall prioritize education and training for energy and manufacturing-related jobs in order to increase the number of skilled workers trained to work in energy and manufacturing-related fields when considering awards for existing grant programs, including by—

(1) encouraging State education agencies and local educational agencies to equip students with the skills, mentorships, training, and technical expertise necessary to fill the employment opportunities vital to managing and operating the Nation's energy and manufacturing industries, in collaboration with representatives from the energy and manufacturing industries (including the oil, gas, coal, nuclear, utility, pipeline, renewable, petrochemical, manufacturing, and electrical construction sectors) to identify the areas of highest need in each sector and the skills necessary for a high quality workforce in the following sectors of energy and manufacturing:

(A) Energy efficiency industry, including work in energy efficiency, conservation, weatherization, or retrofitting, or as inspectors or auditors.

(B) Pipeline industry, including work in pipeline construction and maintenance or work as engineers or technical advisors.

(C) Utility industry, including work in the generation, transmission, and distribution of electricity and natural gas, such as utility technicians, operators, lineworkers, engineers, scientists, and information technology specialists.

(D) Nuclear industry, including work as scientists, engineers, technicians, mathematicians, or security personnel.

(E) Oil and gas industry, including work as scientists, engineers, technicians, mathematicians, petrochemical engineers, or geologists.

(F) Renewable industry, including work in the development, manufacturing, and production of renewable energy sources (such as solar, hydropower, wind, or geothermal energy).

(G) Coal industry, including work as coal miners, engineers, developers and manufacturers of state-of-the-art coal facilities, technology vendors, coal transportation workers and operators, or mining equipment vendors.

(H) Manufacturing industry, including work as operations technicians, operations and design in additive manufacturing, 3–D printing, advanced composites, and advanced aluminum and other metal alloys, industrial energy efficiency management systems, including power electronics, and other innovative technologies.

(I) Chemical manufacturing industry, including work in construction (such as welders, pipefitters, and tool and die makers) or as instrument and electrical technicians, machinists, chemical process operators, chemical engineers, quality and safety professionals, and reliability engineers; and

(2) strengthening and more fully engaging Department of Energy programs and labs in carrying out the Department's workforce development initiatives including the Minorities in Energy Initiative.

(b) PROHIBITION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize the Secretary or any other officer or employee of the Federal Government to incentivize, require, or coerce a State, school district, or school to adopt curricula aligned to the skills described in subsection (a).

(c) PRIORITY.—The Secretary shall prioritize the education and training of underrepresented groups in energy and manufacturing-related jobs.

(d) CLEARINGHOUSE.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall establish a clearinghouse to—

(1) maintain and update information and resources on training and workforce development programs for energy and manufacturing-related jobs, including job training and workforce development programs available to assist displaced and unemployed energy and manufacturing workers transitioning to new employment; and

(2) provide technical assistance for States, local educational agencies, schools, community colleges, universities (including minority serving institutions), workforce development programs, labor-management organizations, and industry organizations that would like to develop and implement energy and manufacturing-related training programs.

(e) COLLABORATION.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary—

(1) shall collaborate with States, local educational agencies, schools, community colleges, universities (including minority serving institutions), workforce-training organizations, national laboratories, State energy offices, workforce investment boards, and the energy and manufacturing industries;

(2) shall encourage and foster collaboration, mentorships, and partnerships among organizations (including industry, States, local educational agencies, schools, community colleges, workforce-development organizations, and colleges and universities) that currently provide effective job training programs in the energy and manufacturing fields and entities (including States, local educational agencies, schools, community colleges, workforce development programs, and colleges and universities) that seek to establish these types of programs in order to share best practices; and

(3) shall collaborate with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Department of Commerce, the Bureau of the Census, States, and the energy and manufacturing industries to develop a comprehensive and detailed understanding of the energy and manufacturing workforce needs and opportunities by State and by region.

(f) OUTREACH TO MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTIONS.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall—

(1) give special consideration to increasing outreach to minority serving institutions and Historically Black Colleges and Universities;

(2) make existing resources available through program cross-cutting to minority

serving institutions with the objective of increasing the number of skilled minorities and women trained to go into the energy and manufacturing sectors;

(3) encourage industry to improve the opportunities for students of minority serving institutions to participate in industry internships and cooperative work/study programs; and

(4) partner with the Department of Energy laboratories to increase underrepresented groups' participation in internships, fellowships, traineeships, and employment at all Department of Energy laboratories.

(g) OUTREACH TO DISLOCATED ENERGY AND MANUFACTURING WORKERS.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall—

(1) give special consideration to increasing outreach to employers and job trainers preparing dislocated energy and manufacturing workers for in-demand sectors or occupations;

(2) make existing resources available through program cross-cutting to institutions serving dislocated energy and manufacturing workers with the objective of training individuals to re-enter in-demand sectors or occupations;

(3) encourage the energy and manufacturing industries to improve opportunities for dislocated energy and manufacturing workers to participate in career pathways; and

(4) work closely with the energy and manufacturing industries to identify energy and manufacturing operations, such as coal-fired power plants and coal mines, scheduled for closure and to provide early intervention assistance to workers employed at such energy and manufacturing operations by—

(A) partnering with State and local workforce development boards;

(B) giving special consideration to employers and job trainers preparing such workers for in-demand sectors or occupations;

(C) making existing resources available through program cross-cutting to institutions serving such workers with the objective of training them to re-enter in-demand sectors or occupations; and

(D) encouraging the energy and manufacturing industries to improve opportunities for such workers to participate in career pathways.

(h) ENROLLMENT IN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall work with industry and community-based workforce organizations to help identify candidates, including from underrepresented communities such as minorities, women, and veterans, to enroll in workforce development programs for energy and manufacturing-related jobs.

(i) PROHIBITION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as authorizing the creation of a new workforce development program.

(j) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) CAREER PATHWAYS; DISLOCATED WORKER; IN-DEMAND SECTORS OR OCCUPATIONS; LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD; STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD.—The terms ''career pathways'', ''dislocated worker'', ''in-demand sectors or occupations'', ''local workforce development board'', and ''State workforce development board'' have the meanings given the terms ''career pathways'', ''dislocated worker'', ''in-demand sectors or occupations'', ''local board'', and ''State board'', respectively, in section 3 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102).

(2) MINORITY-SERVING INSTITUTION.—The term ''minority-serving institution'' means an institution of higher education with a designation of one of the following:

(A) Hispanic-serving institution (as defined in 20 U.S.C.1101a(a)(5)).

(B) Tribal College or University (as defined in 20 U.S.C.1059c(b)).

(C) Alaska Native-serving institution or a Native Hawaiian-serving institution (as defined in 20 U.S.C.1059d(b)).

(D) Predominantly Black Institution (as defined in 20 U.S.C.1059e(b)).

(E) Native American-serving nontribal institution (as defined in 20 U.S.C.1059f(b)).

(F) Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-serving institution (as defined in 20 U.S.C.1059g(b)).

SEC. 2. REPORT.

Five years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall publish a comprehensive report to the Committee on Energy and Commerce and the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee on the outlook for energy and manufacturing sectors nationally. The report shall also include a comprehensive summary of energy and manufacturing job creation as a result of the enactment of this Act. The report shall include performance data regarding the number of program participants served, the percentage of participants in competitive integrated employment two quarters and four quarters after program completion, the median income of program participants two quarters and four quarters after program completion, and the percentage of program participants receiving industry-recognized credentials.

SEC. 3. USE OF EXISTING FUNDS.

No additional funds are authorized to carry out the requirements of this Act. Such requirements shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RUSH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

□ 1615

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

Mr. Speaker, I am also pleased that we are considering today H.R. 4583, a bill to promote a 21st century energy and manufacturing workforce, introduced by my colleagues, Mr. RUSH of Illinois and Mr. HUDSON of North Carolina.

This bill takes important steps to help make training for energy and manufacturing jobs available to women and minorities as well as veterans and out-of-work coal miners.

I want to give a special word of thanks to Mr. RUSH because he and Mr. HUDSON were working on this legislation. They tried to get it included in the energy act that we passed a few weeks ago, and it didn't quite work out; but I am delighted that we are able to move this bill by itself.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, let me begin by commending Chairman UPTON, Chairman WHITFIELD, Ranking Member PALLONE, and the committee staff for working with my office to bring the 21st century workforce legislation to the House floor today. I would also publicly acknowledge the leadership of my colleague, Mr. HUDSON of North Carolina, and his staff who played an instrumental role in helping us to get to this very point.

The good faith talks held between my office, the majority and the minority committee staff, and Mr. HUDSON's office have resulted in this bipartisan jobs bill that will go a long way in helping to get our Nation's economy back on track and working for everyone.

Mr. Speaker, this workforce bill before us provides an example of how Congress should function and how Congress should work on behalf of the American people. Here we have bipartisan members of the Energy and Commerce Committee who represent various constituencies from diverse regions of the country and who come from different political persuasions. However, Mr. Speaker, it must be well noted that we were able to put aside our differences and focus our efforts on bringing forth a jobs bill that will benefit all of our Nation's communities and help lift up the entire American economy.

And exactly what does this bill do, Mr. Speaker?

This bill directs the Secretary of Energy to prioritize the training of underrepresented groups, including minorities, women, veterans, as well as displaced and unemployed energy and manufacturing workers, in order to increase the number of skilled candidates trained to work in these same related fields.

Mr. Speaker, this bill will strengthen and more fully engage DOE programs and national laboratories in order to carry out the Department's workforce development initiatives. That includes the Minorities in Energy Initiative that was established 2 years ago, with my encouragement, under Secretary Moniz's leadership.

There will be a clearinghouse of information and resources on training and workforce development programs for energy and manufacturing-related jobs, State by State and region by region all across our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, this bill will help increase outreach to minority-serving institutions to ensure that the wealth of existing resources at DOE are made available to these worthy establishments. It will also provide additional outreach to displaced and unemployed energy and manufacturing workers with the objective of improving the opportunities for these candidates to find employment.

This legislation, Mr. Speaker, will help to develop a skilled labor force, trained to work in a wide array of sectors, including renewables, energy efficiency, oil and gas, coal, nuclear, utility, pipelines, alternative fuels, as well as energy-intensive and advanced manufacturing industries.

Mr. Speaker, one of the challenges that I have heard far too many times from my constituents is of individuals participating in training programs that in many cases do not always lead to actually finding a job. With that in mind, Mr. Speaker, this bill will help industry, help schools, and help community-based workforce development organizations to identify candidates for enrollment into training and apprenticeship programs, with the objective of ensuring that the skills learned are immediately transferable to good-paying jobs and good-paying careers within the energy and manufacturing sectors regionally, nationally, and, indeed, all across this globe.

Mr. Speaker, as you well know, and as all Members in this House know, the energy and manufacturing industries are two of the most critical and fastest growing sectors both domestically as well as internationally. The potential of these two sectors can help bolster the American economy and are also vital to the growing number of people seeking middle class status all across the developing world.

It is important, Mr. Speaker, that we equip our citizens, those who need jobs and those who are out of work, with the skills needed and necessary to meet this growing demand so that we can tap into these tremendous opportunities. This very bill before us today will accomplish that goal.

Why is the 21st century workforce bill so very necessary? Mr. Speaker, just last week, my office had yet another visiting delegation, a meeting this time with an energy company out of the great State of North Carolina, whose representatives informed me that right now, today, as we stand here in this great Chamber today, they have over 1,000 job openings that they cannot fill because they cannot find enough qualified skilled workers.

The 21st century workforce bill will address that difficulty and be a solution to that and many other similar problems all across our country. In fact, Mr. Speaker, my office has been holding many of these same types of meetings over the past 4 years with a variety of different energy and manufacturing industries that are indeed facing this very same predicament.

At a time when African American and Latino unemployment rates are still too high, when coal workers throughout Appalachia and beyond are finding themselves without work, when too many female heads of household cannot find adequate employment to take care of their families, and when veterans returning home from defending our Nation still cannot find a job, it is a travesty and a shame that eager employers still cannot find the trained workers they need.

Mr. Speaker, this is a commonsense jobs bill that will help to match up trained, qualified candidates with good-paying jobs and careers that will fit them and their families, help lift up their community, help strengthen the energy and manufacturing industry, and will bolster the entire American economy as a whole.

Whether you are a student pursuing your engineering degree at an HBCU or a single mother taking classes at your neighborhood community college, this bill seeks to provide additional opportunity to all those individuals who are out there looking to better themselves and improve the financial situation for their families.

Mr. Speaker, when this bill becomes law and its provisions are implemented, it will help out-of-work coal miners retool and retrain for the jobs of the 21st century. This bill will also help returning veterans use their skills and use their talents to find employment and provide a dignified future for their families.

So, Mr. Speaker, again, I want to thank my distinguished colleague from the great State of Michigan, Chairman UPTON; my friend from the great State of Kentucky, Chairman WHITFIELD; Ranking Member PALLONE; my friend from North Carolina (Mr. HUDSON); and all my colleagues on the Energy and Commerce Committee, as well as those who are on the Education and the Workforce Committee who helped bring us to this point today, where we are bringing forward this bill with this focus not only on underserved communities, such as minorities, women, and veterans, but also displaced and unemployed coal miners and out-of-work energy workers in other places.

I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, when this bill ultimately becomes law, it will go a long way in helping not only communities that look like the one I represent on the south side of Chicago, but every community in every district throughout this Nation.

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

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

I would like to reiterate once again that there were a lot of people involved in bringing this legislation to the floor. It would not have happened except for the persistence and commitment of Mr. RUSH of Illinois. So I want to thank him again.

I also want to say that every Member of Congress comes to this floor, and we talk about regulations and the impact they have on creating jobs. We talk about uncertainty in tax policies, and we talk about the ability of America to be competitive in the global workplace. We talk about a lot of macro issues. But for men and women out there in the country, like coal miners who are losing jobs because of the policies of this administration, veterans who have extensive leadership skills but can't find good jobs, and minorities who are not trained in the right way, this legislation goes a long way in providing the training that people need to find a good job.

I urge all Members to support this legislation. I want to thank everyone who worked for it.

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

□ 1630

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4583, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AMPLIFYING LOCAL EFFORTS TO ROOT OUT TERROR ACT OF 2016

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4401) to authorize the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide countering violent extremism training to Department of Homeland Security representatives at State and local fusion centers, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4401

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 ''Amplifying Local Efforts to Root out Terror Act of 2016'' or the ''ALERT Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM TRAINING.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF TRAINING.—The Secretary of Homeland Security is authorized to provide training for personnel, including Department of Homeland Security personnel, State, local, tribal, and territorial representatives at State and major urban area fusion centers for the purpose of administering community awareness briefings and related activities in furtherance of the Department's efforts to counter violent extremism, identify and report suspicious activities, and increase awareness of and more quickly identify terrorism threats, including the travel or attempted travel of individuals from the United States to support a foreign terrorist organization (as such term is described in section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1189)) abroad.

(b) COORDINATION.—To the extent practicable, in providing the training under subsection (a), the Secretary shall coordinate with the heads of other Federal agencies engaged in community outreach related to countering violent extremism and shall also coordinate with such agencies in the administration of related activities, including community awareness briefings.

SEC. 3. COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM ASSESSMENT.

(a) ASSESSMENT REQUIRED.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with appropriate State,

local, tribal, and territorial representatives, shall assess the efforts of the Department of Homeland Security to support countering violent extremism at the State, local, tribal, and territorial levels. Such assessment shall include each of the following:

(1) A cataloging of departmental efforts to assist State, local, tribal, and territorial governments in countering violent extremism.

(2) A review of cooperative agreements between the Department and such governments relating to countering violent extremism.

(3) An evaluation of departmental plans and any potential opportunities to better support such governments that are in furtherance of the Department's countering violent extremism objectives and are consistent with all relevant constitutional, legal, and privacy protections.

(b) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 150 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and consistent with the protection of classified information, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees the findings of the assessment required under subsection (a) together with any related information regarding best practices for countering violent extremism at the State, local, tribal, and territorial levels.

SEC. 4. DEPARTMENT-SPONSORED CLEARANCES.

Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall notify the appropriate congressional committees of the number of employees of State, local, tribal, and territorial governments with security clearances sponsored by the Department of Homeland Security. Such notification shall include a detailed list of the agencies that employ such employees, the level of clearance held by such employees, and whether such employees are assigned as representatives to State and major urban area fusion centers.

SEC. 5. PROHIBITION ON ADDITIONAL FUNDING.

No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act.

SEC. 6. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Homeland Security and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives; and

(B) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate.

(2) The term ''violent extremism'' means ideologically motivated international terrorism or domestic terrorism, as such terms are defined in section 2331 of title 18, United States Code.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KEATING) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Just 3 short years ago, a group of domestic terrorists were plotting attacks in my hometown in northwest Georgia. Federal law enforcement was informed that these terrorists were trying to obtain pipe bombs and other improvised explosive devices. Once detonated, these weapons could have destroyed property, disabled utilities, and potentially taken innocent human life.

Because of the imminent threat, a Federal drug task force had to move quickly to intercept the suspects before they could carry out their attack. With such a short time to react to such a volatile situation, logic would suggest that Federal law enforcement would notify and enlist the assistance of the local sheriff's office.

Considering the raid was to take place in the parking lot of a busy shopping center adjacent to a hospital, having local law enforcement assistance was clearly justified. However, there was one problem. The sheriff didn't have the proper security clearance; so, he was not authorized to be briefed on the details of the case.

To stop these would-be terrorists, the FBI had to move quickly and could not wait for a waiver to brief the sheriff or to get approval to enlist his assistance. This bureaucratic hurdle put the FBI, our local law enforcement, and the community at greater risk.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, this scenario plays out way too often across the Nation. While our FBI and Homeland Security agents are doing an exemplary job of countering terrorist activities, their resources are being stretched very thin. With the threat of terrorism on the rise, we must find a way to provide these agents with additional resources.

This is why I have introduced H.R. 4401, the ALERT Act. The Amplifying Local Efforts to Root Out Terror Act removes bureaucratic barriers and paves the way for the Federal Government to enhance State and local law enforcement involvement in fighting the war on terrorism.

By providing the tools and training needed to combat terrorism on multiple levels, this act will provide more efficient cooperation and coordination with State and local officials.

Local law enforcement is crucial to our security, and they are too often overlooked as a valuable asset in fighting against terrorism. Through this legislation, the Department of Homeland Security will be authorized to train State and local law enforcement in the best methods used in combating evolving terrorist threats.

Proper security clearances are also vital for our local law enforcement officials so they may assist with countering terror activity as well as receiving notification of pending threats in their local jurisdictions.

This bill requires the Department to keep Congress apprised of the number of security clearances issued to State and local law enforcement so we can assess whether further congressional action is needed.

Because fighting terrorism is not a singular effort of the Federal Government, the ALERT Act provides increased community awareness of ongoing threats.

Radicalization is also a clear and present danger to Americans. The number of cases of homegrown terrorism is growing nationwide. Since September 11, 2001, there have been 139 homegrown jihadist plots.

Community involvement in countering violent extremism has proven to be effective, as more than 75 percent of U.S. foreign fighter arrests have involved tips from local sources, such as community members, relatives, or friends. This bill will provide even more resources to root out terrorists before they can act.

As we are moving into a new era of terrorism that directly threatens our own communities, we must reevaluate how we meet the current threat. Today everyone has a part to play in protecting against terrorism: the neighbor next door and the local police officer.

While this legislation will not in itself end the threat of terrorism against our Nation, it will allow for the better use of valuable resources already within our communities.

I urge all Members to join me in supporting this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 4401, the Amplifying Local Efforts to Root Out Terror Act, or the ALERT Act, of 2016.

Mr. Speaker, this is the latest in a series of efforts by this Congress and, in particular, the Homeland Security Committee in a bipartisan manner to work to thwart terrorist threats in our country.

Mr. Speaker, we work continuously to look back at the 9/11 Commission recommendations to make sure that we are fulfilling all of the areas of trouble that were identified by that commission where we can make ourselves more secure from terrorist threats.

We also worked very hard as a committee looking at the Boston Marathon bombing. We worked on that and found out that information sharing was not as great as it should have been. In fact, it was one of the things that could have prevented that from occurring.

The police commissioner of Boston testified in front of the committee and was asked: Did you know the information that the Federal law enforcement officials had?

His answer was: No.

Then he was asked: Would it have been helpful for you to know that?

And he said: Of course.

Yet, that information wasn't available.

We have worked in the committee to make sure that information is shared at the local, regional, county, and State levels as well as the Federal law enforcement agency communities.

We have worked together successfully with groups like the Joint Terrorism Task Force to make sure that

information is shared on a daily basis, on a weekly basis, and, in a policy sense, even on a monthly basis, looking back and making sure that we have a seamless system.

Mr. Speaker, we had an initiative that I joined with my colleague from Georgia on as well as four other Members of this House where we traveled to look at the issue of foreign terrorist fighters and the threat to our country resulting from their actions.

Sadly, in the United States, there are over 200 people who have been identified as leaving this country to fight for ISIL in Syria and Iraq. Yet, we went through not only the Middle East, but through Europe with our allies there, to see what threats were there in terms of using those countries as portals into the United States, making sure that not only the 200-plus people from the U.S., if they came back, would be able to deal with their threats, but also the threats imposed by other countries coming back to the U.S.

We found out that in Istanbul, for instance, at the airport there, there are 61 million flights in that airport alone. That is probably 11 times, roughly, the whole population of my State of Massachusetts. Think of that. We found out that there wasn't security measures in place there that we take for granted in our own country.

We also worked hard with our allies in Europe so that they would do the basics and have passenger name records there so that we could trade information to find out who is boarding these planes. We are glad to report that the European Union has acted on that and that has been closed. They are working on areas with the exterior borders that we talked to them about in our trip.

We also have been successful as a Congress to work on the visa waiver country issue to make sure that those areas where people are coming back and have traveled to Syria and Iraq are vetted the way they should be vetted.

We also realize that not only do we have to fight this war on multiple fronts, but we know that back home the threat of domestic violent extremists remains the number one threat, according to every expert. We know from the work that we have done collectively that we could do more on that front in preventing it.

We were told about fusion centers, which are tremendous assets to our security at the local, State, or Federal level, where we worked together gathering and compiling information on a realtime basis. Yet, those fusion centers and the employees there wanted to do more.

They were telling us how they could do more if they were given more training, more coordination, and more information to deal with at the local and State level. It would create a great multiplier effect with the frontline law enforcement people that would make our country safer.

Along those lines, the gentleman from Georgia put in legislation that I am proud to be a lead sponsor on to make sure that the Department of Homeland Security is there authorizing and providing these resources through the fusion centers to our State and local counterparts.

And I think that translating that not only as information to stop and coordinate activities reacting to terrorist acts, but working at the root cause of sharing information that they can use and apply at the root level to prevent that kind of activity, puts those people closer to the community in a position where they can do more. To me, that is one of the most important things we can do as a Congress, to make sure that that work is being done.

This is a very important bill. It is a bill that I think, once again, we are seeing the role of Congress in making sure that things don't fall between the cracks in terms of our national security, make sure that the resource is there for our local and State counterparts.

I favor this bill because I think it is one of those areas that we found most in need of amplification. I hope this bill is passed.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. REICHERT).

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and thank him for his hard work on this legislation, along with Mr. KEATING.

After listening to both of you speak on this legislation, I am really happy that you get it, that you understand it. This is a great piece of legislation that we are about to enact.

I can speak from some experience, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that Mr. LOUDERMILK has asked me to speak this evening on this bill.

I was in law enforcement for 33 years. I started out in a patrol car and went through various stages of assignments and finally became the sheriff in King County, which is Seattle, Washington.

Some of the scenarios that you heard two gentlemen speaking about tonight, I have actually been there, done that, and have experienced some of the frustration that they just described tonight.

I know there are going to be some sheriff's deputies and police officers across the country tonight rejoicing in this bill. It will relieve much frustration and also provide some much-needed relief in creating that partnership between Federal and local law enforcement agencies.

I am in strong support of the ALERT Act. Today terrorism is not something that is in foreign countries. It is not somewhere outside of the United States. It is not outside our borders. It is right here. It is right here in Washington, D.C. It is right here in Seattle, Washington, as I said, where I come from.

□ 1645

Our sheriff's deputies and police officers have worked with the Federal agencies over these past few years, especially since 2001, in following up on hundreds and thousands of leads every day—of which the public, of course, is not aware—of possible threats and terrorism threats to our local communities.

I have had the opportunity to work with almost every Federal law enforcement agency that you can think of since 1972, when I joined the sheriff's office—leaving it in 2005 to come here. I had some great experiences and some not so great experiences. It especially relates back to the sharing of information, and it relates back to the inadequacy of our training and of our ability to connect to the Federal agencies in order to really form a true partnership and a true bond and a true trust.

If we can't, as Federal and local agencies, trust each other to share that information—and I know part of the effort here in the ALERT Act is to build that trust and to have the same training and the same information so we can protect the citizens of this country. That is our job, and that is what this law is designed to do.

We also need the partnership, the trust, of our communities because as we go out and investigate these leads and investigate these tips of possible terrorist attacks, we are interviewing people who live in our communities. They need to trust us. They need to respect, I should say, not only us here in Congress, but they need to respect our law enforcement agencies and officers across the country.

Most of all, our law enforcement agencies need to respect them. That is when we will have that trust by which we can share information and truly come together. The cops cannot protect this country alone. The community cannot protect this country alone. They cannot protect their neighborhoods alone, let alone our country; but we have given more and more responsibility to our local officers, and they are being spread thin.

I think that is why, ladies and gentlemen and Mr. Speaker, we are divided today. Cops and community are divided. We don't have that interaction any longer, and that trust that we have built over many, many years is now beginning to erode. I think that this bill goes a long way in building that trust and relationship between the Federal agencies and the local agencies and in providing that training.

Most of all, what I appreciate about this legislation is that you have called attention to the fact that local law enforcement is key and is absolutely vital, absolutely critical, to protecting this country and that we are asking them to participate in the defense of our homeland. Not only that, but at the same time, we are asking them to answer those emergency calls—and I am going to mention, if you will allow me a moment—as Officer Ashley Guindon did on her first day as a sheriff's deputy, and she died. That is what we are talking about here: life and

death, service to our community, protecting this country.

I thank the gentlemen for the hard work.

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

In closing, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for his leadership on this.

With regard to the gentleman from Washington State (Mr. REICHERT), I was a district attorney for 12 years and had my own attached State police force. I worked with local law enforcement, and I understand just what he was talking about in terms of the need to communicate, to work together cohesively, and to share information. We are all safer when that occurs.

Mr. Speaker, I started my day this morning in Boston. We met at the Federal Reserve. The ''we'' that met was something that, perhaps, you wouldn't have seen a few years ago but that we see today because of the efforts by Congress, the Homeland Security Committee, the gentleman from Georgia, and me in working together across the aisle and in making sure these things happen.

It was a meeting on surface transportation threats and terrorist threats. We had our staff and the head of the FBI in our region there. We had the head of the ATF. We had our regional head of the TSA there. We had State officials, local officials, local police, regional police. We had authorities, like the transportation authorities, all present in the room—filling up the room—working together, sharing information. Yet we know we have to do a better job of making sure that occurs going forward.

With regard to many of the things we worked on in the committee, some of those agencies made procedural changes. They adopted new priorities that they had not had before. There is the reporting to Congress on the information of foreign terrorist fighters from our European allies, as well as making sure that the Joint Terrorism Task Force is sharing information.

With this legislation, we are making sure, going forward, that that is going to continue to be done because oftentimes, unfortunately, we react to a major crisis, respond, and provide the resources. Then, after a period of time, our attention wanes, and we are not constantly making sure that it is being done.

This legislation will make sure that it is being done going forward, and it will make sure that these groups are reporting back to Congress on a regular basis so that we are in a position to know that it continues to go forward all the time because, as our attention and our resources and our defensiveness might wane, the threats by terrorists will always be there, unfortunately, in the world we share. This will make sure that the reporting back to Congress occurs as well.

I am pleased to say that Congress has an integral role in this. We have crossed a very divided line, unfortunately, that we live with today from a partisan standpoint, and we will work together time and time again, because if we can't work together on issues of our national security, what can we work together on?

I thank my colleague from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK). I thank the chairman of the committee, Mr. MCCAUL; the ranking member, Mr. THOMPSON; and all of the committee members for their efforts going forward. This ALERT Act will keep us safer, not just tomorrow, but in the decades ahead.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Let me give a heartfelt thanks to my colleagues across the aisle, especially to my colleague from Massachusetts (Mr. KEATING), who mentioned that we have spent a good amount of time together in traveling to the Middle East and to Europe, looking at terrorism.

There was a time in our Nation's history when our focus on terrorism was isolated to areas overseas, but no longer. Terrorism is in our neighborhoods and it is in our communities. As you heard here today, from Massachusetts to Georgia to Washington State, there are no geographical boundaries on terrorism even within the United States.

While this bill will not end terrorism, it will give critical tools to those who know their communities best. The local law enforcement officer who is on the beat every day knows his community better than anyone. When something isn't just right, he is the first one to notice it. It is critical that we provide them with the training, the security clearances, and the tools that they need to become a force multiplier for our Federal agents who are operating on very limited resources today. In fact, they are stretched very thin.

Again, I thank all of those who are in support of this legislation. Of all I have worked on, I believe that this is one of the most important—that being the securing of our Nation so our children will have a nation that is free, safe, and full of opportunity. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4401.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4401, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CALLING ON GOVERNMENT OF IRAN TO ASSIST IN CASE OF ROBERT LEVINSON

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (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, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 148

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 7 children;

Whereas Robert Levinson traveled from Dubai, UAE, 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 8 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 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 the Government 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 John Kerry again stated that the United States ''respectfully request 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, and Germany concluded 20 months of negotiations with Iran over its nuclear program;

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 ''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, Robert Levinson became the longest held United States hostage in our Nation's history; and

Whereas the FBI has announced a $5,000,000 reward for information leading to Mr. Levinson's safe return: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes that Robert Levinson is the longest held United States hostage 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 to the United States Government all available information from all entities of the Government of Iran regarding the disappearance of Robert Levinson;

(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.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on this resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

First, I would like to thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL for their leadership in bringing attention to Bob Levinson's plight and for guiding this resolution through our Foreign Affairs Committee and onto the House floor today.

Two weeks ago, we passed this resolution out of the Middle East and North Africa Subcommittee, which I chair alongside Ranking Member TED DEUTCH, my friend from Florida. We were joined by Bob's wife, Christine, and their son Dan, as well as by Bob's sister-in-law, Suzi.

It was truly heart wrenching, Mr. Speaker, to see Christine, Dan, and Suzi again and to see how much they miss Bob and how much they worry about his well-being and his fate. All they want is Bob's safe and immediate return. Unfortunately, the Iranian regime's continued failure to honor its commitments and promises to assist in Bob's case and to help bring him home have left them without a father, without a husband, and without a friend for nearly 3,300 days.

In fact, next week will mark the ninth anniversary of Bob's disappearance from Kish Island, Iranian territory. I can't even begin to imagine what the family has had to endure for these past 9 years—all of the birthdays, all of the holidays, all of the anniversaries, all of the momentous family occasions that never really felt whole because Bob was unable to share them with his family. No family should ever have to go through that ordeal, and the U.S. and the Iranian Governments can and should do more to ensure Bob's immediate return.

That is why this resolution before us today, Mr. Speaker, is so important, not just for Bob and the Levinson family, but for all American citizens who may, one day, be in a similar situation. Our constituents and the American people need to know that their Representatives and their government will make the safety and security of U.S. citizens a top priority.

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

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

I rise in support of the resolution.

I thank my good friend and partner, Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN, along with Congresswoman WASSERMAN SCHULTZ and Congressman DIAZ-BALART, for introducing this resolution with me and for their commitment to raising awareness to Bob Levinson's case and for always pushing for Bob's return.

I thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL for helping to swiftly move this resolution to the floor as we prepare to mark the anniversary of Bob Levinson's disappearance. I thank Senator NELSON for spearheading a similar resolution, which passed the Senate earlier this month. I also thank all of my colleagues who have cosponsored this resolution.

□ 1700

Passing this resolution today is particularly significant. This Saturday, March 5, 2016, members of Bob's community in my district in south Florida will come together for a rally in support of the Levinson family and call for Bob's immediate return. Just 4 days later, on March 9, we will mark the ninth anniversary of Bob's disappearance from Kish Island in Iran.

When we received word in January that our government negotiated for the release of four Americans imprisoned in Iran, we welcomed the news. These were Americans who were wrongfully held, and this move made very clear that the United States does not forget about its own people.

We rejoiced as Amir Hekmati, Saeed Abedini, and Jason Rezaian were reunited with their families. Our colleagues, Congressmen KILDEE, HUFFMAN, and LABRADOR, have been tireless, tireless advocates for the release of their constituents. I am so pleased that each of them has returned to the United States. For their families, Mr. Speaker, the nightmare is over. Unfortunately, the nightmare continues for my constituents, the Levinson family.

Bob is now the longest held hostage in American history. Bob has now missed 9 years of birthdays with his seven children, anniversaries with his wife, Christine, weddings, the births of three of his four grandchildren, and so many other happy occasions that should have been celebrated together as a family. This is a family who, for 9 years, has never given up on bringing their husband, their father home.

We were so fortunate to be joined by Bob's wife, Christine, and his eldest son, Dan, when we passed this resolution in committee some weeks ago. We had the opportunity to tell them directly that this Congress will not forget about Bob. By passing this resolution today, this House of Representatives will now tell the world that we will never forget about Bob.

Bob Levinson dedicated his life to serving this country, first with the DEA and then over 20 years as an FBI agent. Bob is a patriot who loves this country dearly, and now, Mr. Speaker, it is time for this country to come through for Bob.

Over the years, the Levinson family has received proof of life in the form of pictures and video. We are grateful that throughout the nuclear negotiations with Iran, Secretary Kerry and others raised Bob's case at every single meeting, and we have been told that the deal to release the other Americans opened new avenues for consultation on Bob's case. But we cannot wait. Whatever information Iran has about Bob needs to be provided now so that Bob can be brought home.

This resolution before us today calls on Iran to follow through on its repeated promises of assisting the United States in locating Bob. The resolution calls on our government and those of our partners and allies to continue to press Iran for information about Bob at every opportunity.

President Obama and Secretary Kerry have repeatedly expressed their commitment to securing Bob's release, and Secretary Kerry reiterated that commitment during testimony in the House just last week. President Obama has stated in January, when referencing Bob's case, he said ''we will not rest until their family is whole again.''

For anyone who is watching this debate today, I encourage you to share this information about Bob Levinson, to tweet about Bob Levinson, to use the hashtag #whataboutbob.

For those in south Florida, I encourage you to come to support the Levinson family this Saturday in Coral Springs. We must keep talking about Bob. We must raise the level of awareness about Bob's case.

Our government and the government of our friends and allies must continue to work tirelessly to find Bob and to bring him home. The newly elected Parliament in Iran must know that we will never rest until Bob is home.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), who is the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairwoman of the Subcommittee on The Middle East and North Africa and chairwoman emeritus of the full committee, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, for her leadership on this issue. I also thank TED DEUTCH, who authored this very, very important resolution. I also thank TOM RICE and ELIOT ENGEL for quickly bringing this legislation to the floor so that Members can vote on it in anticipation of the ninth anniversary of Bob Levinson's being held by the Iranians.

Almost 9 years ago, the Levinson family wrote, in part, on helpboblevinson.com. I quote them, in part. They said:

''If you pray for Bob, we thank you. If you frequently follow the news stories and blogs about Bob's situation, we thank you. If you have spread the word about his story and continue to do so, we thank you. We thank you all from the bottom of our hearts. Please continue to pray for Bob. We would love to have him home for Father's Day.''

That was May 25, 2007. That, Mr. Speaker, was almost 9 years ago.

In a letter to Dad, also in May of 2007, Bob Levinson's children wrote:

''Dad . . . your seven children love and miss you very much. We are writing you this letter in the hopes that you will be able to read it wherever you are and know that you are in our thoughts and prayers every minute of every day.''

The seven children continued:

''As you know, Mom is our rock. She has encouraged us to take each day one day at a time. While we are sure it will come as no surprise to you, she has amazing strength and has been an inspiration to all seven of us.

''We are all looking forward to your welcome home party. It cannot seem to come soon enough. We pray for you every day and look forward to having you come home to us safe and sound.''

The seven Levinson children continued:

''Dad, you are the best dad anyone could ever ask for, and we love and miss you more than words can say. We are so proud of you, and the world now knows what we have known all along—what an intelligent, kind, and gentle man you are.''

Again, that letter was from Bob's kids, and it was posted almost 9 years ago. Despite the emotional pain, Christine, his wife, and the entire family tenaciously press for Bob Levinson's freedom.

No one in American history, as Mr. DEUTCH pointed out a moment ago, has been held hostage longer than Bob Levinson. His ordeal and the agony and the heartbreak of his family must end.

When the reports that most of the Americans held by Iran were released but no freedom or even information about Levinson, the family was indeed crushed. In response, the family wrote: ''We are happy for the other families. But once again, Bob Levinson has been left behind. We are devastated.''

Devastated, yes, but they are absolutely committed to the return of their husband, father, grandfather, relative, and friend. Both the administration and Congress must not rest until this good, decent, and honorable American is returned to his family, friends, and a grateful Nation.

So I again thank Representative TED DEUTCH for sponsoring H. Res. 148 so all of us can express our deepest concern for Bob Levinson and press, as never before, for his return.

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

I thank Mr. SMITH for his powerful words and for sharing the very powerful and very moving words of Bob's family.

I ask my colleagues to think about the Levinson family as if they were your own and to use the opportunity that we have here today to send what is the most powerful message that this House can send—these days especially—and that is a message of unity.

Mr. Speaker, with this resolution today, we have an opportunity to recognize that, when a proud American has been missing from his family, has been missing from his community, he is missing from our family and he is missing from our community and our country. Our country is missing Bob Levinson. It is our country that will be made whole when Bob is returned.

I urge my colleagues in the strongest way that I can to stand together with me, with Bob's family, and on behalf of every person in this great country in moving this resolution forward and continuing to work tirelessly to bring Bob home.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank my good friend, Mr. DEUTCH, for his eloquent proposals time and time again in our committee, on the House floor, and in every public gathering on behalf of Bob Levinson's family. I am sure that the Levinson family feels a great sense of relief that they have such a tireless advocate by their side.

I hope that the administration continues to press the Iranian regime to do more to assist with the Bob Levinson case, and it needs to continue to raise the issue with the Iranian regime at the highest level and at every opportunity.

As Mr. DEUTCH pointed out, the community in south Florida will be rallying in support of Bob and his family this coming Saturday, March 5. It will be held at the Center for the Arts in Coral Springs at 2 in the afternoon.

What a powerful message it would send to the family were the House to adopt this resolution without dissent. It will also send a strong message to the Iranian regime that we will not relent until Bob is home with his family and Iran has honored its commitments and its promises.

I commend, again, my good friend and south Florida colleague, TED DEUTCH, for authoring this resolution, and I am honored to be his Republican lead. I have worked alongside Mr. DEUTCH for so many years in support of Bob and his family.

Bob, a south Florida resident, as you heard, is a constituent of Mr. DEUTCH's district. As I said, the Levinson family is so fortunate to have such a wonderful Representative, because TED has shown unwavering commitment to the family, for Bob in his fight to be reunited with his loving family. I can only say that we all support TED in his mission. We support the Levinson family. We will continue to work with Mr. DEUTCH in this effort.

I urge my colleagues to strongly support this measure, support Bob and the Levinson family in this one more anniversary of being in captivity who knows where.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 148, as amended.

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

The title of the resolution was amended 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 hostage in our Nation's history.''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FEMA DISASTER ASSISTANCE REFORM ACT OF 2015

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1471) to reauthorize the programs and activities of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1471

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act of 2015''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—FEMA REAUTHORIZATION

Sec. 101. Reauthorization of Federal Emergency Management Agency.

TITLE II—COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF DISASTER COSTS AND LOSSES

Sec. 201. Comprehensive study of disaster costs and losses.

TITLE III—STAFFORD ACT AND OTHER PROGRAMS

Sec. 301. Reauthorization of urban search and rescue response system.
Sec. 302. Statute of limitations.
Sec. 303. Action plan to improve field transition.
Sec. 304. Simplified procedures.
Sec. 305. Management costs.
Sec. 306. Debts owed to the United States related to disaster assistance.
Sec. 307. Statute of limitations for debts owed to the United States related to disaster assistance.
Sec. 308. Technical assistance and recommendations.
Sec. 309. Local impact.
Sec. 310. Proof of insurance.
Sec. 311. Authorities.
Sec. 312. Responsibilities.
Sec. 313. Earthquake and Tsunami Interagency Task Force.
Sec. 314. Mitigation assistance.
Sec. 315. Additional activities.

TITLE I—FEMA REAUTHORIZATION

SEC. 101. REAUTHORIZATION OF FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY.

Section 699 of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (Public Law 109–295; 6 U.S.C. 811) is amended—

(1) by striking ''administration and operations'' each place it appears and inserting ''management and administration''; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking ''; and'';

(3) in paragraph (3), by striking the period and inserting ''; and''; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

''(4) for fiscal year 2016, $946,982,000;

''(5) for fiscal year 2017, $946,982,000; and

''(6) for fiscal year 2018, $946,982,000.''.

TITLE II—COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF DISASTER COSTS AND LOSSES

SEC. 201. COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF DISASTER COSTS AND LOSSES.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall commence, through the National Advisory Council, a comprehensive study related to disaster costs and losses (referred to in the subsection as the ''Study'').

(b) ADDITIONAL MEMBERSHIP.—For the purposes of the Study, as soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this section, the Administrator shall appoint additional qualified members to the National Advisory Council from the following:

(1) Individuals that have the requisite technical knowledge and expertise on issues related to disaster costs and losses.

(2) Representatives of the insurance industry.

(3) Experts in and representatives of the construction and building industry.

(4) Individuals nominated by national organizations representing local governments and personnel.

(5) Academic experts.

(6) Vendors, developers, and manufacturers of systems, facilities, equipment, and capabilities for emergency management services.

(7) Representatives of such other stakeholders and interested and affected parties as the Administrator considers appropriate.

(c) CONSULTATION WITH NONMEMBERS.—The National Advisory Council shall consult with other relevant agencies and groups that are not represented on the National Advisory Council to consider research, data, findings, recommendations, innovative technologies and developments, including—

(1) entities engaged in federally funded research; and

(2) academic institutions engaged in relevant work and research.

(d) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the National Advisory Council shall convene to evaluate the following topics and develop recommendations for reducing disaster costs and losses:

(1) DISASTER LOSSES.—

(A) COST TRENDS.—Trends in disaster costs including loss of life and injury, property damage to individuals, the private sector, and each level of government (State, local and tribal) since the enactment of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.), to the extent data is available.

(B) CONTRIBUTING FACTORS.—Contributing factors such as shifting demographics and aging infrastructure and their impacts on the trends in disaster losses and costs.

(2) DISASTER COSTS.—

(A) TRENDS IN DECLARATIONS.—Trends in disaster declarations, including factors contributing to the trends.

(B) DISASTER ASSISTANCE.—Disaster assistance available from all Federal sources, including descriptions of programs, eligibility and authorities, where assistance has been used geographically, how quickly the funds are used, how that assistance is coordinated among the various agencies and departments, and recommendations for ways to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the delivery of such assistance.

(C) COSTS.—Disaster costs borne by the private sector and individuals.

(3) DISASTER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY.—Fundamental principles that should drive national disaster assistance decision making, including the appropriate roles for each level of government, the private sector and individuals.

(4) REDUCTION OF COSTS AND LOSSES.—

(A) MECHANISMS AND INCENTIVES.—Mechanisms and incentives, including tax incentives, to promote disaster cost reduction, mitigation, and recovery, including cost data, projections for the return on investment, and measures of effectiveness.

(B) IDENTIFICATION OF CHALLENGES.—Identify fundamental legal, societal, geographic and technological challenges to implementation.

(5) LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS.—Legislative proposals for implementing the recommendations in the report compiled pursuant to the requirement in section 1111 of the Sandy Recovery Improvement Act of 2013 (Public Law 113–2).

(e) REPORT TO ADMINISTRATOR AND CONGRESS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the National Advisory Council shall submit a report containing the data, analysis, and recommendations developed under subsection (d) to—

(1) the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency;

(2) the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives; and

(3) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate.

The Administrator shall make the data collected pursuant to this section publically available on the Agency's website.

TITLE III—STAFFORD ACT AND OTHER PROGRAMS

SEC. 301. REAUTHORIZATION OF URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE RESPONSE SYSTEM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title III of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5141 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 327. NATIONAL URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE RESPONSE SYSTEM.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the following definitions apply:

''(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term 'Administrator' means the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

''(2) AGENCY.—The term 'Agency' means the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

''(3) HAZARD.—The term 'hazard' has the meaning given that term by section 602.

''(4) NONEMPLOYEE SYSTEM MEMBER.—The term 'nonemployee System member' means a System member not employed by a sponsoring agency or participating agency.

''(5) PARTICIPATING AGENCY.—The term 'participating agency' means a State or local government, nonprofit organization, or private organization that has executed an agreement with a sponsoring agency to participate in the System.

''(6) SPONSORING AGENCY.—The term 'sponsoring agency' means a State or local government that is the sponsor of a task force designated by the Administrator to participate in the System.

''(7) SYSTEM.—The term 'System' means the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System to be administered under this section.

''(8) SYSTEM MEMBER.—The term 'System member' means an individual who is not a full-time employee of the Federal Government and who serves on a task force or on a System management or other technical team.

''(9) TASK FORCE.—The term 'task force' means an urban search and rescue team designated by the Administrator to participate in the System.

''(b) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—Subject to the requirements of this section, the Administrator shall continue to administer the emergency response system known as the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System.

''(c) FUNCTIONS.—In administering the System, the Administrator shall provide for a national network of standardized search and rescue resources to assist States and local governments in responding to hazards.

''(d) TASK FORCES.—

''(1) DESIGNATION.—The Administrator shall designate task forces to participate in the System. The Administration shall determine the criteria for such participation.

''(2) SPONSORING AGENCIES.—Each task force shall have a sponsoring agency. The Administrator shall enter into an agreement with the sponsoring agency with respect to the participation of each task force in the System.

''(3) COMPOSITION.—

''(A) PARTICIPATING AGENCIES.—A task force may include, at the discretion of the sponsoring agency, one or more participating agencies. The sponsoring agency shall enter into an agreement with each participating agency with respect to the participation of the participating agency on the task force.

''(B) OTHER INDIVIDUALS.—A task force may also include, at the discretion of the sponsoring agency, other individuals not otherwise associated with the sponsoring agency or a participating agency. The sponsoring agency of a task force may enter into a separate agreement with each such individual with respect to the participation of the individual on the task force.

''(e) MANAGEMENT AND TECHNICAL TEAMS.—The Administrator shall maintain such management teams and other technical teams as the Administrator determines are necessary to administer the System.

''(f) APPOINTMENT OF SYSTEM MEMBERS INTO FEDERAL SERVICE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may appoint a System member into Federal service for a period of service to provide for the participation of the System member in exercises, preincident staging, major disaster and emergency response activities, and training events sponsored or sanctioned by the Administrator.

''(2) NONAPPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN CIVIL SERVICE LAWS.—The Administrator may make appointments under paragraph (1) without regard to the provisions of title 5, United States Code, governing appointments in the competitive service.

''(3) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER AUTHORITIES.—The authority of the Administrator to make appointments under this subsection shall not affect any other authority of the Administrator under this Act.

''(4) LIMITATION.—A System member who is appointed into Federal service under paragraph (1) shall not be considered an employee of the United States for purposes other than those specifically set forth in this section.

''(g) COMPENSATION.—

''(1) PAY OF SYSTEM MEMBERS.—Subject to such terms and conditions as the Administrator may impose by regulation, the Administrator shall make payments to the sponsoring agency of a task force—

''(A) to reimburse each employer of a System member on the task force for compensation paid by the employer to the System member for any period during which the System member is appointed into Federal service under subsection (f)(1); and

''(B) to make payments directly to a nonemployee System member on the task force for any period during which the non-employee System member is appointed into Federal service under subsection (f)(1).

''(2) REIMBURSEMENT FOR EMPLOYEES FILLING POSITIONS OF SYSTEM MEMBERS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to such terms and conditions as the Administrator may impose by regulation, the Administrator shall make payments to the sponsoring agency of a task force to reimburse each employer of a System member on the task force for compensation paid by the employer to an employee filling a position normally filled by the System member for any period during which the System member is appointed into Federal service under subsection (f)(1).

''(B) LIMITATION.—Costs incurred by an employer shall be eligible for reimbursement under subparagraph (A) only to the extent that the costs are in excess of the costs that would have been incurred by the employer had the System member not been appointed into Federal service under subsection (f)(1).

''(3) METHOD OF PAYMENT.—A System member shall not be entitled to pay directly from the Agency for a period during which the System member is appointed into Federal service under subsection (f)(1).

''(h) PERSONAL INJURY, ILLNESS, DISABILITY, OR DEATH.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—A System member who is appointed into Federal service under subsection (f)(1) and who suffers personal injury, illness, disability, or death as a result of a personal injury sustained while acting in the scope of such appointment shall, for the purposes of subchapter I of chapter 81 of title 5, United States Code, be treated as though the member were an employee (as defined by section 8101 of that title) who had sustained the injury in the performance of duty.

''(2) ELECTION OF BENEFITS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—If a System member (or, in the case of the death of the System member, the System member's dependent) is entitled—

''(i) under paragraph (1) to receive benefits under subchapter I of chapter 81 of title 5, United States Code, by reason of personal injury, illness, disability, or death, and

''(ii) to receive benefits from a State or local government by reason of the same personal injury, illness, disability, or death,

the System member or dependent shall elect to receive either the benefits referred to in clause (i) or (ii).

''(B) DEADLINE.—A System member or dependent shall make an election of benefits under subparagraph (A) not later than 1 year after the date of the personal injury, illness, disability, or death that is the reason for the benefits or until such later date as the Secretary of Labor may allow for reasonable cause shown.

''(C) EFFECT OF ELECTION.—An election of benefits made under this paragraph is irrevocable unless otherwise provided by law.

''(3) REIMBURSEMENT FOR STATE OR LOCAL BENEFITS.—Subject to such terms and conditions as the Administrator may impose by regulation, in the event that a System member or dependent elects benefits from a State or local government under paragraph (2)(A), the Administrator shall reimburse the State or local government for the value of those benefits.

''(4) PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICER CLAIMS.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to bar any claim by, or with respect to, any System member who is a 'public safety officer', as defined in section 1204 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, for any benefits authorized pursuant to section 1001(a)(4) of that Act.

''(5) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Section 1086(d) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 is amended as follows (which amendments shall take effect as if enacted on January 2, 2013)—

''(A) in paragraph (1)—

''(i) by striking 'paragraph (1)' and inserting 'paragraph (2)'; and

''(ii) in subparagraph (B) by striking 'filed or' and inserting 'filed (consistent with preexisting effective dates) or'; and

''(B) in paragraph (2)(A), by striking 'amendments made by this Act' and inserting 'amendments made to section 1204 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3796b) by this Act'.

''(i) LIABILITY.—A System member appointed into Federal service under subsection (f)(1), while acting within the scope of the appointment, is deemed an employee of the Federal Government under section 1346(b) of title 28, United States Code, and chapter 171 of that title, relating to tort claims procedure.

''(j) EMPLOYMENT AND REEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS.—With respect to a System member who is not a regular full-time employee of a sponsoring agency or participating agency, the following terms and conditions apply:

''(1) SERVICE.—Service as a System member is deemed 'service in the uniformed services' for purposes of chapter 43 of title 38, United States Code, relating to employment and reemployment rights of individuals who have performed service in the uniformed services (regardless of whether the individual receives compensation for such participation). All rights and obligations of such persons and procedures for assistance, enforcement, and investigation shall be as provided for in such chapter.

''(2) PRECLUSION.—Preclusion of giving notice of service by necessity of appointment under this section is deemed preclusion by 'military necessity' for purposes of section 4312(b) of title 38, United States Code, pertaining to giving notice of absence from a position of employment. A determination of such necessity shall be made by the Administrator and shall not be subject to judicial review.

''(k) LICENSES AND PERMITS.—If a System member holds a valid license, certificate, or other permit issued by any State or other governmental jurisdiction evidencing the member's qualifications in any professional, mechanical, or other skill or type of assistance required by the System, the System member is deemed to be performing a Federal activity when rendering aid involving such skill or assistance during a period of appointment into Federal service under subsection (f)(1).

''(l) ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall establish and maintain an advisory committee to provide expert recommendations to the Administrator in order to assist the Administrator in administering the System.

''(2) COMPOSITION.—The advisory committee shall be composed of members from geographically diverse areas, and shall include—

''(A) the chief officer or senior executive from at least three sponsoring agencies;

''(B) the senior emergency manager from at least two States that include sponsoring agencies; and

''(C) at least one representative recommended by the leaders of the task forces.

''(3) INAPPLICABILITY OF TERMINATION REQUIREMENT.—Section 14(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the advisory committee under this subsection.

''(m) PREPAREDNESS COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability of appropriations for such purpose, the Administrator shall enter into an annual preparedness cooperative agreement with each sponsoring agency. Amounts made available to a sponsoring agency under such a preparedness cooperative agreement shall be for the following purposes:

''(A) Training and exercises, including training and exercises with other Federal, State, and local government response entities.

''(B) Acquisition and maintenance of equipment, including interoperable communications and personal protective equipment.

''(C) Medical monitoring required for responder safety and health in anticipation of and following a major disaster, emergency, or other hazard, as determined by the Administrator.

''(2) AVAILABILITY OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Notwithstanding section 1552(b) of title 31, United States Code, amounts made available for cooperative agreements under this subsection that are not expended shall be deposited in an agency account and shall remain available for such agreements without fiscal year limitation.

''(n) RESPONSE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The Administrator shall enter into a response cooperative agreement with each sponsoring agency, as appropriate, under which the Administrator agrees to reimburse the sponsoring agency for costs incurred by the sponsoring agency in responding to a major disaster or emergency.

''(o) OBLIGATIONS.—The Administrator may incur all necessary obligations consistent with this section in order to ensure the effectiveness of the System.

''(p) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out the System and the provisions of this section $50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016, 2017, and 2018.

''(2) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—The Administrator may use not to exceed 6 percent of the funds appropriated for a fiscal year pursuant to paragraph (1) for salaries, expenses, and other administrative costs incurred by the Administrator in carrying out this section.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) APPLICABILITY OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE.—Section 8101(1) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (D) by striking ''and'' at the end;

(B) by moving subparagraph (F) to appear after subparagraph (E);

(C) in subparagraph (F)—

(i) by striking ''United States Code,''; and

(ii) by adding ''and'' at the end; and

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

''(G) an individual who is a System member of the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System during a period of appointment into Federal service pursuant to section 327 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act;''.

(2) INCLUSION AS PART OF UNIFORMED SERVICES FOR PURPOSES OF USERRA.—Section 4303 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in paragraph (13) by inserting '', a period for which a System member of the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System is absent from a position of employment due to an appointment into Federal service under section 327 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act'' before '', and a period''; and

(B) in paragraph (16) by inserting after ''Public Health Service,'' the following: ''System members of the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System during a period of appointment into Federal service under section 327 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act,''.

SEC. 302. STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 705(a)(1) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5205) is amended—

(1) by striking ''Except'' and inserting ''Notwithstanding section 3716(e) of title 31, United States Code, and except''; and

(2) by striking ''report for the disaster or emergency'' and inserting ''report for project completion as certified by the grantee''.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—With respect to disaster or emergency assistance provided to a State or local government on or after January 1, 2004—

(A) no administrative action may be taken to recover a payment of such assistance after the date of enactment of this Act if the action is prohibited under section 705(a)(1) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5205(a)(1)), as amended by subsection (a); and

(B) any administrative action to recover a payment of such assistance that is pending on such date of enactment shall be terminated if the action is prohibited under section 705(a)(1) of that Act, as amended by subsection (a).

(2) LIMITATION.—This section, including the amendments made by this section, may not be construed to invalidate or otherwise affect any administration action completed before the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 303. ACTION PLAN TO IMPROVE FIELD TRANSITION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall report to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate regarding the plans the agency will undertake to provide the following:

(1) Consistent guidance to applicants on FEMA disaster funding procedures during the response to an emergency.

(2) Appropriate record maintenance and transfer of documents to new teams during staff transitions.

(3) Accurate assistance to applicants and grantees to ease the administrative burden throughout the process of obtaining and monitoring assistance.

(b) MAINTAINING RECORDS.—The report shall also include a plan for implementing operating procedures and document retention requirements to ensure the maintenance of appropriate records throughout the lifecycle of the disaster.

(c) NEW TECHNOLOGIES.—Finally, the report shall identify new technologies that further aid the disaster workforce in partnering with State, local, and tribal governments and private nonprofits in the wake of a disaster or emergency to educate, assist, and inform applicants on the status of their disaster assistance applications and projects.

SEC. 304. SIMPLIFIED PROCEDURES.

Section 422(a) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5189) is amended—

(1) by striking ''$35,000'' the first place it appears and inserting ''$1,000,000''; and

(2) by striking the second sentence.

SEC. 305. MANAGEMENT COSTS.

Section 324 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5165b) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a) by striking ''any administrative expense, and any other expense not directly chargeable to'' and inserting ''direct administrative cost, and any other administrative expense associated with''; and

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) by striking ''Notwithstanding'' and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding''.

(B) by striking ''establish'' and inserting the following: ''implement the following:''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) SPECIFIC MANAGEMENT COSTS.—The Administrator shall provide the following percentage rates, in addition to the eligible project costs, to cover direct and indirect costs of administering the following programs:

''(A) HAZARD MITIGATION.—A grantee under section 404 may be reimbursed not more than 15 percent of the total amount of the grant award under such section of which not more than 10 percent may be used by the grantee and 5 percent by the subgrantee for such costs.

''(B) PUBLIC ASSISTANCE.—A grantee under sections 403, 406, 407, and 502, may be reimbursed not more than 10 percent of the total award amount under such sections, of which not more than 6 percent may be used by the grantee and 4 percent by the subgrantee for such costs.''.

SEC. 306. DEBTS OWED TO THE UNITED STATES RELATED TO DISASTER ASSISTANCE.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''covered assistance'' means assistance provided—

(1) under section 408 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174); and

(2) in relation to a major disaster or emergency declared by the President under section 401 or 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170; 42 U.S.C. 5191) on or after October 30, 2012.

(b) WAIVER AUTHORITY.—Notwithstanding section 3716(e) of title 31, United States Code, the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency—

(1) subject to paragraph (2), may waive a debt owed to the United States related to covered assistance provided to an individual or household if—

(A) the covered assistance was distributed based on an error by the Federal Emergency Management Agency;

(B) there was no fault on behalf of the debtor; and

(C) the collection of the debt would be against equity and good conscience; and

(2) may not waive a debt under paragraph (1) if the debt involves fraud, the presentation of a false claim, or misrepresentation by the debtor or any party having an interest in the claim.

(c) MONITORING OF COVERED ASSISTANCE DISTRIBUTED BASED ON ERROR.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Inspector General shall monitor the distribution of covered assistance to individuals and households to determine the percentage of such assistance distributed based on an error.

(2) REMOVAL OF WAIVER AUTHORITY BASED ON EXCESSIVE ERROR RATE.—If the Inspector General determines, with respect to any 12-month period, that the amount of covered assistance distributed based on an error by the Federal Emergency Management Agency exceeds 4 percent of the total amount of covered assistance distributed—

(A) the Inspector General shall notify the Administrator and publish the determination in the Federal Register; and

(B) with respect to any major disaster declared by the President under section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170) after the date of the determination, the authority of the Administrator to waive debt under subsection (b) shall no longer be effective.

SEC. 307. STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS FOR DEBTS OWED TO THE UNITED STATES RELATED TO DISASTER ASSISTANCE.

Notwithstanding section 3716(g) of title 31, United States Code, and unless there is evidence of civil or criminal fraud, the Administrator, on behalf of the President, shall not initiate new administrative action in any forum to recover—

(1) payments made to an individual or household under section 408 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174) more than 3 years after the last date on which such payments were made; or

(2) funds owed by an individual or household for assistance provided under section 408 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174) more than 3 years after the last date on which such funds were determined to be owed.

SEC. 308. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

(a) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall provide technical assistance to a common interest community that provides essential services of a governmental nature on actions that a common interest community may take in order to be eligible to receive reimbursement from a grantee that receives funds from the Agency for certain activities performed after an event that results in a disaster declaration.

(b) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall provide recommendations to the House Committee on

Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs on how common areas of condominiums and housing cooperatives may be eligible for assistance, including any progress the Agency has made in its explorations of this issue and the potential challenges identified since the Agency issued its report on May 22, 2014.

SEC. 309. LOCAL IMPACT.

In making recommendations to the President regarding a major disaster declaration, the Administrator shall give greater weight and consideration to severe localized impact. Further, the Administrator shall make corresponding adjustments to the Agency's policies and regulations. Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Administrator shall report to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate on the changes made to regulations and policies and the number of declarations that have been declared based on the new criteria.

SEC. 310. PROOF OF INSURANCE.

A State shall be deemed to have proven that an applicant has satisfied the purchase of insurance requirements under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et. seq.) when an encumbrance requiring the purchase and maintenance of insurance has been placed on the title of the property receiving the benefit of the grant or assistance. This section in no way removes or reduces the insurance requirements on an applicant under the Act and in no way limits the requirement that assistance provided under the Stafford Act be reduced or eliminated when the requirements are not met.

SEC. 311. AUTHORITIES.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency shall not, pursuant to consultation with another Federal agency or otherwise, expand its statutory authorities as they relate to floodplain management or floodplain mapping unless the requirement to do so is explicitly and specifically stated in statute, nor shall the Agency's authorities be construed to impute the privately-funded actions of private parties on private land to such Agency for the purpose of extending the requirements of any Federal law applicable to Federal agencies to such actions.

SEC. 312. RESPONSIBILITIES.

The Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall be responsible for the Nation's efforts to reduce the loss of life and property and to protect the Nation from an earthquake, tsunami or a combined earthquake and tsunami event by developing the ability to prepare and plan for, mitigate against, respond to, recover from, and more successfully adapt to such an event.

SEC. 313. EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The President shall establish a Federal Interagency Task Force for the purpose of developing a comprehensive strategy and recommendations on how the Nation should prepare and plan for, mitigate against, respond to, recover from, and more successfully adapt to an earthquake, tsunami or a combined earthquake and tsunami event in the Cascadia Subduction Zone, including identifying potential administrative or legislative changes required to implement the strategy, the funding required to implement the strategy and recommendations, and the priority in which the strategy should be implemented.

(b) CHAIRPERSON.—The Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or his designee, shall serve as the chairperson of the Task Force.

(c) MEMBERSHIP.—The membership of the Task Force shall include a cross section of subject matter experts representing the following:

(1) Relevant Federal agencies.

(2) The States of Oregon, Washington, and California.

(3) Indian tribes, local governments, and private sector representatives that may be impacted by a mega-thrust earthquake, tsunami or a combined earthquake and tsunami event in the Cascadia Subduction Zone.

(4) Universities, academia and research institutions with expertise in topics relevant to the work of the Task Force.

(d) DETAILED EMPLOYEES.—Members of the Task Force may detail employees to assist the Administrator, or his designee, in fulfilling the responsibilities of the Task Force.

(e) CASCADIA SUBDUCTION ZONE.—The term ''Cascadia Subduction Zone'' means the approximately 684 miles long landward-dipping fault that separates the Juan de Fuca and North America plates and that stretches along a portion of the western coast of the United States beginning off Cape Mendocino, California, along the State of Oregon, the State of Washington, to Northern Vancouver Island, British Columbia.

(f) STRATEGY.—The comprehensive strategy, which may build upon existing plans, studies, or other resources, shall include the following:

(1) Define how Federal agencies will coordinate to develop the ability to prepare and plan for, mitigate against, respond to, recover from, and more successfully adapt to the impacts of a mega-thrust earthquake, tsunami, or a combined earthquake and tsunami event in the Cascadia Subduction Zone.

(2) Ensure collaboration between the Department of Transportation, the Department of Energy, the United States Coast Guard, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, and other Federal agencies as appropriate to complete a needs assessment of Federal facilities in need of hardening for an event and develop a strategic plan to mitigate and retrofit Federal, State, tribal, and local critical assets for freight, energy, and transit purposes to withstand an event and to help save lives during and immediately after an event.

(3) Assist State, tribal, and local governments in developing and implementing a coordinated and comprehensive plan to prioritize Federal, State, tribal, local, and private investments and activities to develop the ability to prepare and plan for, mitigate against, respond to, recover from, and more successfully adapt to the impacts of a mega-thrust earthquake, tsunami, or a combined earthquake and tsunami event in the Cascadia Subduction Zone, and to link to any existing State-wide mitigation plan, including examining the feasibility of the public and private sector and individuals to acquire earthquake insurance.

(4) Identify existing funding opportunities across Federal agencies and other sources to implement the comprehensive strategy and any recommendations made by the Task Force and make recommendations for new funding opportunities.

(5) Identify barriers to obtaining funding and implementing the comprehensive strategy and to develop recommendations on how to remove such barriers.

(6) Collaborate with and assist State, tribal, and local governments in developing recommendations for cost-effective mitigation alternatives for aging State, tribal, or locally owned critical infrastructure.

(7) Assist State, tribal, and local governments with developing a recovery plan prior to an earthquake, tsunami, or combined earthquake and tsunami event in the Cascadia Subduction Zone as to how State, tribal, and local governments may want to rebuild after the event;

(8) Identify steps taken to date to develop an onshore and offshore earthquake early warning system and define the purpose and scope of an onshore and offshore earthquake early warning system.

(9) Evaluate types of offshore earthquake early warning systems and provide recommendations and a cost estimate for an earthquake early warning system appropriate for the Cascadia Subduction Zone.

(10) Make recommendations about how an earthquake early warning system should operate, including whether and how a system should interface with the private sector.

(11) Define appropriate roles and responsibilities for Federal, State, local, and tribal governments, including who should operate and maintain an earthquake early warning system, the cost of a system, and possible funding sources for a system.

(12) Develop a plan on how to integrate an earthquake early warning system into existing and new public alert warning systems and technologies, including mobile systems.

(g) COLLABORATION.—The Task Force shall work simultaneously and collaboratively with the National Academies.

(h) NATIONAL ACADEMIES.—The Task Force shall enter into an agreement with the National Academies under which the National Academies shall develop recommendations for a Federal research strategy to advance scientific understanding of a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake and resulting tsunami preparedness, including the following:

(1) Geologic conditions, ground motions, and tsunami hazard.

(2) Implications of an effective automated early warning system.

(3) Effects of mega-earthquake and tsunami events on the built and natural environment.

(4) Social and behavioral factors for effective disaster preparedness and response.

(5) Cost-effective mitigation alternatives for legacy and aging infrastructure.

(6) Strategic planning for freight, energy, and transit network robustness.

(7) Tools that help communities invest its resources for the greatest benefit.

(8) Any other topics identified as necessary by the Task Force or the National Academies.

(i) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs of the Senate a report of the Task Force that provides the following:

(1) The comprehensive strategy identified in subsection (f).

(2) Recommendations on administrative actions that may be taken to further the strategy.

(3) Recommendations for legislative changes that may be necessary to further the strategy.

(4) Recommendations on funding necessary to carry out the strategy.

SEC. 314. MITIGATION ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 420 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5187) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (d) as subsection (e); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (c) the following:

''(d) HAZARD MITIGATION ASSISTANCE.—Whether or not a major disaster is declared, the President may provide hazard mitigation assistance in accordance with section 404 in

any area affected by a fire for which assistance was provided under this section.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 404(a) (42 U.S.C. 5170c(a))—

(A) by inserting before the first period '', or any area affected by a fire for which assistance was provided under section 420''; and

(B) in the third sentence by inserting ''or event under section 420'' after ''major disaster'' each place it appears; and

(2) in section 322(e)(1) (42 U.S.C. 5165(e)(1)), by inserting ''or event under section 420'' after ''major disaster'' each place it appears.

SEC. 315. ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES.

Section 404 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170c) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(f) USE OF ASSISTANCE.—Recipients of hazard mitigation assistance provided under this section and section 203 may use the assistance to conduct the following activities to help reduce the risk of future damage, hardship, loss, or suffering in any area affected by—

''(1) a wildfire, including—

''(A) reseeding ground cover with quick-growing or native species;

''(B) mulching with straw or chipped wood;

''(C) constructing straw, rock, or log dams in small tributaries to prevent flooding;

''(D) placing logs and other erosion barriers to catch sediment on hill slopes;

''(E) installing debris traps to modify road and trail drainage mechanisms;

''(F) modifying or removing culverts to allow drainage to flow freely;

''(G) adding drainage dips and constructing emergency spillways to keep roads and bridges from washing out during floods;

''(H) planting grass to prevent the spread of noxious weeds;

''(I) installing warning signs;

''(J) establishing defensible space measures; and

''(K) reducing hazardous fuels; and

''(2) earthquake hazards, including—

''(A) improvements to regional seismic networks in support of building a capability for earthquake early warning;

''(B) improvements to geodetic networks in support of building a capability for earthquake early warning; or

''(C) seismometers, GPS receivers, and associated infrastructure in support of building a capability for earthquake early warning.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA) and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. CARSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1471, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman SHUSTER for his tremendous support and leadership on this bill. Few Members of Congress have had a greater impact on reforming our disaster programs since Hurricane Katrina than Chairman SHUSTER. This bill represents another important step in that effort, and I greatly appreciate the chairman's help.

I also want to thank Ranking Member DEFAZIO and Ranking Member CARSON for their bipartisan support of the bill.

The FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act has two primary goals: to help save lives and to save taxpayer money.

□ 1715

The bill helps save lives by fixing a longstanding problem that hinders the deployment of critical search and rescue teams between States. These reforms will help ensure our constituents receive the help they need when disaster strikes.

Additionally, this bill helps save money by improving the cost-effectiveness of FEMA's existing disaster assistance programs. For example, there are provisions that will speed up reconstruction and lower administrative costs. The bill also saves money by encouraging smart recovery practices and mitigation to lower the costs of the next disaster.

The bill commissions a comprehensive review of the growing disaster losses the Nation has experienced over the past decades. Experts estimated over $1 trillion of disaster losses have occurred in North America since 1980. FEMA alone has spent almost $200 billion on over 1300 major Presidential disaster declarations since 1989. These numbers are going up, and we should try to find ways to bring those costs down over time.

It has been over 20 years since we have had a comprehensive look at disaster spending. It is time for a big picture assessment of what is driving these costs and to review if we, as a Nation, are responding in the most appropriate and cost-effective way.

Right after I became a Member of Congress, my district was hit hard by Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. I saw homes destroyed, lives and livelihoods upset. Disaster relief is critical at times like these, and people need help to rebuild their lives and rebuild their communities.

As I witnessed the recovery, I was amazed that folks were rebuilding back in the very same place, in the very same way, leaving themselves just as vulnerable to the next storm. We have to be compassionate and responsive to our citizens, but we also have a duty to be a good steward of the taxpayer dollars.

I am committed to establishing this study to see if we can tackle these tough issues and find solutions that are driven by facts and data rather than the emotion that inevitably follows a disaster. These reforms are one of my top priorities this Congress.

At the end of the day, the purpose of this bill is to ensure help will be there when disaster strikes and our constituents need that help the most.

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

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Washington, DC, February 26, 2016.

Hon. BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SHUSTER: I am writing to you concerning the jurisdictional interest of the Committee on Homeland Security in H.R. 1471, the ''FEMA Disaster Assistance Act of 2015.'' The bill contains provisions that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Homeland Security.

I recognize and appreciate the desire to bring this legislation before the House of Representatives in an expeditious manner, and accordingly, the Committee on Homeland Security will not assert its jurisdictional claim over this bill by seeking a sequential referral. The Committee takes this action with the mutual understanding that by foregoing consideration of H.R. 1471 at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and that our Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as this bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues in our jurisdiction.

This waiver is also given with the understanding that the Committee on Homeland Security expressly reserves its authority to seek conferees on any provision within its jurisdiction during any House-Senate conference that may be convened on this or any similar legislation, and requests your support for such a request.

I would appreciate your response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 1471, and ask that a copy of this letter and your response be included in the Congressional Record during consideration of this bill on the House floor.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL T. MCCAUL,
Chairman,
Committee on Homeland Security.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,
Washington, DC, February 26, 2016.

Hon. MICHAEL T. MCCAUL,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MCCAUL: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 1471, the FEMA Disaster Assistance Act of 2015. I appreciate your willingness to support expediting the consideration of this legislation on the House Floor.

I acknowledge that by waiving consideration of this bill, the Committee on Homeland Security does not waive any future valid jurisdictional claim to provisions in this or similar legislation. In addition, should a conference on the bill be necessary, I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving provisions within this legislation on which the Committee on Homeland Security has a valid jurisdictional claim.

I will include our letters on H.R. 1471 in the Congressional Record during House Floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation, and I look forward to working with the Committee on Homeland Security as the bill moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, February 25, 2016.

Hon. BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SHUSTER: I am writing with respect to H.R. 1471, the ''FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act,'' which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

As you know, H.R. 1471 contains provisions that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary. As a result of your having consulted with the Committee and in order to expedite the House's consideration of H.R. 1471, the Committee on the Judiciary will not assert its jurisdictional claim over this bill. However, this is conditional on our mutual understanding and agreement that doing so will in no way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary with respect to the appointment of conferees or to any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matters contained in the bill or similar legislation.

I would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 1471, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during Floor consideration of H.R. 1471.

Sincerely,

BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,
Washington, DC, February 26, 2016.

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 1471, the FEMA Disaster Assistance Act of 2015. I appreciate your willingness to support expediting the consideration of this legislation on the House Floor.

I acknowledge that by waiving consideration of this bill, the Committee on the Judiciary does not waive any future valid jurisdictional claim to provisions in this or similar legislation. In addition, should a conference on the bill be necessary, I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving provisions within this legislation on which the Committee on the Judiciary has a valid jurisdictional claim.

I will include our letters on H.R. 1471 in the Congressional Record during House Floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation, and I look forward to working with the Committee on the Judiciary as the bill moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman.

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the bipartisan measure before us today. H.R. 1471, the FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act of 2015, as amended, contains several provisions important to State and local governments and emergency managers. I will only highlight a few of them. I also want to acknowledge Chairman BARLETTA and my good friend, Ranking Member DEFAZIO.

Mr. Speaker, in my opinion, the most important aspect of this bill is that it clarifies compensation and liability issues for urban search and rescue team members. These members provide critical services and put themselves in harm's way to help others involved in a disaster.

In Indianapolis, my city, our own urban search and rescue team, which consists of firefighters, paramedics, civilians, and others responded to Hurricane Sandy. They did so despite the uncertainties that they would be covered for any injuries. These protections, Mr. Speaker, are long overdue. Team members can now rest assured that they will be taken care of when activated for Federal service if they are injured.

Another important provision grows out of the individual States' and local governments' need to know that they can rely on FEMA's decisions and reimbursement amounts. Local governments make major decisions during the disaster recovery phase in reliance on FEMA's initial approval. There comes a time, Mr. Speaker, when FEMA should not be able to reverse its initial decisions or award amounts. Statute of limitations protections for individuals, States, and local governments will provide peace of mind and certainty needed to go forward with the recovery process.

Climate change, Mr. Speaker, is causing more extreme weather patterns. So in order for us to become more resilient, we must encourage more local governments, communities to undertake mitigation measures. Some communities may forgo mitigation actions because they do not have the capacity to administer the funds. Ensuring that local governments will be reimbursed for management costs should help us all obtain more resilient communities.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, our subcommittee has embarked on discussions related to the trends and causes of rising disaster costs and losses. In furtherance of this discussion, the bill requires FEMA's National Advisory Council to study the issue and make recommendations to Congress and address causes and trends. Specifically, the bill requires the Council to examine mechanisms and incentives to promote mitigation and to make recommendations regarding the same.

The last few years, Mr. Speaker, I have introduced a bill to reauthorize the disaster mitigation program. Mr. Speaker, mitigation saves taxpayer funds over the long haul. I look forward to any recommendations from the National Advisory Council on how we can strengthen this available and very effective program.

I want to thank Chairman BARLETTA again and Ranking Member DEFAZIO for their leadership on this very important measure. As an original cosponsor of this measure, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting H.R. 1471.

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

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS), who knows very well how important these disaster programs are when disasters have struck his State of Illinois.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill.

FEMA's disaster declaration process is broken. You don't need to look any further than the State of Illinois to see how FEMA's aid formula is failing the hardworking families of this country because it simply doesn't put all communities on a level playing field.

In 2012, Harrisburg, Illinois, was denied Federal assistance following tornadoes that swept across the Midwest, while Missouri and Kentucky received it. Recently, towns like Gifford and Washington in central Illinois were denied public assistance as well.

FEMA currently takes into account several factors when determining the need for public and individual assistance. However, there currently is no standard to determine which factor is more important than another, which leads to highly subjective and uncertain processes that leave States and communities in limbo for weeks as their application is considered.

By working with this committee and this subcommittee that Chairman BARLETTA chairs, we were able to include language that was based on a bill that I introduced with many of my colleagues that requires the administrator of FEMA, when making recommendations to the President regarding a major disaster declaration, to give greater weight and consideration to localized impact.

Consideration of this important legislation is timely for my home State of Illinois. Just days ago, Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner submitted a request to President Obama asking him to declare a major disaster for Illinois following the extensive holiday flooding that we saw right at about the new year.

Much of this damage happened in my home county of Christian County, where four people tragically lost their lives after encountering flood waters. Sadly, two of the deceased, Brandon Mann and Devan Everett, were from my hometown of Taylorville. Certainly no amount of resources can compensate for the loss of human life when disaster strikes, and yet these communities still need to rebuild. Preliminary damage assessments determined that communities in Illinois experienced $15 million in damages. Unfortunately, that doesn't meet FEMA's $18.1 million threshold.

Mr. Speaker, it is just not right that States like Illinois, where a significant portion of the population is concentrated in a single area, can be denied disaster relief because of an arbitrary formula developed by bureaucrats in concrete buildings right here in Washington, D.C. That is what makes this bill and my provision so important. It levels the playing field. It tells rural America that, when disaster

strikes, we are going to look out for you, too.

Mr. Speaker, I come from rural America. I know these people. These are not the type of people who expect help, who expect Washington to solve their problems; but we as Members of Congress and as Americans have an obligation to commit that we will be there for them when they need us and that we won't let arbitrary formulas prevent that help from being delivered.

We need this bill. We need these reforms. It will make a difference. Thank you again to Chairman BARLETTA, Chairman SHUSTER, and the ranking members.

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO), my good friend and ranking member.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, the ranking member of the subcommittee, for yielding, and I thank him for his excellent work on this bill, as I do the subcommittee chair and the full committee chairman.

This is a bill very much in the tradition of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure where, in fact, we have come together and put together a bipartisan proposal to reauthorize the Federal Emergency Management Agency, a critical, critical agency, as you have heard from some of the previous speakers.

In particular, in the West, we have some issues regarding wildfires. We had the worst wildfire season on record last year: 10 million acres burned; half the Forest Service budget went to fighting these wildfires. The perversity of that is that, when astounding amounts of money like that are required from the Forest Service, the Forest Service has to reduce other budgets, including preventative activities, particularly fuel reduction and other activities that would prevent future fires. So we are on this endless cycle that should end.

Unfortunately, this bill doesn't end that. I hope that happens later in the Congress. There is legislation pending in both the House and the Senate that we have come close to moving that would deal with declaring that catastrophic fires are disasters, just like tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, et cetera.

In this bill, we did make some progress. It makes State and private lands eligible for hazard mitigation assistance after wildfires. It is a commonsense solution to save on future disaster costs and losses. The bill also encourages States to direct the funds to the areas that experienced the wildfire.

I thank our colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. RUIZ), for his extraordinary leadership on this issue. You have a fire, and particularly in California and elsewhere you have potential for catastrophic mudslides, future catastrophes, putting the public at risk. Hazard mitigation assistance on wildfires on State and private lands, encouraging wildfire mitigation, such as reducing hazardous fuels, and reseeding ground cover will help reduce the costs of future disasters.

Further, there are other provisions in this legislation that deal with the potential for catastrophic earthquake and tsunami. The Cascadia subduction zone off the coast of Oregon, northern California has generated at least 12 major, great earthquakes, magnitude 8 to 9, yet we are woefully unprepared in terms of any sorts of early detection.

We have just begun the rudiments with some Federal assistance of a land-based early detection system. We need an ocean-based early detection system, such as the Japanese have deployed. Early warning of quakes and tsunamis will save many lives on the coast of Oregon, Washington, and northern California. It will also save tremendous amounts in terms of infrastructure in the inland and more distant areas where they would have ample warning to shut down transit systems, get people off bridges, stop elevators in high-rise buildings, and otherwise accommodate the public, preventing more loss of life and also more catastrophic problems.

Again, Japan is far, far ahead of us. They can and have stopped their high-speed rail trains when they have distant warning of a coming tremor. Even though the tremors move quickly through the Earth, there is enough time to slow or stop those trains. They have had time to evacuate the coastal areas. Although, unfortunately, in the last quake, when they reestimated the size of the tsunami, they found out communications were down. Now they have taken care of this. Now they have moved to a cellular-based network to notify people the tsunami is coming and to get them to high ground.

So we can and should do a lot more there. This bill opens the door to those sorts of programs here in the United States of America.

Finally, it gives assurances—well, two more points—to State and local governments they will be reimbursed up to a certain amount for costs incurred during disaster recovery.

□ 1730

This will encourage local governments to undertake new mitigation projects, which is a good deal for both the Federal Government and for taxpayers. Mitigation saves $3 to $4 for every dollar invested.

Finally, we have a power play by a minor Federal agency attempting to make FEMA become the national land use planning agency of the United States, trying to force FEMA to deny flood insurance to States that don't follow the directives of the National Marine Fisheries Service.

This is not authorized by law. They are way out of line, unfortunately. I talked to the woman who is head of that agency. She disagrees. Her regional representative is hell-bent to become the land use planning agency for Oregon, although, of course, it already has comprehensive land use planning, unlike his home State of Washington, which was not subjected to these dramatic changes in law.

We are making it clear that that is not the authority of FEMA in this bill. That is a reasonable position. It is a bipartisan position. I thank my colleague and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle for their help.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER), who was very helpful in adding very important language that strengthened this bill.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, in August of 2013, the southern portion of my district experienced a major disaster involving heavy flooding, which devastated infrastructure and caused significant hardship to many of my constituents.

Unfortunately, the Federal recovery efforts to this devastated region added insult to injury. Local officials dealt with multiple teams conducting duplicative site visits due to lost paperwork, inconsistent messages between various survey and evaluation teams, and unnecessarily long delays in recovery and reimbursement. Such a response to any disaster is unacceptable, and change is necessary.

Last year I introduced a bill to address the shortcomings of the FEMA response to the 2013 flooding in my district to ensure future disaster recoveries in Missouri and elsewhere are as painless and efficient as possible.

My bill, which is included in this reform package, requires FEMA to create an action plan to address inconsistent guidance, inappropriate recordkeeping procedures, and overall mixed assistance to local officials.

Additionally, it directs FEMA to issue a forward-looking report to identify new technologies that further aid the disaster workforce in partnering with private nonprofits as well as State and local governments in the wake of a disaster or emergency.

FEMA processes need to be streamlined and consistent in order to help those recovering from a disaster feel supported and assured the relief will come in a timely, efficient manner.

I rise today in full support of H.R. 1471, the FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act. Making sure Federal agencies have the proper oversight and resources they need is an important function of the U.S. Congress.

This 3-year reauthorization is a shining example of a bipartisan, commonsense effort to make the people get the help and assistance they so desperately need in times of crisis.

I want to thank the sponsor of this bill, Mr. BARLETTA, and the ranking member for including my language in the FEMA reform package.

I encourage my colleagues to vote for H.R. 1471.

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL),

my good friend and a member of the committee.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1471, the FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act, and I thank the chairman and ranking member for their fine work.

The bill contains a bipartisan provision which I had the honor of working on with my friend and colleague from Florida, Congressman DAN WEBSTER.

As Floridians, we know hurricanes. In 2004 and 2005, Charley, Frances, Jeanne, Wilma, and Katrina tore through our State, leaving families stranded and property damaged. Trees crashed to the ground, ripping power lines and blocking flooded streets. Water systems were compromised.

Our local governments did a miraculous job cleaning debris from public ways, fixing broken infrastructure, and getting life back to normal. It takes a lot to get this done.

When hurricanes strike, communities are ravaged and so are their budgets. So I want to thank FEMA for the funding assistance it provided Florida at a time of great stress and need.

Now FEMA is asking some of our cities and counties to pay back money that they were given for disaster relief projects that were approved more than 10 years ago.

But here is the thing. There is no question that FEMA should do responsible audits of its relief payments to make sure that money was used properly. But unless there is fraud, the process should not be an endless journey into the Federal bureaucracy.

Our local governments, unlike the Federal Government, have to balance their budgets. They can't afford to wait 5, 10, or an infinite number of years for FEMA to do its assessment, especially when millions of dollars are at stake.

Simply said, the current practice unfairly stymies our local governments' ability to plan their future budgets. This legislation will make sure that the process is more balanced, giving FEMA adequate time to review its grant payments while allowing for financial security to local governments.

I urge my colleagues to support this very good legislation.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. GRAVES), who spent a lot of time and worked very hard to make this bill better.

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the reality, as the gentleman from Indiana noted earlier, is that we are going to have disasters and we are going to spend funds responding to those disasters.

The problem with the United States disaster management policy is that it is backward. It is entirely reactive. Rather than going in before a disaster happens and making areas more resilient, making our ecosytem more resilient, making our economy more resilient, we are dead set on this process of coming in after disasters and spending exponentially more dollars.

The ranking member referenced a few figures a little while ago. He referenced a figure of a CBO study indicating that, for every $1 we invest in the right type of hazard mitigation, we save $3 in disaster response cost.

There was another study that FEMA did. For every $1 we invest, we have $4 in cost savings. I think, Mr. Speaker, with the right criteria, you actually even save more.

Now, we are challenged as a Nation right now because the agency that is primarily responsible for making our communities more resilient is the U.S. Army Corps Engineers, which, unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, is stuck on stupid.

What we have seen over the last several years is, rather than trying to fix that, we have seen other agencies coming up being granting agencies. We have seen FEMA. This year we have seen the Department of the Interior in the President's budget. In the recent years, we have seen HUD.

Rather than fixing the problem, we are just trying to go around it and put more granting agencies out there. It is creating a disparate approach, an approach that is not coordinated and an approach that is going to result in more taxpayers' funds being spent on the wrong projects, the wrong priorities, rather than being proactive. This bill addresses that, Mr. Speaker.

This bill actually incudes a provision that has FEMA begin developing a coordinated, proactive approach to how we mitigate or reduce vulnerabilities from disasters.

In the last several years, in my home State of Louisiana, we have seen extraordinary disasters, whether it is Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005 or Hurricanes Gustav and Ike in 2008.

We had the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2011. In 2012, we had Hurricane Isaac. In 2011 and again this year, we saw record-high water on the Mississippi River system causing flooding.

We are going to spend dollars. We have got to spend them in the right and principled places.

This bill does a number of things that are important. Number one, it eliminates bureaucracy and helps to streamline the process of getting dollars on the ground to some of our important impacted areas.

We have seen where this bill comes in and it actually changes criteria, where severely impacted local communities, like in Louisiana, where we just saw St. John Parish, Ascension Parish, Livingston Parish, the area of Kenner, and St. James Parish experience extraordinary impacts from tornadoes. Those areas actually could potentially qualify for Federal disaster because of the severe impacts in some of these limited areas.

Most importantly, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the ranking member and the chairman for working with us on a provision that prevents FEMA from being able to move the goalpost on us, being able to come and change conditions after a grant is made that could result in homeowners having to pay back absurd amounts of money when they followed the criteria and followed the commitments when they entered into these grant agreements.

Mr. Speaker, this bill goes a long way. I want to continue working with the leaders of this bill on these zones, on duplication of efforts, and other things. But I will say it again, Mr. Speaker: we are going to spend the money one way or another. We need to spend it in a principled manner.

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

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

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend my colleagues for passing H.R. 1471, the FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act of 2015. This important legislation authorizes appropriations for the Federal Emergency Management Agency for FY2016–FY2018 for management and administration. It also, directs FEMA, through the National Advisory Council, to undertake and report on a comprehensive study of disaster costs and losses.

H.R. 1471 includes provisions that I introduced that extends the authority of FEMA's Administrator to waive debts associated with an overpayment of individual assistance, so long as the overpayment was not a result of fraud.

This issue received national attention when about 30 residents at the Belle Harbor Manor, an assisted living facility in my district, received collection notices related to assistance provided by FEMA in the aftermath of Super Storm Sandy. FEMA's Administrator, Craig Fugate, later cancelled their debts. However, he is limited in canceling the debts of others who are in the exact same situation.

H.R. 1471 fixes this and provides FEMA's Administrator with expanded authority to waive debts of thousands of Super Storm Sandy survivors, as well as the debts incurred as a result of future natural disasters.

I want to thank my colleagues, Representative LOU BARLETTA and Representative PETER DEFAZIO, for their assistance in developing this language. I would also like to thank New York State Assemblyman Phillip Goldfeder for his tireless advocacy on behalf of Super Storm Sandy victims. It is my hope that this measure will receive speedy passage in the Senate so it can be signed by President Obama, and survivors of Super Storm Sandy can finally recover for this horrific act of God.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1471, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NUCLEAR ENERGY INNOVATION CAPABILITIES ACT

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the

bill (H.R. 4084) to enable civilian research and development of advanced nuclear energy technologies by private and public institutions and to expand theoretical and practical knowledge of nuclear physics, chemistry, and materials science, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4084

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 ''Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act''.

SEC. 2. NUCLEAR ENERGY.

Section 951 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16271) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 951. NUCLEAR ENERGY.

''(a) MISSION.—The Secretary shall conduct programs of civilian nuclear research, development, demonstration, and commercial application, including activities in this subtitle. Such programs shall take into consideration the following objectives:

''(1) Providing research infrastructure to promote scientific progress and enable users from academia, the National Laboratories, and the private sector to make scientific discoveries relevant for nuclear, chemical, and materials science engineering.

''(2) Maintaining National Laboratory and university nuclear energy research and development programs, including their infrastructure.

''(3) Providing the technical means to reduce the likelihood of nuclear weapons proliferation and increasing confidence margins for public safety of nuclear energy systems.

''(4) Reducing the environmental impact of nuclear energy related activities.

''(5) Supporting technology transfer from the National Laboratories to the private sector.

''(6) Enabling the private sector to partner with the National Laboratories to demonstrate novel reactor concepts for the purpose of resolving technical uncertainty associated with the aforementioned objectives in this subsection.

''(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this subtitle:

''(1) ADVANCED FISSION REACTOR.—The term 'advanced fission reactor' means a nuclear fission reactor with significant improvements over the most recent generation of nuclear reactors, which may include inherent safety features, lower waste yields, greater fuel utilization, superior reliability, resistance to proliferation, and increased thermal efficiency.

''(2) FAST NEUTRON.—The term 'fast neutron' means a neutron with kinetic energy above 100 kiloelectron volts.

''(3) NATIONAL LABORATORY.—The term 'National Laboratory' has the meaning given that term in paragraph (3) of section 2, except that with respect to subparagraphs (G), (H), and (N) of such paragraph, for purposes of this subtitle the term includes only the civilian activities thereof.

''(4) NEUTRON FLUX.—The term 'neutron flux' means the intensity of neutron radiation measured as a rate of flow of neutrons applied over an area.

''(5) NEUTRON SOURCE.—The term 'neutron source' means a research machine that provides neutron irradiation services for research on materials sciences and nuclear physics as well as testing of advanced materials, nuclear fuels, and other related components for reactor systems.

''(c) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of the Congress that nuclear energy, through fission or fusion, represents the highest energy density of any known attainable source and yields zero air emissions. This energy source is of national importance to scientific progress, national security, electricity generation, heat generation for industrial applications, and space exploration. Considering the inherent complexity and regulatory burden associated with this area of science, the Department should focus its civilian nuclear research and development activities towards programs that enable the private sector, National Laboratories, and universities to carry out such experiments as are necessary to promote scientific progress and enhance practical knowledge of nuclear engineering.''.

SEC. 3. NUCLEAR ENERGY RESEARCH PROGRAMS.

Section 952 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16272) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (c); and

(2) by redesignating subsections (d) and (e) as subsections (c) and (d), respectively.

SEC. 4. ADVANCED FUEL CYCLE INITIATIVE.

Section 953(a) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16273(a)) is amended by striking '', acting through the Director of the Office of Nuclear Energy, Science and Technology,''.

SEC. 5. UNIVERSITY NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING SUPPORT.

Section 954(d)(4) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16274(d)(4)) is amended by striking ''as part of a taking into consideration effort that emphasizes'' and inserting ''that emphasize''.

SEC. 6. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY CIVILIAN NUCLEAR INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES.

Section 955 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16275) is amended—

(1) by striking subsections (c) and (d); and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(c) VERSATILE NEUTRON SOURCE.—

''(1) MISSION NEED.—Not later than December 31, 2016, the Secretary shall determine the mission need for a versatile reactor-based fast neutron source, which shall operate as a national user facility. During this process, the Secretary shall consult with the private sector, universities, National Laboratories, and relevant Federal agencies to ensure that this user facility will meet the research needs of the largest possible majority of prospective users.

''(2) ESTABLISHMENT.—Upon the determination of mission need made under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall, as expeditiously as possible, provide to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a detailed plan for the establishment of the user facility.

''(3) FACILITY REQUIREMENTS.—

''(A) CAPABILITIES.—The Secretary shall ensure that this user facility will provide, at a minimum, the following capabilities:

''(i) Fast neutron spectrum irradiation capability.

''(ii) Capacity for upgrades to accommodate new or expanded research needs.

''(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—In carrying out the plan provided under paragraph (2), the Secretary shall consider the following:

''(i) Capabilities that support experimental high-temperature testing.

''(ii) Providing a source of fast neutrons at a neutron flux, higher than that at which current research facilities operate, sufficient to enable research for an optimal base of prospective users.

''(iii) Maximizing irradiation flexibility and irradiation volume to accommodate as many concurrent users as possible.

''(iv) Capabilities for irradiation with neutrons of a lower energy spectrum.

''(v) Multiple loops for fuels and materials testing in different coolants.

''(vi) Additional pre-irradiation and post-irradiation examination capabilities.

''(vii) Lifetime operating costs and lifecycle costs.

''(4) REPORTING PROGRESS.—The Department shall, in its annual budget requests, provide an explanation for any delay in its progress and otherwise make every effort to complete construction and approve the start of operations for this facility by December 31, 2025.

''(5) COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall leverage the best practices for management, construction, and operation of national user facilities from the Office of Science.''.

SEC. 7. SECURITY OF NUCLEAR FACILITIES.

Section 956 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16276) is amended by striking '', acting through the Director of the Office of Nuclear Energy, Science and Technology,''.

SEC. 8. HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMPUTATION AND SUPPORTIVE RESEARCH.

Section 957 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16277) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 957. HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMPUTATION AND SUPPORTIVE RESEARCH.

''(a) MODELING AND SIMULATION.—The Secretary shall carry out a program to enhance the Nation's capabilities to develop new reactor technologies through high-performance computation modeling and simulation techniques. This program shall coordinate with relevant Federal agencies through the National Strategic Computing Initiative created under Executive Order 13702 (July 29, 2015) while taking into account the following objectives:

''(1) Utilizing expertise from the private sector, universities, and National Laboratories to develop computational software and capabilities that prospective users may access to accelerate research and development of advanced fission reactor systems, nuclear fusion systems, and reactor systems for space exploration.

''(2) Developing computational tools to simulate and predict nuclear phenomena that may be validated through physical experimentation.

''(3) Increasing the utility of the Department's research infrastructure by coordinating with the Advanced Scientific Computing Research program within the Office of Science.

''(4) Leveraging experience from the Energy Innovation Hub for Modeling and Simulation.

''(5) Ensuring that new experimental and computational tools are accessible to relevant research communities.

''(b) SUPPORTIVE RESEARCH ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary shall consider support for additional research activities to maximize the utility of its research facilities, including physical processes to simulate degradation of materials and behavior of fuel forms and for validation of computational tools.''.

SEC. 9. ENABLING NUCLEAR ENERGY INNOVATION.

Subtitle E of title IX of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16271 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 958. ENABLING NUCLEAR ENERGY INNOVATION.

''(a) NATIONAL REACTOR INNOVATION CENTER.—The Secretary shall carry out a program to enable the testing and demonstration of reactor concepts to be proposed and funded by the private sector. The Secretary shall leverage the technical expertise of relevant Federal agencies and National Laboratories in order to minimize the time required

to enable construction and operation of privately funded experimental reactors at National Laboratories or other Department-owned sites while ensuring reasonable safety for persons working within these sites. Such reactors shall operate to meet the following objectives:

''(1) Enabling physical validation of novel reactor concepts.

''(2) Resolving technical uncertainty and increasing practical knowledge relevant to safety, resilience, security, and functionality of first-of-a-kind reactor concepts.

''(3) General research and development to improve nascent technologies.

''(b) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act, the Secretary, in consultation with the National Laboratories, relevant Federal agencies, and other stakeholders, shall transmit to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report assessing the Department's capabilities to authorize, host, and oversee privately funded fusion and advanced fission experimental reactors as described under subsection (a). The report shall address the following:

''(1) The Department's safety review and oversight capabilities, including options to leverage expertise from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and National Laboratories.

''(2) Potential sites capable of hosting activities described under subsection (a).

''(3) The efficacy of the Department's available contractual mechanisms to partner with the private sector and Federal agencies, including cooperative research and development agreements, strategic partnership projects, and agreements for commercializing technology.

''(4) Potential cost structures related to physical security, decommissioning, liability, and other long-term project costs.

''(5) Other challenges or considerations identified by the Secretary.''.

SEC. 10. BUDGET PLAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle E of title IX of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16271 et seq.) is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 959. BUDGET PLAN.

''Not later than 12 months after the date of enactment of the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act, the Department shall transmit to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate 2 alternative 10-year budget plans for civilian nuclear energy research and development by the Department. The first shall assume constant annual funding for 10 years at the appropriated level for the Department's civilian nuclear energy research and development for fiscal year 2016. The second shall be an unconstrained budget. The 2 plans shall include—

''(1) a prioritized list of the Department's programs, projects, and activities to best support the development of next generation nuclear energy technology;

''(2) realistic budget requirements for the Department to implement sections 955(c), 957, and 958 of this Act; and

''(3) the Department's justification for continuing or terminating existing civilian nuclear energy research and development programs.''.

(b) REPORT ON FUSION INNOVATION.—Not later than six months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Department of Energy shall transmit to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report that will identify engineering designs for innovative fusion energy systems that have the potential to demonstrate net energy production not later than 15 years after the start of construction. In this report, the Secretary will identify budgetary requirements that would be necessary for the Department to carry out a fusion innovation initiative to accelerate research and development of these designs.

SEC. 11. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

The table of contents for the Energy Policy Act of 2005 is amended by striking the item relating to section 957 and inserting the following:

''957. High-performance computation and supportive research.
''958. Enabling nuclear energy innovation.
''959. Budget plan.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WEBER) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4084, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act.

I want to thank Ranking Member JOHNSON and Chairman SMITH for cosponsoring this important legislation and for their leadership in advocating for nuclear energy research and development.

I am grateful for the opportunity to work with my fellow Texans to guide research that will keep America safe, globally competitive, and support nuclear innovation. I also want to thank my colleagues on the Science Committee who cosponsored H.R. 4084.

Mr. Speaker, the Science Committee has spent over a year examining U.S. nuclear energy policy and preparation for this legislation. We have been holding hearings on supercomputing, advanced nuclear energy technology, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and the DOE Energy Innovation Hubs.

Witnesses from the national labs, universities, and the private sector have all testified in support of the various reforms and policies outlined in this bill.

We took our time developing this legislation. By working together and listening to all the relevant stakeholders, we have developed broad bipartisan and bicameral support for this bill.

We have worked with our colleagues in the Senate to develop companion legislation as well. Last month an amendment with the text of this legislation passed, Mr. Speaker, with historic overwhelming support in the Senate.

For the first time in many years, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act will provide updated statutory direction to the Department of Energy's nuclear research activities to ensure that fundamental research is prioritized and precious resources are not wasted.

This bill requires DOE to leverage its supercomputing infrastructure and use modeling and simulation capabilities to develop advanced fission and fusion reactors.

The bill lays out a clear timeline and parameters for DOE to complete a research reactor. A research reactor is a crucial part of ensuring materials and nuclear fuels R&D can take place in the United States.

This type of research requires access to fast neutrons, which, unfortunately, are currently only available for civilian research in Russia, Mr. Speaker.

While modeling and simulation can accelerate R&D, nuclear energy must be validated through a physical source. The versatile neutron source under section 6 of H.R. 4084 will provide the United States with that vital capability.

□ 1745

This legislation also directs DOE to partner with the private sector to construct and operate reactor prototypes at DOE National Labs.

Nuclear reactors are expensive and highly regulated. Designing a first-of-a-kind reactor requires a blend of creative freedom for engineers to test new designs while ensuring safety throughout the entire process.

DOE sites, particularly the DOE National Labs, can provide a unique environment that safely allows for this kind of creative testing and development for advanced nuclear technology, without a burdensome regulatory process which slows progress to a crawl.

DOE has fundamental authority to enter into these innovative research partnerships, but won't have the confidence to act without direction from Congress, which is provided in this legislation, Mr. Speaker.

America must maintain our nuclear capabilities and continue to develop cutting-edge technology right here at home. Without the direction provided in this bill, we will continue to fall further and further behind, lose the ability to develop innovative nuclear technology, and be left importing reactor designs from overseas.

Today, we have the best nuclear engineers and manufacturing capacity in the world right here at home. We can't put that expertise at risk, Mr. Speaker.

Even more importantly, this bill will maintain America's capability to influence security and proliferation standards around the world, as more developing nations look to nuclear energy to grow their economies.

As a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, I am constantly reminded of the need for American leadership in a dangerous world. H.R. 4084 reaffirms the United States' commitment to safely advancing nuclear technology.

I encourage my colleagues to support this bill.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4084, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act.

Currently in the United States, nuclear power produces about 20 percent of our Nation's electrical supply, and that makes nuclear power the single largest carbon-free power source in the country.

However, our current nuclear fleet is growing older. Many of the plants across our country are many decades old and rely upon nuclear technology that is even older.

There have been substantial efforts in the past decade to move towards constructing new nuclear generating units with more modern designs. However, these efforts have had mixed results.

There have been construction difficulties, regulatory hurdles, and financing issues, all of which have conspired to delay the construction of new nuclear plants in America.

Some of these hurdles, though, are unlikely to go away with our current technologies. The Three Mile Island, Chernobyl, and Fukushima nuclear accidents have repeatedly highlighted the necessity of ensuring our nuclear fleet runs as safely as possible. This has led to much of the cost and difficulty of building the new plants.

I think the answer to these problems can be found in innovative new nuclear technologies. The Department of Energy and many different companies in the private sector are working on new forms of nuclear energy generation that hold the promise of much more effective and much safer nuclear generation stations.

Some of these technologies also address the extremely important issue of the radioactive waste streams that plague our current generation of nuclear plants.

H.R. 4084 takes several positive steps to help spur this innovation and deliver these very promising nuclear technologies to market.

I also want to highlight one additional reason to support H.R. 4084. As the world makes commitments to move toward a lower carbon future, as evidenced by the Paris climate agreement, it presents an opportunity to American Industry to supply low-carbon power platforms like nuclear power.

This bill will keep our country on the forefront of nuclear power technology, and it is my hope it will empower American Industry to be the suppliers of the next generation of nuclear plants throughout the entire world.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Congressman WEBER for sponsoring this legislation, and thank Science, Space, and Technology Committee Chairman SMITH and Ranking Member EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON for bringing this bill to the floor in such a bipartisan manner.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve balance of my time.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. I appreciate the gentleman's kind remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK).

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Texas, Mr. WEBER, for his leadership on this important issue and for allowing me a few moments to speak on it.

H.R. 4084 is a critical piece of legislation that will improve our Nation's nuclear energy research and foster the development of our next generation of nuclear reactors.

Throughout our history, the United States has led the world in developing new nuclear technologies, and this bill provides the tools to help us to continue this leadership into the future.

One of the many important provisions of this bill is that it directs the Department of Energy, through its National Laboratories, to develop new nuclear reactor concepts by partnering with the private sector.

With a national population of 320 million, and growing, we must be aggressive in our pursuit of new nuclear breakthroughs in order to power our Nation's future.

As a Member of Congress from Georgia, I understand the challenges of providing power to a rapidly growing population. Georgia's population is expected to increase by almost 2 million over the next 10 years, and without clean, affordable, reliable nuclear power, the task of bringing electricity to these new residents would be daunting.

The United States has not added any nuclear power generation for over 30 years. However, today, new power units are being built at Plant Vogtle in Georgia. These nuclear power generators will add the capacity to power 1 million homes and businesses once they are completed.

After visiting Plant Vogtle last year, I am confident that these new generators will reassure the country that nuclear power is safe, secure, and reliable, and will encourage the pursuit of future nuclear technology breakthroughs.

This bill is vital to the future of our Nation because it enables the private sector to utilize the research tools and resources at the DOE National Labs so scientists and engineers in the private sector can assist in the development of new nuclear technologies. Nuclear power generation that is clean, sustainable, and safe, is what will power America's homes and businesses for years to come.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

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

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. KNIGHT).

Mr. KNIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. WEBER and Mr. BEYER for their congenial work on this issue.

I do rise today in support of H.R. 4084, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act, as I am a cosponsor. Some of us believe a nuclear energy policy is important to the State of California, which is home to private companies and universities pursuing advanced nuclear technologies.

I am proud to support this legislation because it would provide capabilities for our technology innovators to develop new reactors that will yield amazing benefits to society through increased resistance to proliferation, minimizing waste, and perhaps even consuming existing waste stockpiles.

The possibilities are endless when we allow our engineers to creatively tackle the world's challenges, and this is no different for nuclear energy.

This is important because in my district we have recently seen the issues that can arise when an area is dependent on a single energy source.

California is home to many of the companies seeking to partner with the DOE and benefit from our Nation's unparalleled supercomputer capabilities. Leveraging the Department's assets will help our domestic industry capture a significant share of a growing, multibillion-dollar industry.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters of support from Tri Alpha, a California-based fusion company, and UPower, a California-based advanced fission reactor company.

TRI ALPHA ENERGY,
February 24, 2016.

Hon. LAMAR SMITH,
Chairman, House Science, Space & Technology Committee, Washington, DC.

Hon. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON,
Ranking Member, House Science, Space & Technology Committee, Washington, DC.

Hon. RANDY WEBER,
Chairman, Energy Subcommittee, House Science, Space & Technology Committee, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SMITH, RANKING MEMBER JOHNSON, and REPRESENTATIVE WEBER: Tri Alpha Energy is a fusion energy science research company headquartered in Foothill Ranch, California. Our purpose is to deliver world-changing clean fusion energy for economical, commercial power generation as fast as possible. Tri Alpha started as a research project at the University of California-Irvine in 1990. Today we have 150 employees, over 350 patents issued or pending, and are conducting experiments on a state of the art plasma generation device.

We are writing to express support for your bill H.R. 4084, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act. Global market and environmental conditions demand that new sources of clean, baseload electricity be developed. New nuclear designs hold tremendous promise as a sustainable and cost-competitive power solution, but the United States government must provide a favorable policy environment for the necessary technology developments to take place.

H.R. 4084 would make several improvements at the Department of Energy to help move advanced nuclear technology concepts, including fusion, out of the laboratory and toward commercialization. The Nuclear Innovation Center, for example, would enable shorter development and permitting timelines by allowing private companies to work hand-in-hand with federal researchers and regulators on design validation.

We commend you and your staff for recognizing the enormous positive potential that advanced nuclear, including fusion, holds in

the United States and for offering thoughtful, bipartisan legislation to move the industry forward. We hope that H.R. 4084 will be offered for floor consideration soon and offer our support to help move the bill to final passage. We also look forward to working with your Committee on other fusion energy issues in the future. Please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

RICHARD C. BARTH, Ph.D.,
Senior Vice President, Government Relations, Tri Alpha Energy.

JANUARY 22, 2016.

Hon. LAMAR SMITH, *Chairman*,
Hon. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, *Ranking Member*,
Hon. RANDY WEBER, *Chairman*,
Subcommittee on Energy and the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SMITH, RANKING MEMBER JOHNSON, CHAIRMAN WEBER, and SENATOR WHITEHOUSE, SENATOR BOOKER, and SENATOR RISCH: On behalf of UPower Technologies, I am writing to commend your bipartisan leadership and foresight regarding the creation and passage of H.R. 4084 and the Senate companion which compose the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act (the Act).

UPower Technologies, Inc., soon to become Oklo, Inc., is a funded advanced reactor startup based in Silicon Valley. We believe that what is good for all advanced nuclear is what's best for the individual companies as well, and in turn what is best for the industry is best for the nation. Each entity in the advanced nuclear industry requires a high-functioning network of a diversity of companies, manufacturers, labs, suppliers, regulators, investors, and other expertise in order to thrive. And the United States will require this home-grown industry to be an international leader in clean energy, to provide high-paying, long-term jobs, and to provide clean power in a safe and reliable manner. Your commendable work on the Nuclear Innovation Capabilities Act will support these important U.S. goals.

The Act is a start to look critically at potential ways that the U.S. government can be more efficient both in utilizing its vast, existing investments in infrastructure and expertise, and in removing unreasonable blocks to American innovation.

The Act begins to lay out an important framework and focus for the Department of Energy (DOE) regarding advanced nuclear, especially regarding its relationship to industry. While the DOE has many resources in place, such as a wealth of valuable advanced codes and computational resources, a congressional mandate to focus on making these resources more accessible, cost effective, and utilized could make both the DOE complex and the advanced reactor industry more vibrant.

The Act also requires the DOE to consider locations for nuclear fueled advanced reactor testing. It will be critical as this process proceeds to ensure that locations for implementations are not limited among the various potential DOE sites and that fees and contracting are in line with reasonable costs and not compensating for irrelevant or excessive overhead.

The Act institutes a focus on having a fast reactor resource within the DOE complex. It will be a valuable asset to both the DOE and the industry.

The laudable goal of the Act is to streamline U.S. technology development to commercialization. As such, it will be critically important that the DOE work as seamlessly as possible with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) as far as providing data and allowing for the licensing activities required for commercialization, so that there need not be a duplication of nuclear-fueled implementations—possibly an exorbitant cost for any startup to survive.

The Act also asks the NRC for a report on timeline expectations for advanced reactor licensing. From the perspective of current or future advanced nuclear startup companies, an official report on timelines creates better certainty for private investment. This is potentially a very valuable provision to encourage private investment to further this relatively new U.S. industry. We also encourage continued dialog between the NRC, industry, and other stakeholders regarding how the regulatory process can benefit from significant advances in safety, further reducing uncertainty and accelerating deployment of safe, clean energy.

In summary, we support H.R. 4084 and the accompanying Senate bill. We appreciate the focus it brings to key areas to utilize U.S. investments and infrastructure to enhance U.S. innovation in clean energy. We also look forward to future legislation which may add appropriation and clarification of public-private contracting to further enable American innovation. UPower Technologies stands ready to support these important advances in U.S. energy leadership.

Sincerely,

JACOB DEWITTE,
CEO and founder, UPower Technologies, Inc. (changing to Oklo, Inc.), Sunnyvale, CA.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, having no further requests for time, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have left?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 12 minutes remaining.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 4084, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 4084 is vital to ensuring America's leadership in nuclear innovation. By harnessing the expertise of our Nation's National Labs, some of which we heard about today, its universities and entrepreneurs, the private sector can take the lead in developing groundbreaking advanced nuclear technology.

I especially want to thank my colleagues on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee; of course, Ranking Member EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON; those who have also cosponsored the bill, including DAN LIPINSKI, BARRY LOUDERMILK, ED PERLMUTTER, BARBARA COMSTOCK, PAUL TONKO, JIM BRIDENSTINE, BRIAN BABIN, DANA ROHRABACHER, RANDY HULTGREN, BRUCE WESTERMAN, STEVE KNIGHT, BILL POSEY, FRANK LUCAS, RANDY NEUGEBAUER, and the gentleman from Virginia for his kind remarks. I also want to thank the dozens and dozens of researchers and stakeholders who came in and provided feedback as we developed this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter exchange between the Energy and Commerce Committee and the Science, Space, and Technology Committee on H.R. 4084.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE,
Washington, DC, February 29, 2016.

Hon. LAMAR SMITH,
Chairman, Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SMITH: I write in regard to H.R. 4084, the ''Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act.'' As you are aware, the bill was referred to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, but the Committee on Energy and Commerce has a jurisdictional interest in the bill. I wanted to notify you that the Committee on Energy and Commerce will forgo action on H.R. 4084 so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

This is done with the understanding that the Committee on Energy and Commerce's jurisdictional interests over this and similar legislation are in no way diminished or altered. In addition, the Committee reserves the right to seek conferees on H.R. 4084 and requests your support when such a request is made.

I would appreciate your response confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 4084 and ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during consideration of the bill on the House floor.

Sincerely,

FRED UPTON,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY,
Washington, DC, February 29, 2016.

Hon. FRED UPTON,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 4084, the ''Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act.'' Your support for this legislation and your assistance in ensuring its timely consideration are greatly appreciated.

I agree that a provision in the bill is within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. I acknowledge that by waiving rights to further consideration of H.R. 4084, your Committee is not relinquishing its jurisdiction. A copy of our letters will be placed in the Congressional Record during consideration of the bill on the House floor.

I value your cooperation and look forward to working with you as we move ahead with this legislation.

Sincerely,

LAMAR SMITH,
Chairman.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this commonsense, bipartisan legislation. I appreciate my colleagues' help.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4084, the "Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act," directs civilian nuclear energy research and development to contribute to American nuclear power.

I thank the Energy Subcommittee Chairman, RANDY WEBER, and Science Committee Ranking Member, EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, for their leadership on this issue.

I also want to thank many bipartisan cosponsors of the bill, which include Science Committee Vice Chairman FRANK LUCAS, Research and Technology Subcommittee Chairwoman BARBARA COMSTOCK and Subcommittee Ranking Member DAN LIPINSKI, Environment Subcommittee Chairman JIM BRIDENSTINE, Oversight Subcommittee Chairman BARRY LOUDERMILK, Space Subcommittee Chairman BRIAN BABIN, and full committee members DANA ROHRABACHER, ED PERLMUTTER, RANDY HULTGREN, PAUL TONKO, BRUCE WESTERMAN, STEVE KNIGHT, BILL POSEY, and RANDY NEUGEBAUER.

I am encouraged by the strong bipartisan support for the subsequently introduced Senate version of the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act, which passed as an amendment to the Energy Policy Modernization Act by a vote of 87–4 on the Senate floor in January.

Advanced nuclear energy technology is the best opportunity to make reliable, emission-free electricity available throughout the modern and developing world.

America must maintain a strong nuclear technology sector in order to influence global nonproliferation standards. This will help us prevent civilian nuclear energy technology from being misused for weapons development overseas.

H.R. 4084 harnesses the strengths of the Department of Energy (DOE) National Labs, universities, and the private sector. It ensures that America's best and brightest minds advance this groundbreaking science and technology.

This legislation provides DOE with the direction and certainty it needs to develop plans for long term research and infrastructure development within the Office of Nuclear Energy.

H.R. 4084 authorizes DOE to take advantage of the National Labs' supercomputers in order to accelerate research for advanced fission and fusion experimental reactors. This program will leverage expertise from the private sector, universities, and National Labs.

The bill provides a clear timeline for DOE to complete a research reactor user facility within ten years. This research reactor will enable proprietary and academic research to develop supercomputing models and also design next generation nuclear energy technology.

Finally, H.R. 4084 creates a reliable mechanism for the private sector to partner with DOE labs to build fission and fusion prototype reactors at DOE sites.

Nuclear power has been a proven source of safe and emission-free electricity for over half a century. Now, America's strategic investments in advanced nuclear reactor technology can play a more meaningful role to reduce global emissions. Unfortunately, the ability to move innovative technology to the market has been stalled by government red tape.

By working around these bureaucratic barriers, H.R. 4084 will spur American competitiveness and keep us on the forefront of nuclear energy technology.

This legislation enables our talented engineers in the private sector, academia, and at the National Labs to develop the next generation of nuclear technology here in the United States.

Nuclear energy can be a clean, cheap answer to an energy independent, pro-growth, secure future.

I thank Chairman WEBER and Ranking Member JOHNSON of Texas for their work on this bill and encourage my colleagues to support it.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H.R. 4084, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act, which I am very pleased to co-sponsor.

Today, nuclear power plays a vital role in providing our country with clean, reliable energy. Nuclear power is currently the single largest carbon-free component of our electrical supply. One of my top priorities as a Member of Congress is preventing and mitigating the potentially devastating impacts of climate change. I believe that nuclear power can and should play a key role in our efforts to reduce the carbon footprint of our electricity sector.

But there currently are technical, economic, and policy challenges that prevent nuclear energy from playing a larger role in enabling our clean energy future. The Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act takes several positive steps to address these challenges. Implementing the provisions in this bill will help accelerate the development of advanced nuclear energy technologies that are safer, less expensive, more efficient, and produce less waste than the current generation of nuclear reactors.

While the results of this research will clearly benefit the American consumers, it is my hope that it will also help spur American industry. As the world collectively moves towards greenhouse gas reductions, we need to make sure that American industry is ready to supply the technologies to fuel the world's low carbon future. This bill will help ensure that American industry will lead the world in supplying next generation nuclear power.

I would like to express my appreciation for the process we followed to put this bill together. Majority and Minority staff worked closely together, from engaging stakeholders through crafting and incorporating suggested changes to bill language. This is a great example of what we can achieve when we leave politics at the door and look for common ground to address the challenges facing our nation's research enterprise. Specifically, I'd like to thank my Texas colleague Mr. WEBER for sponsoring this legislation, and my other Texas colleague Chairman SMITH for working with the Minority to advance this bill.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WEBER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4084, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EDWARD ''TED'' KAUFMAN AND MICHAEL LEAVITT PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITIONS IMPROVEMENTS ACT OF 2015

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1172) to improve the process of presidential transition, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1172

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 ''Edward 'Ted' Kaufman and Michael Leavitt Presidential Transitions Improvements Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION IMPROVEMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Presidential Transition Act of 1963 (3 U.S.C. 102 note) is amended—

(1) by redesignating sections 4, 5, and 6 as sections 5, 6, and 7, respectively; and

(2) by inserting after section 3 the following:

''SEC. 4. TRANSITION SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES BEFORE ELECTION.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

''(1) the term 'Administrator' means the Administrator of General Services;

''(2) the term 'agency' means an Executive agency, as defined in section 105 of title 5, United States Code;

''(3) the term 'eligible candidate' has the meaning given that term in section 3(h)(4); and

''(4) the term 'Presidential election' means a general election held to determine the electors of President and Vice President under section 1 or 2 of title 3, United States Code.

''(b) GENERAL DUTIES.—The President shall take such actions as the President determines necessary and appropriate to plan and coordinate activities by the Executive branch of the Federal Government to facilitate an efficient transfer of power to a successor President, including by—

''(1) establishing and operating a White House transition coordinating council in accordance with subsection (d); and

''(2) establishing and operating an agency transition directors council in accordance with subsection (e).

''(c) FEDERAL TRANSITION COORDINATOR.—The Administrator shall designate an employee of the General Services Administration who is a senior career appointee to—

''(1) carry out the duties and authorities of the General Services Administration relating to Presidential transitions under this Act or any other provision of law;

''(2) serve as the Federal Transition Coordinator with responsibility for coordinating transition planning across agencies, including through the agency transition directors council established under subsection (e);

''(3) ensure agencies comply with all statutory requirements relating to transition planning and reporting; and

''(4) act as a liaison to eligible candidates.

''(d) WHITE HOUSE TRANSITION COORDINATING COUNCIL.—

''(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 6 months before the date of a Presidential election, the President shall establish a White House transition coordinating council for purposes of facilitating the Presidential transition.

''(2) DUTIES.—The White House transition coordinating council shall—

''(A) provide guidance to agencies and the Federal Transition Coordinator regarding preparations for the Presidential transition, including succession planning and preparation of briefing materials;

''(B) facilitate communication and information sharing between the transition representatives of eligible candidates and senior employees in agencies and the Executive Office of the President; and

''(C) prepare and host interagency emergency preparedness and response exercises.

''(3) MEMBERSHIP.—The members of the White House transition coordinating council shall include—

''(A) senior employees of the Executive branch selected by the President, which may include the Chief of Staff to the President, any Cabinet officer, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the Administrator, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, the Director of the Office of Government Ethics, and the Archivist of the United States;

''(B) the Federal Transition Coordinator;

''(C) the transition representative for each eligible candidate, who shall serve in an advisory capacity; and

''(D) any other individual the President determines appropriate.

''(4) CHAIRPERSON.—The Chairperson of the White House transition coordinating council shall be a senior employee in the Executive Office of the President, designated by the President.

''(e) AGENCY TRANSITION DIRECTORS COUNCIL.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall establish and operate an agency transition directors council, which shall—

''(A) ensure the Federal Government has an integrated strategy for addressing interagency challenges and responsibilities around Presidential transitions and turnover of noncareer appointees;

''(B) coordinate transition activities between the Executive Office of the President, agencies, and the transition team of eligible candidates and the President-elect and Vice President-elect; and

''(C) draw on guidance provided by the White House transition coordinating council and lessons learned from previous Presidential transitions in carrying out its duties.

''(2) DUTIES.—As part of carrying out the responsibilities under paragraph (1), the agency transition directors council shall—

''(A) assist the Federal Transition Coordinator in identifying and carrying out the responsibilities of the Federal Transition Coordinator relating to a Presidential transition;

''(B) provide guidance to agencies in gathering briefing materials and information relating to the Presidential transition that may be requested by eligible candidates;

''(C) ensure materials and information described in subparagraph (B) are prepared not later than November 1 of a year during which a Presidential election is held;

''(D) ensure agencies adequately prepare career employees who are designated to fill noncareer positions under subsection (f) during a Presidential transition; and

''(E) consult with the President's Management Council, or any successor thereto, in carrying out the duties of the agency transition directors council.

''(3) MEMBERSHIP.—The members of the agency transition directors council shall include—

''(A) the Federal Transition Coordinator and the Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget, who shall serve as Co-Chairpersons of the agency transition directors council;

''(B) other senior employees serving in the Executive Office of the President, as determined by the President;

''(C) a senior representative from each agency described in section 901(b)(1) of title 31, United States Code, the Office of Personnel Management, the Office of Government Ethics, and the National Archives and Records Administration whose responsibilities include leading Presidential transition efforts within the agency;

''(D) a senior representative from any other agency determined by the Co-Chairpersons to be an agency that has significant responsibilities relating to the Presidential transition process; and

''(E) during a year during which a Presidential election will be held, a transition representative for each eligible candidate, who shall serve in an advisory capacity.

''(4) MEETINGS.—The agency transition directors council shall meet—

''(A) subject to subparagraph (B), not less than once per year; and

''(B) during the period beginning on the date that is 6 months before a Presidential election and ending on the date on which the President-elect is inaugurated, on a regular basis as necessary to carry out the duties and authorities of the agency transition directors council.

''(f) INTERIM AGENCY LEADERSHIP FOR TRANSITIONS.—

''(1) OVERSIGHT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF TRANSITION.—Not later than 6 months before the date of a Presidential election, the head of each agency shall designate a senior career employee of the agency and a senior career employee of each major component and subcomponent of the agency to oversee and implement the activities of the agency, component, or subcomponent relating to the Presidential transition.

''(2) ACTING OFFICERS.—Not later than September 15 of a year during which a Presidential election occurs, and in accordance with subchapter III of chapter 33 of title 5, United States Code, for each noncareer position in an agency that the head of the agency determines is critical, the head of the agency shall designate a qualified career employee to serve in the position in an acting capacity if the position becomes vacant.

''(g) MEMORANDUMS OF UNDERSTANDING.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than November 1 of a year during which a Presidential election occurs, the President (acting through the Federal Transition Coordinator) shall, to the maximum extent practicable, negotiate a memorandum of understanding with the transition representative of each eligible candidate, which shall include, at a minimum, the conditions of access to employees, facilities, and documents of agencies by transition staff.

''(2) EXISTING RESOURCES.—To the maximum extent practicable, the memorandums of understanding negotiated under paragraph (1) shall be based on memorandums of understanding from previous Presidential transitions.

''(h) EQUITY IN ASSISTANCE.—Any information or other assistance provided to eligible candidates under this section shall be offered on an equal basis and without regard to political affiliation.

''(i) REPORTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The President, acting through the Federal Transition Coordinator, shall submit to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate reports describing the activities undertaken by the President and agencies to prepare for the transfer of power to a new President.

''(2) TIMING.—The reports under paragraph (1) shall be provided 6 months and 3 months before the date of a Presidential election.''.

(b) OTHER IMPROVEMENTS.—Section 3 of the Presidential Transition Act of 1963 (3 U.S.C. 102 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (8)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)(i)—

(I) by inserting ''and during the term of a President'' after ''during the transition''; and

(II) by striking ''after inauguration''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by inserting ''or Executive agencies (as defined in section 105 of title 5, United States Code)'' before the period; and

(B) in paragraph (10), by inserting ''including, to the greatest extent practicable, human resource management system software compatible with the software used by the incumbent President and likely to be used by the President-elect and Vice President-elect'' before the period;

(2) in subsection (b)(2), by striking ''30 days'' and inserting ''180 days'';

(3) in subsection (g), by inserting ''except for activities under subsection (a)(8)(A),'' before ''there shall be no''; and

(4) in subsection (h)(2), by adding at the end the following:

''(D) An eligible candidate shall have a right to the services and facilities described in this paragraph until the date on which the Administrator is able to determine the apparent successful candidates for the office of President and Vice President.''.

(c) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 3 of the Pre-Election Presidential Transition Act of 2010 (3 U.S.C. 102 note) is repealed.

(2) The Presidential Transition Act of 1963 (3 U.S.C. 102 note) is amended—

(A) in section 3—

(i) in subsection (a)(4)(B), by striking ''section 6'' and inserting ''section 7'';

(ii) in subsection (b), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''section 3 of this Act'' and inserting ''this section''; and

(iii) in subsection (h)(3)(B)(iii), by striking ''section 5'' each place it appears and inserting ''section 6'';

(B) in section 6, as redesignated by subsection (a) of this section, by striking ''section 6(a)(1)'' each place it appears and inserting ''section 7(a)(1)''; and

(C) in section 7(a)(2), as redesignated by subsection (a) of this section, by striking ''section 4'' and inserting ''section 5''.

(3) Section 8331(1)(K) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking ''section 4'' and inserting ''section 5''.

(4) Section 8701(a)(10) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking ''section 4'' and inserting ''section 5''.

(5) Section 8901(1)(I) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking ''section 4'' and inserting ''section 5''.

SEC. 3. NATIONAL ARCHIVES PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION.

Section 2203(g) of title 44, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

''(3) When the President considers it practicable and in the public interest, the President shall include in the President's budget transmitted to Congress, for each fiscal year in which the term of office of the President will expire, such funds as may be necessary for carrying out the authorities of this subsection.''.

SEC. 4. REPORTS ON POLITICAL APPOINTEES APPOINTED TO NONPOLITICAL PERMANENT POSITIONS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term ''agency'' has the meaning given the term ''Executive agency'' in section 105 of title 5, United States Code;

(2) the term ''covered civil service position'' means a position in the civil service (as defined in section 2101 of title 5, United States Code) that is not—

(A) a temporary position; or

(B) a political position;

(3) the term ''former political appointee'' means an individual who—

(A) is not serving in an appointment to a political position; and

(B) served as a political appointee during the 5-year period ending on the date of the request for an appointment to a covered civil service position in any agency;

(4) the term ''political appointee'' means an individual serving in an appointment to a political position; and

(5) the term ''political position'' means—

(A) a position described under sections 5312 through 5316 of title 5, United States Code (relating to the Executive Schedule);

(B) a noncareer appointment in the Senior Executive Service, as defined under paragraph (7) of section 3132(a) of title 5, United States Code; or

(C) a position in the executive branch of the Government of a confidential or policy-determining character under schedule C of subpart C

of part 213 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations.

(b) REPORTING ON CURRENT OR RECENT POLITICAL APPOINTEES APPOINTED TO COVERED CIVIL SERVICE POSITIONS.—

(1) ANNUAL REPORT.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives an annual report regarding requests by agencies to appoint political appointees or former political appointees to covered civil service positions. Each report shall cover one calendar year and shall—

(A) for each request by an agency that a political appointee be appointed to a covered civil service position during the period covered by the report, provide—

(i) the date on which the request was received by the Office of Personnel Management;

(ii) subject to subsection (c), the name of the individual and the political position held by the individual, including title, office, and agency;

(iii) the date on which the individual was first appointed to a political position in the agency in which the individual is serving as a political appointee;

(iv) the grade and rate of basic pay for the individual as a political appointee;

(v) the proposed covered civil service position, including title, office, and agency, and the proposed grade and rate of basic pay for the individual;

(vi) whether the Office of Personnel Management approved or denied the request; and

(vii) the date on which the individual was appointed to a covered civil service position, if applicable; and

(B) for each request by an agency that a former political appointee be appointed to a covered civil service position during the period covered by the report, provide—

(i) the date on which the request was received by the Office of Personnel Management;

(ii) subject to subsection (c), the name of the individual and the political position held by the individual, including title, office, and agency;

(iii) the date on which the individual was first appointed to any political position;

(iv) the grade and rate of basic pay for the individual as a political appointee;

(v) the date on which the individual ceased to serve in a political position;

(vi) the proposed covered civil service position, including title, office, and agency, and the proposed grade and rate of basic pay for the individual;

(vii) whether the Office of Personnel Management approved or denied the request; and

(viii) the date on which the individual was first appointed to a covered civil service position, if applicable.

(2) QUARTERLY REPORT IN CERTAIN YEARS.—In the last year of the term of a President, or, if applicable, the last year of the second consecutive term of a President, the report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted quarterly and shall cover each quarter of the year, except that the last quarterly report shall also cover January 1 through 20 of the following year.

(c) NAMES AND TITLES OF CERTAIN APPOINTEES.—If determined appropriate by the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, a report submitted under subsection (b) may exclude the name or title of a political appointee or former political appointee—

(1) who—

(A) was requested to be appointed to a covered civil service position; and

(B) was not appointed to a covered civil service position; or

(2) relating to whom a request to be appointed to a covered civil service position is pending at the end of the period covered by that report.

SEC. 5. REPORT ON REGULATIONS PROMULGATED NEAR THE END OF PRESIDENTIAL TERMS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term ''covered presidential transition period'' means each of the following:

(A) The 120-day period ending on January 20, 2001.

(B) The 120-day period ending on January 20, 2009.

(C) The 120-day period ending on January 20, 2017.

(2) The term ''covered regulation'' means a final significant regulatory action promulgated by an Executive department.

(3) The term ''significant regulatory action'' means any regulatory action that is likely to result in a rule that may—

(A) have an annual effect on the economy of $100,000,000 or more or adversely affect in a material way the economy, a sector of the economy, productivity, competition, jobs, the environment, public health or safety, or State, local, or tribal governments or communities;

(B) create a serious inconsistency or otherwise interfere with an action taken or planned by another agency;

(C) materially alter the budgetary impact of entitlements, grants, user fees, or loan programs or the rights and obligations of recipients thereof; or

(D) raise novel legal or policy issues.

(4) The term ''Executive department'' has the meaning given that term under section 101 of title 5, United States Code.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives a report regarding covered regulations promulgated during each covered presidential transition period.

(2) CONTENTS OF REPORT.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall, to the extent feasible, for each covered presidential transition period—

(A) compare the number, scope, and impact of, and type of rulemaking procedure used for, covered regulations promulgated during the covered presidential transition period to the number, scope, and impact of, and type of rulemaking procedure used for, covered regulations promulgated during the 120-day periods ending on January 20 of each year after 1996, other than 2001, 2009, and 2017;

(B) determine the statistical significance of any differences identified under subparagraph (A) and whether and to what extent such differences indicate any patterns;

(C) evaluate the size, scope, and effect of the covered regulations promulgated during the covered presidential transition period; and

(D) assess the extent to which the regularly required processes for the promulgation of covered regulations were followed during the covered presidential transition period, including compliance with the requirements under—

(i) chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the ''Congressional Review Act'');

(ii) the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (5 U.S.C. 601 note);

(iii) sections 202, 203, 204, and 205 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1532-1535);

(iv) chapter 6 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the ''Regulatory Flexibility Act''); and

(v) chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code (commonly known as the ''Paperwork Reduction Act'').

SEC. 6. ANALYSIS OF THREATS AND VULNERABILITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than February 15, 2016, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform and Homeland Security of the House of Representatives a report analyzing the threats and vulnerabilities facing the United States during a presidential transition, which—

(1) shall identify and discuss vulnerabilities related to border security and threats related to terrorism, including from weapons of mass destruction;

(2) shall identify steps being taken to address the threats and vulnerabilities during a presidential transition; and

(3) may include recommendations for actions by components and agencies within the Department of Homeland Security.

(b) FORM.—The report submitted under subsection (a) shall be prepared in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE) and the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of S. 1172, the Edward ''Ted'' Kaufman and Michael Leavitt Presidential Transitions Improvements Act of 2015, introduced by Senator THOMAS CARPER of Delaware.

By building on the Pre-Presidential Transaction Act of 2010, S. 1172 improves the process of Presidential transition by mandating several processes that have been effective in past Presidential transitions.

The bill promotes early planning and supports communication by codifying the working groups put in place for the 2010 transition, which was one of the smoothest in our Nation's history.

S. 1172 directs the White House to establish a transition council. It requires the General Services Administration to designate a Federal transition coordinator, and it ensures agencies designate staff to manage their internal transition activities needed to support the process of transitioning from one Presidential administration to another.

The bill requires that the transition teams be in place no later than 6 months before election day, and it authorizes GSA to provide services for the incoming administration up to 6 months after inauguration.

□ 1800

S. 1172 also requires a report to Congress on national security threats related to terrorism and border security during a transition. The bill further requires the Office of Personnel Management to provide quarterly reports to

Congress detailing requests by agencies to appoint political appointees and former political appointees to nonpolitical civil service positions.

Mr. Speaker, S. 1172 will help ensure the incoming President has the information necessary to oversee our complex government. Together, these commonsense steps will support future Presidents as they prepare to govern immediately after inauguration. Regardless of party, key management actions must be taken during transitions to support the smooth operation of government.

Mr. Speaker, this bill was also referred to the Committee on Homeland Security, and we deeply appreciate their cooperation in getting this bill to the floor.

I also would like to thank Senators JOHNSON and CARPER for their work to ensure the upcoming transition remains nonpartisan and supports the continuance of essential government operations.

Mr. Speaker, as we prepare for an upcoming Presidential transition, I urge my colleagues to support this important bipartisan legislation.

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

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM,
Washington, DC, December 11, 2015.

Hon. MICHAEL T. MCCAUL,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: On October 9, 2015, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform ordered reported with an amendment S. 1172, the Edward ''Ted'' Kaufman and Michael Leavitt Presidential Transitions Improvements Act of 2015, by unanimous consent. The bill was referred primarily to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, with an additional referral to the Committee on Homeland Security.

I ask that you allow the Homeland Security Committee to be discharged from further consideration of the bill so that it may be scheduled by the Majority Leader. This discharge in no way affects your jurisdiction over the subject matter of the bill, and it will not serve as precedent for future referrals. In addition, should a conference on the bill be necessary, I would support your request to have the Committee on Homeland Security represented on the conference committee. Finally, I would be pleased to include this letter and any response in the bill report filed by the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, as well as in the Congressional Record during floor consideration, to memorialize our understanding.

Thank you for your consideration of my request.

Sincerely,

JASON CHAFFETZ,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Washington, DC, December 11, 2015.

Hon. JASON CHAFFETZ,
Chairman, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN CHAFFETZ: Thank you for letter regarding S. 1172, the ''Edward 'Ted' Kaufman and Michael Leavitt Presidential Transitions and Improvements Act of 2015.'' As a result of your having consulted with us on provisions in S. 1172 that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on Homeland Security, I agree to discharge our Committee from further consideration of this bill so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

The Committee on Homeland Security takes this action with our mutual understanding that by forgoing consideration of S. 1172 at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and that our Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as this bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues in our jurisdiction. Our Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation, and I ask that your support any such request.

To memorialize our understanding, please include a copy of this letter exchange in the report filed by the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, as well as in the Congressional Record during floor consideration.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL T. MCCAUL,
Chairman.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation. I appreciate the leadership of Senator TOM CARPER in advocating for this bill which would improve the transition process for Presidential administrations.

When a new President takes office, it can take months for the new administration to put people in place. This bill would ensure that the Federal Government can continue its important functions during this transition and allow the head of an agency to put career employees in noncareer positions temporarily if necessary.

Under this legislation, a senior-level interagency transition council would be established to help develop an effective strategy for each Presidential transition. The General Services Administration would also be required to designate a Federal transition coordinator, and agencies would be required to designate senior career officials to oversee transition activities.

This bill would also help the National Archives carry out its mission by authorizing the President to include funds for the Archives to efficiently receive records from the outgoing administration.

Several changes were made to this legislation during consideration by the Oversight and Government Reform Committee to address concerns raised by Ranking Member CUMMINGS. For example, the Senate version of this bill would have required the Office of Personnel Management to report every quarter on requests for political appointees to convert to career employees. The bill before us today would still require OPM to report this information, but it would only be on an annual basis during nonelection years.

This bill will help future Presidents have a smooth and productive transition. I support this bill, and I have no additional speakers.

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

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this bill.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 1172, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COMPETITIVE SERVICE ACT OF 2015

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1580) to allow additional appointing authorities to select individuals from competitive service certificates, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1580

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 ''Competitive Service Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. ADDITIONAL APPOINTING AUTHORITIES FOR COMPETITIVE SERVICE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3318 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (b) and (c) as subsections (c) and (d), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

''(b) OTHER APPOINTING AUTHORITIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—During the 240-day period beginning on the date of issuance of a certificate of eligibles under section 3317(a), an appointing authority other than the appointing authority requesting the certificate (in this subsection referred to as the 'other appointing authority') may select an individual from that certificate in accordance with this subsection for an appointment to a position that is—

''(A) in the same occupational series as the position for which the certification of eligibles was issued (in this subsection referred to as the 'original position'); and

''(B) at a similar grade level as the original position.

''(2) APPLICABILITY.—An appointing authority requesting a certificate of eligibles may share the certificate with another appointing authority only if the announcement of the original position provided notice that the resulting list of eligible candidates may be used by another appointing authority.

''(3) REQUIREMENTS.—The selection of an individual under paragraph (1)—

''(A) shall be made in accordance with subsection (a); and

''(B) subject to paragraph (4), may be made without any additional posting under section 3327.

''(4) INTERNAL NOTICE.—Before selecting an individual under paragraph (1), and subject to the requirements of any collective bargaining obligation of the other appointing authority, the other appointing authority shall—

''(A) provide notice of the available position to employees of the other appointing authority;

''(B) provide up to 10 business days for employees of the other appointing authority to apply for the position; and

''(C) review the qualifications of employees submitting an application.

''(5) COLLECTIVE BARGAINING OBLIGATIONS.—Nothing in this subsection limits any collective bargaining obligation of an agency under chapter 71.''.

(b) ALTERNATIVE RANKING AND SELECTION PROCEDURES.—Section 3319 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking subsection (c) and inserting the following:

''(c) SELECTION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—An appointing official may select any applicant in the highest quality category or, if fewer than 3 candidates have been assigned to the highest quality category, in a merged category consisting of the highest and the second highest quality categories.

''(2) USE BY OTHER APPOINTING OFFICIALS.—Under regulations prescribed by the Office of Personnel Management, appointing officials other than the appointing official described in paragraph (1) (in this subsection referred to as the 'other appointing official') may select an applicant for an appointment to a position that is—

''(A) in the same occupational series as the position for which the certification of eligibles was issued (in this subsection referred to as the 'original position'); and

''(B) at a similar grade level as the original position.

''(3) APPLICABILITY.—An appointing authority requesting a certificate of eligibles may share the certificate with another appointing authority only if the announcement of the original position provided notice that the resulting list of eligible candidates may be used by another appointing authority.

''(4) REQUIREMENTS.—The selection of an individual under paragraph (2)—

''(A) shall be made in accordance with this subsection; and

''(B) subject to paragraph (5), may be made without any additional posting under section 3327.

''(5) INTERNAL NOTICE.—Before selecting an individual under paragraph (2), and subject to the requirements of any collective bargaining obligation of the other appointing authority (within the meaning given that term in section 3318(b)(1)), the other appointing official shall—

''(A) provide notice of the available position to employees of the appointing authority employing the other appointing official;

''(B) provide up to 10 business days for employees of the other appointing authority to apply for the position; and

''(C) review the qualifications of employees submitting an application.

''(6) COLLECTIVE BARGAINING OBLIGATIONS.—Nothing in this subsection limits any collective bargaining obligation of an agency under chapter 71.

''(7) PREFERENCE ELIGIBLES.—Notwithstanding paragraphs (1) and (2), an appointing official may not pass over a preference eligible in the same category from which selection is made, unless the requirements of section 3317(b) and 3318(c), as applicable, are satisfied.''.

(c) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 9510(b)(5) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking ''3318(b)'' and inserting ''3318(c)''.

(d) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall issue an interim final rule with comment to carry out the amendments made by this section.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE) and the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 1580, the Competitive Service Act of 2015, introduced by Senator JON TESTER of Montana. This bill will allow Federal agencies to share their lists of best qualified candidates with other agencies needing to hire for similar positions.

Mr. Speaker, many applicants are reluctant to apply for jobs with the Federal Government due to the length of time it takes for some agencies to fill job announcements. This bill will expedite the Federal hiring process by allowing agencies to share their assessments of job applicants for competitive service positions.

S. 1580 allows an agency to hire from another agency's certified list of eligible candidates as long as the original job announcement provided notice that the list of eligible candidates may be used by another agency, that the position is in the same occupational category, and that the position is at a similar grade level.

However, before an agency can hire from another agency's certified list of eligible candidates, that agency must provide notice of the available position to its internal employees, give up to 10 business days for its employees to submit applications, and then consider those applications. S. 1580 provides that as long as all of these requirements are met, an agency does not need to make any additional postings and may hire from the list of certified eligible candidates.

In an April 2014 report, titled, ''A New Civil Service Framework,'' the Partnership for Public Service discussed allowing agencies to share those best qualified candidates with other agencies. PPS notes that creating cross-agency best qualified applicant pools is ''another commonsense opportunity to create enterprisewide efficiencies for the Federal Government.''

With the Federal Government looking to fill critical vacancies, this bill will assist agencies with recruiting and hiring much-needed talent in areas such as cybersecurity and information technology.

Mr. Speaker, the committee received letters of support for this legislation from the Professional Managers Association and the Partnership for Public Service. The Federal Managers Association also supports this bill, calling it commonsense legislation.

I want to thank Senator TESTER for this legislation. The House has a similar bill that was introduced by Representatives CONNOLLY and WITTMAN, and I want to thank them also for bringing this matter to the attention of the committee as well.

Mr. Speaker, as we move forward with legislation to make the Federal Government more effective and efficient, I urge my colleagues to support this important, bipartisan legislation.

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

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of S. 1580, the Competitive Service Act of 2015. I commend Senators TESTER and PORTMAN and other colleagues in the Senate for their leadership on this important legislation. I also want to thank my friend and colleague, Congressman CONNOLLY of Virginia, for his work on this bill and introducing the companion bill in the House.

S. 1580 is a commonsense measure to streamline the Federal Government's hiring process. The legislation would reduce duplication in the vetting of candidates for Federal jobs by allowing agencies to share their list of best qualified candidates with other agencies that are hiring for a similar position.

Under this bill, an agency may hire an individual from another agency's certified list of candidates without any additional job posting if the agency meets certain requirements, including notifying its employees of the available position and allowing them to apply.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting in favor of this legislation.

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

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN). He has been a major player in this legislation.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding and thank him for his leadership.

As you have heard, this is just a commonsense bill, and I rise in strong support of S. 1580, the Competitive Services Act. I want to thank my colleague from Virginia, GERRY CONNOLLY, for his effort, along with my staff, in putting together the House version of this bill.

It is just a commonsense, bicameral, and bipartisan bill that allows agencies in a very complex and competitive world to aggressively and timely recruit individuals for these positions. We want to get individuals into those positions quickly, and we want to understand where the talent lies so that these agencies can communicate back

and forth. Many times that silo approach doesn't work. This breaks down those silos and allows agencies to share information about these applicants.

In today's world when we need to, in a timely way, gets folks into the cybersecurity realm, we need to get folks into the information technology realm, and even in the veterans' healthcare realm where we need to get healthcare providers there quickly, especially when there is demand, this is the perfect way to do that. When we go through the effort of having these individuals apply for these jobs, we know what their qualifications are. There is no reason why we shouldn't be sharing this information. It allows us to act in the best interests of taxpayers, it cuts down on the amount of expense that is put forth in recruiting these individuals, and it ensures that we get things done on time.

We understand, too, the talent pool that is out there. Many times, too, if you look at it and say that these are the individuals who are available and even if there is a challenge in getting somebody, you can immediately see that, instead of having to wait for time to communicate back and forth between agencies and say, ''Well, it doesn't look like in this area that we have the number of individuals that we need; what is the next course of action?'' this allows us to get through all of those particular issues and get people in these positions as quickly as possible.

It is just a commonsense piece of legislation that allows our managers to manage in the most effective way possible. It allows us to do the best job for our country, and it allows the best use of taxpayers' dollars.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support S. 1580.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers.

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

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I am prepared to close. I urge adoption of this bill.

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

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I want to express my strong support for the bipartisan, bicameral Competitive Service Act, S. 1580, before the House today. I am pleased to sponsor the House companion, H.R. 2827, of this common-sense legislation with my fellow Virginian, ROB WITTMAN.

Our bill reforms an antiquated and cumbersome hiring system that hinders our nation's ability to efficiently hire the most qualified candidates into federal service. Under current law, federal agencies are prohibited from sharing information about vetted job applicants. For example, when agencies identify finalists for a vacant position in a highly competitive field, such as cybersecurity, no other agency can leverage those efforts and take advantage of applicant screening that's already been performed.

Our bill will empower agencies to share information about the most qualified candidates, allowing the federal government to effectively recruit the best and the brightest talent while saving taxpayer dollars. It represents a win-win for applicants and agency human resource professionals.

Further this is an important component of a comprehensive effort to modernize the federal hiring process to ensure we can recruit the next generation of civil servants. We are facing a retirement bubble within the federal ranks. Last year, GAO reported that nearly one-third of the federal workforce would be eligible to retire by the end of fiscal year 2017.

We need to begin repairing the significant-damage that has been wrought on federal employees. The perception of public service, once lionized by President Kennedy as a noble profession, has steadily been whittled away by the current House majority, which has cut federal pay and benefits. Just try to go to a college campus today and convince a young graduate that they have a promising future federal service.

The relaunch of the USAJobs site later this week is another critical tool that will make the application process more user-friendly and transparent. Our Competitive Service Act will ensure all agencies have ready access to those qualified individuals once they're in the system.

I urge my colleagues to support this common-sense legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 1580, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 12 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CARTER of Georgia) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

MODERNIZATION OF TERMS RELATING TO MINORITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (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, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 376, nays 0, not voting 57, as follows:

[Roll No. 102]

YEAS—376

Abraham
Adams
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Barletta
Barr
Bass
Beatty
Benishek
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Calvert
Capps
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Castor (FL)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Green, Al
Griffith
Grijalva
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins
Himes
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Israel
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Knight
Kuster
LaHood
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Sean
Marino
Massie
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent

Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roe (TN)
Rogers (KY)
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Russell
Ryan (OH)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Whitfield
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—57

Aderholt
Babin
Barton
Becerra
Brady (TX)
Byrne
Capuano
Cartwright
Castro (TX)
Conyers
Culberson
Doggett
Farenthold
Fattah
Fincher
Flores
Gohmert
Green, Gene
Harris
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hill
Hinojosa
Hudson
Issa
Jackson Lee
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Maloney, Carolyn
Marchant
McGovern
Mulvaney
Napolitano
Pascrell
Perlmutter
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Roby
Rogers (AL)
Rohrabacher
Sanchez, Loretta
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sires
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Speier
Tiberi
Tsongas
Veasey
Vela
Westmoreland
Williams
Wilson (FL)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1849

Messrs. SIMPSON and RANGEL changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

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

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote No. 102 on Feb 29, 2016, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, my vote was not recorded on rollcall No. 102. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, during the votes today, I was inescapably detained and away handling important matters related to my District and the State of Alabama. If I had been present, I would have voted: YES on H.R. 4238—To Amend the Department of Energy on Organization Act and the Local Public Works Capital Development and Investment Act of 1976 to modernize terms relating to minorities.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, February 29, 2016, I was absent during rollcall vote No. 102. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on the motion to suspend the rules and pass 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.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on Monday, February 29, 2016, due to important events being held today in our district in Houston and Harris County, Texas.

If I had been able to vote, I would have voted as follows:

On 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, I would have voted "yea."

MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR THE LIVES LOST IN THE STORM OF FEBRUARY 2016

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

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I gather today with Representatives from the Virginia delegation, the South Carolina delegation, Mississippi, and Louisiana. We would like to take this opportunity to remember the victims who lost their lives during the devastating storms that ravaged the Gulf and East Coast last week.

In my district, our prayers and deep sympathy are with the loved ones of Larry Turner, Devine Stringfield, and Ian Lewis, who tragically lost their lives after their home was destroyed by the tornado that ripped through Waverly, Virginia, on Wednesday, February 24, 2016. Our thoughts and prayers are also with the many who were injured and whose daily lives were disrupted or, in some instances, permanently altered by this storm.

As communities, we extend our deep gratitude to our local law enforcement, first responders, and emergency personnel for their quick, courageous, and compassionate response in the aftermath of these storms. We are proud, though not surprised, by the way citizens and communities in Virginia and across the East Coast are coming together to support those most affected.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in a moment of silence honoring those who lost their lives, their loved ones, the entire Waverly community, and all those across Virginia, South Carolina, Mississippi, and Louisiana who have been impacted by this storm.

HONORING OFFICER ASHLEY M. GUINDON

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

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life of Officer Ashley Guindon, a law enforcement officer and Marine Corps Reserve veteran who answered the call to serve her community and her country.

In her heart, Officer Guindon was a guardian. She was willing to step into the breach to protect others.

On Saturday, February 27, one day, Mr. Speaker, after Officer Guindon was sworn in as an officer with the Prince William County Police Department, she did just that.

While responding to a call for help from a domestic violence victim, Officer Guindon was shot and killed by a gunman who had already taken the life of his wife, Crystal Hamilton, a loving mother who cared for our Nation's wounded warriors.

I ask that my colleagues join me in mourning the victims of this latest gun tragedy and, also, in paying tribute to the men and women in law enforcement who give more to this world than they ever ask in return. Mr. Speaker, we pray for their safety.

RARE DISEASE DAY

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

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on Rare Disease Day to raise awareness about this important issue and to advocate for those who are impacted.

A medical condition is considered rare if fewer than 200,000 people in the U.S. are known to be living with that particular disease.

But while each disease affects a relatively small segment of the population, with over 7,000 different diseases that fall into this category, rare diseases are not uncommon. In fact, 1 in 10 Americans is affected.

I want to commend our researchers at the NIH and in hospitals and research facilities in my district and across the U.S. who have risen to the distinct challenges posed by rare diseases.

These men and women work tirelessly to remain on the cutting edge of medical breakthrough in their search for new treatments and cures, and they deserve our full support.

So, too, do the parents, advocates, and those afflicted who spend their time raising awareness and educating policymakers on issues impacting rare diseases.

I also want to remind us all that there is much left to be accomplished. In the time it takes for one new drug to be developed, tested, and approved for general use, countless other diseases have been newly discovered, leaving us with more questions than answers. That is why the House has taken a critical step by passing the 21st Century Cures Act.

As a member of the Rare Disease Caucus, I urge my colleagues in both Chambers to advance this bipartisan initiative. On this Rare Disease Day and every other day, let us remember that the stakes are high and families are counting on us.

REMEMBERING DR. MARGUERITA WASHINGTON

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

Mr. ASHFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today saddened by the passing of a true public servant, Dr. Marguerita Washington, the long-time publisher of the Omaha Star newspaper.

When the Omaha Star began in 1938, it focused on printing positive news and being a champion for African American progress. When Dr. Washington succeeded her aunt, Mildred Brown, in running the paper, she successfully carried this responsibility for over three decades, making the Omaha Star a national landmark.

Dr. Washington was a robust and principled voice for social justice. Through the Omaha Star, she enlightened the public on a variety of matters, including health care, jobs, and education.

Her advocacy has garnered many well-deserved accolades and awards, including recognition by this body in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. She devoted her life to serving the citizens of Omaha, Nebraska, and the impact of her efforts will endure for generations to come.

May God bless Marguerita Washington. May her memory strengthen and comfort all who mourn this remarkable woman.

FIRST COLONY LITTLE LEAGUE

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

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, last Saturday, in the early afternoon, two beautiful words rang out: play ball.

The 2016 First Colony Little League season had begun. All the players are special, but one group stands out. It is called the Dream League.

This is season 9 for the Dream League. 100-plus more players with physical and intellectual challenges played baseball. Each player has at least one volunteer helping them, like Angel in the outfield in this picture to my left.

This picture is what the Dream League is all about, a big ear-to-ear smile for everyone involved. Our Dream League team played in the World Series for Little League in 2015.

America, if you want to see what makes our country so great, come to Sugar Land, Texas. Watch a Dream League game. See kids who are special because of what they can do and not because of what they cannot do.

Batter up.

RENEGOTIATION OF WASSENAAR ARRANGEMENT INTRUSION SOFTWARE CONTROLS

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, today we learned of the Obama administration's decision to renegotiate a set of export controls that could have been hugely detrimental to our national security.

I want to thank President Obama for his leadership on cybersecurity generally and specifically on this issue.

In 2013, Wassenaar member states added intrusion software to the list of export-controlled products. While the addition was well-intentioned, since we certainly do not want companies making a profit selling hacking tools to repressive regimes, the language used was simply too broad and encompassed vital cybersecurity tools and even fundamental vulnerability research.

The plan to renegotiate is the culmination of a months-long process involving industry, a number of agencies, and 124 of my colleagues in this Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, I deeply appreciate the work of the Bureau of Industry and Security in shepherding this process and the National Security Council for pushing for its resolution.

Now, we still have work to do with our international partners, but today is a validation of our ability to come together, government and industry, to address difficult challenges in cybersecurity policy. This is a good news story.

□ 1900

VOICE FOR THE ESSURE SISTERS

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to tell the story of Kendra Kilroy of Quincy, Massachusetts, one of tens of thousands of women harmed by the permanent sterilization device Essure.

Because of Essure, she has lived in debilitating pain. She has lived in anxiety, thinking maybe her doctor was right and her symptoms were really just in her head. She lived in sadness, missing out on field trips, school plays, and a Christmas concert for her children because she was too sick and too tired. Mostly, she lived in anger, finding out that the Essure coil was migrating through her fallopian tube and into her body. She now lives in hope, knowing we have people fighting with and for us to protect so many women from the same fate.

Mr. Speaker, I rise as a voice for the Essure sisters, to tell this Chamber that their stories are real, their pain is real, and their fight is real.

My bill, the E-Free Act, can halt this tragedy by removing this dangerous device from the market. Too many women have been harmed.

I urge my colleagues to join this fight because stories like Kendra's are too important to ignore.

RARE DISEASE DAY

(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, today is Rare Disease Day. It is the reason why I am wearing this special tie given to me by Minnesotan Erica Barnes as part of the Chloe's Fight Rare Disease Foundation's Wear Something Rare campaign.

Now, a rare disease is generally defined as a condition that affects fewer than 200,000 people, and there are approximately 7,000 different types of rare diseases which impact the health of about 30 million Americans, half of which are children.

February 29, a day which is rare in itself, is also set aside to bring awareness and improve access to treatment and medical representation for people living with a rare disease. It is recognized by over 80 countries around the world.

Mr. Speaker, there is more that we can do to help. The House passed the 21st Century Cures Act with strong bipartisan support to help lower barriers to medical innovation and provide critical funding to find cures and treatment for medical afflictions, including rare diseases.

So on this Rare Disease Day, we raise attention to this issue and the need to continue our work to help those who are suffering from rare diseases.

TECHNOLOGY IS THE FUTURE

(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 congratulate Tom Ardolf and Avant-Garde Technology Liberation for the recent win at the International Consumer Electronics Show. The group earned the Health and Wellness Project of the Year from the Consumer Technology Association.

Ardolf and his group designed an impressive home automation system for a woman who is a quadriplegic. Originally, they were asked to create a system that would allow the woman to easily change the volume on her television. Instead, they went above and beyond, creating a system that allows her to control her entire media center, unlock her door, adjust her lighting, and even place phone calls.

Technology's role in the world is rapidly increasing. With the increase, many new frontiers have been discovered and explored. I am proud to represent a State and district that is home to medical innovation.

I am constantly amazed by how technology has the capacity to improve and even save lives. That is exactly what Tom Ardolf and his team demonstrated with this automation system. I applaud their ingenuity.

RECOGNIZING THE GREENFIELD VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of the Greenfield Volunteer Fire Department stationed in Erie County, which has been named Pennsylvania's EMS Agency of the Year.

I am proud to have these dedicated volunteers stationed in Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District. Just 2 years ago, their department only had two active volunteers, two active members. Now they have a team of 25, with an additional 2 junior members.

Responders say 70 percent of their calls are for emergency services and that their department hasn't missed a call in 2 years. Department officials say that they are overjoyed with the support they have received from both the volunteers and their community.

At a time when many volunteer fire departments in my State and across the Nation are shrinking, it is great to see this kind of growth. Mr. Speaker, it is the dedicated men and women, like the volunteers of Greenfield Township, that make our communities across Pennsylvania safe and great places to call home.

Well done, Greenfield Volunteer Fire Department.

NOAA FEES

(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, tomorrow the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration will begin charging New England fishermen new fees—$710 per fishing trip, to be exact—that could destroy an historic industry.

Granite State fishermen—just 10 remaining boat operators—are already struggling under regulations that severely limit their catch. Now fishermen like David Goethel will also be responsible for the cost of Federal contractors who monitor them at sea.

NOAA has always paid these associated costs. The agency has delayed implementation of new fees several times over the years, but somehow NOAA has always found the extra money in its $6 billion budget. In my letter to the chief administrator, I asked where the money is going, and the agency can't account for much of it, nor can they appreciate nor understand the economic impact of its regulations.

The gentleman from Maine (Mr. POLIQUIN) and I introduced legislation to stop NOAA's new fees. An historic way of life and good jobs up and down the New England coast are at stake. I ask for your help.

WE MUST PROTECT OUR ANGELS ABROAD

(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, Peace Corps volunteers are America's angels abroad. These unique volunteers are some of our best diplomats. They travel to the ends of the Earth to spread the message of democracy in lands far, far away.

Sometimes they work alone, and they help in remote regions of the world, areas where most of us could not even locate with Google Maps. They help small villages with sanitation and lack of water, for instance, and they do it all with great passion.

These volunteers are called to serve. However, we must serve and protect these volunteers as well.

Sometimes bad things happen to Peace Corps volunteers overseas. If so, America must help with medical services. We must help with care and counseling if they are assaulted in a foreign country. That is why Congress passed the Kate Puzey Peace Corps Volunteer Protection Act of 2011.

But Congress must continue to advocate for victims in the Peace Corps. We need to make sure that our volunteers with service-related medical conditions and injuries are cared for and compensated both in the field and when they return home to America.

We must protect these angels abroad. After all, Mr. Speaker, they are ambassadors to the world from America.

And that is just the way it is.

RECOGNIZING AMPLIVOX SOUND SYSTEMS

(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 AmpliVox Sound Systems, a small business in Northbrook, Illinois.

The Northbrook Chamber of Commerce recently named AmpliVox Business of the Year for 2016. AmpliVox has been providing the community with innovative sound systems since the 1950s and has grown to become an industry leader. In the past 5 years, the company's revenue grew by over 60 percent.

Most admirably, throughout this growth, the company has not lost sight of the community it serves. CEO Don Roth sets an example for small businesses across the Nation through his integrity, vision, and emphasis on community involvement.

Small businesses like AmpliVox are truly the backbone of our economy and our communities. Unfortunately, backwards Federal regulations are making it harder and harder for small businesses to thrive and create more jobs.

I am committed to doing all that I can in this body to support small businesses and get more people back to work.

Congratulations, again, to AmpliVox Sound Systems and Don Roth. Thank you for representing the Northbrook community with passion and integrity.

SUPPORTING THE LIVE LIKE BELLA CHILDHOOD CANCER FOUNDATION

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge our south Florida community to attend the Live Like Bella Superhero 5K Run/Walk this Saturday, March 5, at 8 a.m. at Zoo Miami, as you can see here.

Bella Rodriguez-Torres was the oldest daughter of Shannah and Raymond, the founders of the Live Like Bella Childhood Cancer Foundation.

Bella was diagnosed with an aggressive type of cancer when she was only 4 years old. Doctors and medical experts only gave her a few months to live, but Bella miraculously lived and courageously fought cancer six times until her death in 2013. During that time, Bella never feared. Instead, Bella encouraged everyone around her to enjoy life and appreciate each moment.

By creating this wonderful organization, Bella's parents and all of their supporters fight pediatric cancer while offering much-needed support for families. I encourage everyone in our community to attend this organization's run on Saturday and help end the number one disease killer of children today.

Let's all support the Live Like Bella Foundation.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JOSEPH ''NORMAN'' O'CLAIR

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

Mr. POLIQUIN. Mr. Speaker, one of our brave American heroes is the late U.S. Army Corporal Joseph O'Clair of Ashland, Maine.

Corporal O'Clair fought for our freedom and was seriously wounded in the brutal month-long Battle of Heartbreak Ridge in Korea.

In November, our congressional office presented Corporal O'Clair with his long-overdue Purple Heart. Sadly, Norm passed away just 2 weeks ago.

Norm was a loving husband, father, and grandfather from a small town in Aroostook County, Maine. He and Lydia were married for more than 61 years and raised five terrific children. After the war, Norm worked alongside two of his three sons at the Fournier Logging and Pinkham Lumber companies. He was an avid outdoorsman, a

terrific woodworker, and a lifelong member of the VFW, Post 9699, in Ashland.

For 240 years, patriotic Americans from small towns across this great country have fought for our freedoms and our way of life. Corporal Joe O'Clair of Ashland, Maine, was among 66,000 courageous veterans throughout Maine's Second Congressional District.

Thank you, Norm, for what you have given us. Your gift will last forever.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY POLICE OFFICER ASHLEY GUINDON

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

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the life of Prince William County Police Officer Ashley Guindon.

Ashley was 28 years old. She was shot and killed while responding to a domestic disturbance in Woodbridge, Virginia, on her first day on the job. She had just been sworn in the previous day, and the incident occurred only 90 minutes into her first training shift. She also had been serving her country and community as a member of the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve.

She was a gifted and skilled officer, and this great sense of service that she had to her country and her community will be so missed by her family, friends, and colleagues on the force.

Twenty-eight years old. She represented the best of our youth, and her tragic murder is a reminder of the sacrifices that law enforcement in my district, in all of Virginia, and throughout our country make every day. We honor her service and her sacrifice and that of all of our dedicated, selfless law enforcement officers. They deserve our honor and respect every day.

I also ask that we continue to pray for her fellow officers, Jesse Hempen and David McKeown, who were also shot during this incident, and we pray for their full recovery.

□ 1915

SUPREME COURT VACANCY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor and a privilege for me to once again stand on the floor of the House of Representatives along with my distinguished colleague from Ohio, Representative JOYCE BEATTY, coanchor of this CBC Special Order hour, this hour of power where, for the next 60 minutes, we will have an opportunity to speak directly to the American people about an issue of grave importance to the integrity of our democracy, and that is making sure that the United States Senate fulfills their constitutional obligation to advise and consent as it relates to considering any Supreme Court nomination that President Obama sends up to that body.

We know that Justice Antonin Scalia has moved on after a long and distinguished career. Though I disagree with almost every single judicial opinion that he has issued, he served this Nation well.

Now that he has moved on, the Supreme Court, which is contained in Article III of the United States Constitution, has a vacancy. It is the obligation of the United States Senate to fill that vacancy by considering whatever nominee President Barack Obama sends forward.

Members of the United States Senate take an oath of office to faithfully discharge their responsibilities. When you look at Article II, section 2, of the United States Constitution, which gives the President the power to nominate someone to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court, it is the Senate that must consider that nominee.

Since the early part of the 20th century, there have been eight different Supreme Court nominees who have been voted on in an election year. Six of them actually were confirmed, but all eight of them received a hearing.

So, for the life of me, I can't figure out why Senator MITCH MCCONNELL thinks that he can get away with holding a nomination up without even the slightest bit of consideration. So we are going to explore that here today.

We will be joined by any number of distinguished Members of the House of Representatives and the Congressional Black Caucus, but let me proceed by yielding to my good friend and colleague from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY), my dynamic coanchor who does such a tremendous job on behalf of the people of the great State of Ohio and the city of Columbus.

Mrs. BEATTY. Thank you so much, Congressman JEFFRIES. It is certainly an honor and a privilege for me to join you this evening as coanchor for this Congressional Black Caucus Special Order hour.

Congressman JEFFRIES' scholarship and distinguished talents as a member of the Judiciary Committee have not gone unnoticed. I thank him for leading by example in challenging us to initiate and follow through in sending a message on Senate Republicans' refusal to act on the Supreme Court vacancy.

In part, tonight's Congressional Black Caucus Special Order hour, Senate Republicans: Do Your Job, does just that.

As you reflected in your opening statement, Article II, section 2, of the Constitution expressly designates that the President has a duty to name and the Senate has a responsibility to advise and consent a nominee to fill the seat.

President Obama takes this very seriously. He has stated: "It's a decision to which I devote considerable time, deep reflection, careful deliberation, and serious consultation with legal experts, members of both political parties, and people across the political spectrum."

But Republicans have made a decision to completely refuse consideration of anyone that President Obama nominates to the Supreme Court. In fact, they have stated that they won't hold a hearing or a vote before the full Senate.

Senate Democrats never acted so recklessly when faced with this situation in 1988, when there was a vote to confirm Justice Kennedy. There was no talk of doing nothing until after that year's election because it was unthinkable then to leave the Court shorthanded for that long. And it remains so now.

The power of the Court, Mr. Speaker, is reflected in the work it does. Its decisions often shape the policy as profoundly as any law passed by Congress or any action taken by the President of these United States.

When we look back to our history, especially as African Americans, the importance of the decisions handed down by the Supreme Court cannot be overstated.

For example, most of us are familiar with Brown v. Board of Education in 1954, which reversed Plessy v. Ferguson and its "separate but equal" ruling.

Striking down segregation in our Nation's public schools provided a major catalyst for the civil rights movement and made advances in desegregating housing, public accommodations, and institutions of higher education possible.

After Brown, the Nation made some great strides towards opening the doors of education to all students. Unfortunately, the promise of the Brown decision remains unfulfilled in many ways.

More than 2 million Black students attend schools where 90 percent of the student body is made up of minority students. On average, schools serving more minority populations have less experienced, lower paid teachers who are less likely to be certified.

A report from the Center for American Progress found that a 10 percent point increase in students of color at a school is associated with a decrease in per-pupil spending of $75.

In many ways, more than 60 years after Brown v. Board of Education school systems in the United States are still separate and unequal. And we are just not witnessing educational disparities at the elementary and secondary education level. College enrollment is racially polarized.

White students are overrepresented in selective colleges, which have more resources to educate and to support them, while African American students are overrepresented in less selective institutions.

Mr. Speaker and Congressman JEFFRIES, you see where I am going with that.

This is also why the late Justice Scalia's comments during oral arguments of the pending United States Supreme Court case, Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin, were so disturbing.

He stated, in part: Maybe the University of Texas ought to have fewer African Americans.

These comments are inaccurate and insulting to me and to African Americans. They undervalue the historic achievement that African Americans have made.

Thousands of Black Americans have excelled to the top tier of their universities. Many of them you will hear from tonight because they are members of the Congressional Black Caucus.

They are scholars. They are the conscience of the Congress. They represent the diversity of America's best universities and of America's Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank the distinguished gentlewoman for her wonderful thoughts and observations, and I look forward to our continued dialogue.

It is now my honor and privilege to yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT), one of those individuals that Representative BEATTY mentioned who is really a legal giant amongst us.

He is someone who has served this institution well. He understands the Constitution, the notion of separation of powers, and the importance of a fair and equitable justice system.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. I thank the gentleman from New York and the gentlewoman from Ohio for organizing tonight's Special Order to call on our colleagues in the Senate to do their job and provide their advice and consent on the President's upcoming nomination to the United States Supreme Court.

The Constitution is pretty clear on this issue. Article II, Section 2, doesn't say the President might or the President should. It says the President shall nominate, and by and with advice and consent of the Senate, appoint judges to the Supreme Court.

There seems to be some suggestion that, if it is an election year, he ought to skip that process and let the next President make the appointment. They say there is very little precedence for a President nominating somebody in an election year.

That might be technically correct, but the fact of the matter is that there have been virtually no vacancies that have occurred during an election year. I think the last one was about almost 50 years. In that case, an appointment was made and considered.

That is the process that ought to take place in this case. The rarity of such an event should not preclude the Senate from fulfilling its constitutional responsibility. There is precedent for the President nominating and the Senate at least considering the nomination during an election year.

Now, Justice Kennedy was confirmed in an election year in 1988. That was a 7-month process that began with the appointment of Robert Bork to the Supreme Court. His nomination was considered and defeated.

And then there was the appointment of Douglas Ginsburg. We will just say his nomination went up in smoke. And then we had the nomination and confirmation of Justice Kennedy.

In 7 months, from start to finish, another nomination was made and collapsed and another nomination made, all within 7 months. We could complete that entire process by the first Monday in October, the beginning of the Supreme Court session.

There is no precedence for the President declining to nominate somebody and virtually no precedence for the Senate just to ignore a nomination that is made.

The people overwhelmingly reelected President Obama in 2012 to a term that does not end until January 20, 2017, and we fully expect the President to fulfill his duty to nominate a qualified individual to the Supreme Court to fill the current vacancy.

A failure of the Senate to act this year would be unprecedented. There is ample time for that to take place. The longest confirmation process for a single nominee has been 125 days.

On historic average, it takes 25 days to confirm or reject a nominee. As of today, the Senate has 216 days until the first Monday in October.

If the Senate were to refuse to consider any of President Obama's nominations—and they have said they want the next President to make the appointment—there has been no indication that they will give expedited consideration to the next President's nomination. It could be well into the next year by the time the new Justice is confirmed and sworn in.

Even on an expedited schedule, the new President would not be able to nominate anyone until they are sworn in on January 20. The Senate Judiciary Committee would need time to prepare for hearings, which could not occur until probably February. And then the full Senate would need time to consider the nomination, with the confirmation not likely until probably March.

□ 1930

Now, by March of a term, the term is effectively about over. Most of the oral arguments have already taken place and they are into decisions. You can't participate in a decision if you skip the oral argument.

So not only would the vacancy occur through the rest of this term, almost half of a Supreme Court term, it would be well into the next term and, effectively, through most of the next term.

There is no excuse to leave the Court vacancy open in what then would be a historic new precedence. There is no precedence for keeping a vacancy open that long.

We need the justice appointed. The Senate ought to do its job. The President has indicated that he will do his job, as mandated by the Constitution, and so the Senate ought to just fulfill its responsibility under the Constitution and consider an appointment. Otherwise, you will have a vacancy not only through the rest of this term—and oral arguments have been taking place—you will have the vacancy through the rest of this term. You don't need a vacancy through the entire rest of the next term.

There is plenty of time to consider and vote up or down on a nomination. And the unprecedented vacancy that would occur if the Senate fulfills its threat to stonewall any nomination is just unprecedented.

So I want to thank the gentleman from New York and the gentlewoman from Ohio for giving us the opportunity to just say a word about the importance of everyone in our democracy fulfilling their constitutional responsibilities.

The President shall appoint, and the Senate shall consider, advise and consent, so that we can have a Supreme Court Justice appointed before the first Monday in October.

We have plenty of time to do that. There is no excuse for not doing it, and we expect the Senate to do its job.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Virginia for highlighting several important points, including the fact that there is no election year exception in Article II, section 2 of the United States Constitution.

This is all in MITCH MCCONNELL's mind, cooked up in some partisan laboratory in order to stop this President from being able to move forward and do the business of the American people.

We shouldn't be surprised, because we know MITCH MCCONNELL stated very early on that his objective was to grind everything to a halt here in the Capitol to try to prevent President Obama from being re-elected. Not my words, his words.

But here's the thing. President Obama was re-elected in an electoral college landslide. And his opponent in that race, Mitt Romney, tried to make it, in part, an election that was a referendum on the possibility that President Obama would have the opportunity to fill a Supreme Court vacancy.

That issue was laid before the American people by President Obama's opponent, and the American people responded, processed all of the facts, and decided to re-elect President Obama, send him back to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

The American people did their job. The President is prepared to do his job. The Senate Republicans need to do their job as well.

It is now my honor and my privilege to yield to someone who has been a stalwart for justice in this institution, a revered Member of the House of Representatives, the great whip of House Democrats, and someone who has the respect of everyone in the United

States Capitol and beyond for his service to the House and his service to the country, a great friend to the Congressional Black Caucus, and we are so thankful that he is present here today.

I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the Democratic whip.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES) for his excellent presentation.

I want to thank Mr. SCOTT, who, as the gentleman observed, is one of the leaders in this Congress on the Constitution and on the law and on equal justice.

I want to thank my friend from Ohio, the gentlewoman from Ohio, for her remarks.

I noticed that the chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, Mr. G.K. BUTTERFIELD, formerly a judge on the Court in North Carolina, is here.

Mr. Speaker, I want to first say that I thank the Congressional Black Caucus for sponsoring this Special Order.

I want to tell every Member, and all Americans ought to know, this is not an issue related to one group, to one gender, to one race, to one nationality. The failure to fill the vacancy on the Supreme Court will affect every American. So we rise tonight to ask the Senate to do its duty.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be here on the floor this evening with my distinguished colleagues from the Congressional Black Caucus for this Special Order.

The Supreme Court now has a vacancy, as everyone knows, that must be filled. The American people deserve a Supreme Court operating at full strength.

Mr. Speaker, I am old enough to have been alive at the time that John Kennedy was assassinated. Within hours of his death, we swore in Lyndon Johnson as President of the United States because we wanted to make sure that there was a continuity of service. As sad and as tragic as those hours were, the responsibility of having a President of the United States was met within just a few hours.

Mr. Speaker, when a vacancy occurs in this House—and there are, after all, 434 of us left when that happens—the State laws put a time limit on the Governors' action to call an election so that that vacancy can be filled.

Why?

Because the Constitution of those States do not want to have a vacancy exist for very long and have their State or their district not represented.

Now, there is not a time limit with respect to the Supreme Court, per se. And the reason for that, of course, is the process, as Mr. SCOTT just pointed out, sometimes take a little longer, sometimes takes a little shorter.

But in 7 months, as the gentleman pointed out, they had three nominees considered. Two were defeated after debate and a vote, and the third was confirmed. The process worked, and it worked in the last year of an administration.

President Obama has a constitutional responsibility to nominate a candidate for the Court that will exercise sound judgment, uphold the principle that all people are created equal and must be treated equally under the laws.

The Founders of our country very wisely made the number on the Supreme Court an odd number, not an even number, because the Founders did not want gridlock. Now we are used to gridlock in this Congress. But they did not want gridlock on the Court, and so they provided for a decision to be made by five members out of nine.

Now, however, with four and four, they will maybe not be able to make a decision. That was not contemplated by the Founders, nor would it have been welcomed by the Founders.

Shamefully, Senate Republicans have said they have no intention of even meeting with a nominee put forward by President Obama. That is not only disrespectful of the President of the United States, Barack Obama, but it is contrary to the best interest of the Supreme Court, but more importantly, to the people of this country.

It is appalling that Republicans would prefer to leave a vacancy on the Supreme Court, thereby rendering it in some cases unable to make a decision, unable to perform its duties of being the final arbiter when circuits may differ on an issue.

If Members of one party or another were simply to ignore the other side and refuse to carry out their duties within a divided government, our democracy would break down, and in some respects it has.

We ought not to carry that conduct to the Supreme Court. We must not let that happen and we must not allow this Supreme Court vacancy to remain unfilled.

The Court currently has a number, as the gentleman from New York has pointed out, of major cases pending that require a decision; not to be remanded to a lower court, because if that is done, that judgment may stand for that circuit, but there will be other circuits around the country who may make a different decision.

Mr. Speaker, the Supreme Court has been a powerful safeguard of American's liberty and equality over the past century and beyond.

From recognizing the right of every child to attend desegregated schools, to protecting every loving couple who wishes to marry, the Court has breathed life into the words of our Declaration of Independence that all are ''created equal, and they are endowed by their Creator,'' not by us, not by the Constitution, ''by their Creator with certain unalienable rights.''

That may be self-evident, Mr. Speaker, but it is not self-executed. And we have established the Supreme Court of the United States to make a decision so that that can be realized.

Melissa Hart, Director of the Byron White Center, a former member of the Supreme Court for Constitutional Law at the University of Denver said, if we don't act, ''It would be a monumental crisis for the development of the law and the need to resolve legal questions.''

Caroline Frederickson, president of the American Constitution Society for Law and Policy, wrote on February 19, ''It would be unfathomable to go through this term,'' and as Mr. SCOTT pointed out, the next term, ''with a Supreme Court hobbled by a vacancy.''

Mr. Speaker, let me remind you again, if a President dies, immediately we fill the vacancy. If a Member of Congress dies, every State has a time limit in which that must be filled so that democracy can be represented and operate in the way our Founders wanted it to operate.

When the President nominates a candidate to the Court, the Senate, in my view, Mr. Speaker, has a responsibility under the Constitution to give that nominee every due consideration. They do not have a constitutional responsibility to approve it, as Mr. SCOTT has pointed out, but they have a responsibility to consider it.

We must not allow politics, we must not allow politics, we must not allow politics to allow the obstruction of this most essential institution of our democracy and the rule of law.

I want to thank my friends in the Congressional Black Caucus for leading this Special Order and for their efforts to hold Senate Republicans accountable for their blatantly irresponsible action on this matter.

Mr. Speaker, there is always another election. It may be 2 years away, it may be 4 years away, but if we adopt the principle that if we don't think we can win now, we will obstruct now and hope to win later, America and Americans will not be well-served.

I thank my friend for yielding.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished Democratic whip for a very insightful and powerful observation, for pointing that the very fabric of the United States Constitution is threatened by the willingness of Senate Republicans to abdicate their legislative responsibilities to hold hearings and act on a nomination put forth by the President of the United States of America.

□ 1945

It is now my great honor and privilege to yield to the distinguished chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, as was pointed out by Mr. HOYER, a former prominent member of the North Carolina judiciary, a legal scholar, a historian, and, of course, the leader of the conscience of the Congress here in the United States House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the chairman, G.K. BUTTERFIELD.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, let me begin tonight by thanking the gentleman, Mr. JEFFRIES, for yielding to

me this evening and to thank him for his extraordinary friendship and leadership in the Congressional Black Caucus.

I want to publicly thank you for coming to my district this past weekend. You spoke—some would say you preached—at Mount Vernon Baptist Church in Durham, North Carolina, and I thank you so very much for the message that you brought to my constituents in North Carolina.

Mr. Speaker, moments after the death of Justice Scalia, the majority leader of the United States Senate announced to the country in a tone of defiance that the Senate will not consider any nomination—any nomination—of President Barack Obama to replace Justice Scalia. Mr. Speaker, the American people can see right through this.

Though I represent a Democratic-leaning district in North Carolina, I represent many Republicans in North Carolina. Many of them have told me how disappointed they are with the Senate Republican leadership in making this announcement. Senator MCCONNELL is reinforcing the Republican political agenda to disrupt—to disrupt—governmental functions when the circumstances do not line up with their conservative philosophy.

It is imperative that we have nine members of the U.S. Supreme Court deciding constitutional issues that are important to the American people. The irony in all of this is that my Republican friends constantly on this floor talk about strict construction of the Constitution. A strict construction of the Constitution, as Mr. HOYER said a moment ago, requires the President to nominate an individual once there is a vacancy on the Court. The Senate, the United States Senate, has the awesome responsibility of having a hearing, deciding, and confirming the nomination by an up-or-down vote. So it is absurd to suggest that President Obama should be denied the opportunity to nominate a qualified Justice to replace Justice Scalia.

The American people should clearly understand that Senate Republicans have a political agenda to pack the Court with conservative Justices who would reverse years of commonsense progressive jurisprudence. So the Congressional Black Caucus tonight demands Senate Republicans to stop the complete blockade and the blatant disrespect of our President.

Senate Republicans' outright refusal to hold a hearing on any individual nominated by the President to serve on the Court is an affront to our Constitution and the American people. Such divisive actions undermine our democracy and reduce our standing in the world. This blockade is an obstruction and runs afoul of the duties held by those who hold a seat in the august Chamber of the United States Senate.

I have read that Senator GRASSLEY, Senator MCCONNELL, and others will meet with President Obama this week. I hope they meet. I hope they sit together and reconcile their differences because this issue needs to be put to rest. We call on Senate Republicans to hold hearings once President Obama submits his nomination and follow the procedures set forth in the Constitution.

In short and in closing, the Congressional Black Caucus, the 45, 46 members of the Congressional Black Caucus—and, indeed, the American people—have one message—one message—for Senate Republicans: Do your job. Don't play partisanship. Don't play a partisan game with the Supreme Court of the United States of America. It is too serious. It is too important.

Thank you very much, Mr. JEFFRIES.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank the distinguished chair for pointing out that this is a simple question for Senate Republicans: Do your job consistent with your obligations and responsibilities under Article II, section 2 of the United States Constitution.

The Senate Republicans' failure to act or consider any nominee put forth by the President of the United States of America is an abdication of responsibility, a dereliction of duty, and it would be a stunning act of legislative malpractice that undermines the rule of law, the Presidency, the Supreme Court, the United States Constitution, as well as the American people.

I am thankful now to be joined by someone who is a powerful voice for the voiceless here in the House of Representatives, who has ably served her constituents in northern California and consistently fought for a fair, equitable society. Let me now yield to my good friend, the distinguished gentlewoman from California, Representative BARBARA LEE.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, let me thank the gentleman from New York for yielding, but also for his tremendous leadership.

You and Congresswoman JOYCE BEATTY from Ohio really have sounded the alarm, beat the drum, and really brought to the American people the important issues that we are dealing with each and every day, so I just have to thank you for your diligence and for staying the course. Every week you are here, you are representing not only this Congress, but the country very, very well. So thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today with all my colleagues from the Congressional Black Caucus, with our whip, Mr. HOYER, and others to urge our Republican colleagues in the Senate to, of course, do your job.

Also, let me just remind us, once again, the President is trying to meet his constitutional obligation once again. He is trying to do what he is supposed to do, and that is to nominate Justice Scalia's replacement to our Nation's highest Court. And Senate Republicans have a constitutional responsibility to give the President's nominee a speedy and fair hearing, followed up with a simple up-or-down vote.

Sadly, these Senate Republicans said ''no'' to their constitutional responsibility. The Supreme Court has a huge responsibility of deciding cases that impact every aspect of American life, from our elections, college admissions, to scientific patents and a woman's right to make her own healthcare decisions. It is imperative that the Supreme Court be allowed to function in its full capacity with nine Justices.

Former Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, who was appointed by a conservative President, President Ronald Reagan, did not mince words in her condemnation of Republicans playing politics with the Court. She said: ''We need somebody in there to do the job and just get on with it.''

Former Justice O'Connor, I could not agree more.

Despite the calls for action and a constitutional mandate, Senate Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL of Kentucky has said that there will be no hearings, no votes, not even a meeting with President Obama to discuss the late Justice Scalia's replacement.

That is just wrong. His actions prompted The New York Times to editorialize that he ''seems to have lost touch with reality and the Constitution,'' speaking of Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a couple of New York Times articles.

[From the New York Times, Feb. 17, 2016]

BLACKS SEE BIAS IN DELAY ON A SCALIA SUCCESSOR

(By Maggie Haberman and Jonathan Martin)

CHARLESTON, SC.—As he left Martha Lou's Kitchen, a soul food institution here on Wednesday, Edward Gadsden expressed irritation about the Republican determination to block President Obama from selecting Justice Antonin Scalia's replacement on the Supreme Court.

''They've been fighting that man since he's been there,'' Mr. Gadsden, who is African-American, said of Mr. Obama, before pointing at his forearm to explain what he said was driving the Republican opposition: ''The color of his skin, that's all, the color of his skin.''

When Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, the majority leader, said after Mr. Scalia's death on Saturday that the next president, rather than Mr. Obama, should select a successor, the senator's words struck a familiar and painful chord with many black voters.

After years of watching political opponents question the president's birthplace and his faith, and hearing a member of Congress shout ''You lie!'' at him from the House floor, some African-Americans saw the move by Senate Republicans as another attempt to deny the legitimacy of the country's first black president. And they call it increasingly infuriating after Mr. Obama has spent seven years in the White House and won two resounding election victories.

''Our president, the president of the United States, has been disrespected from Day 1,'' Carol Richardson, 61, said on Wednesday as she colored a customer's hair at Ultra Beauty Saloh in Hollywood, S.C., a mostly black town near Charleston. ''The words that have been said, the things the Republicans have done they'd have never have done to another president. Let's talk like it is, it's because of his skin color.''

Reflecting on the Supreme Court vacancy, Bakari Sellers, a former state representative from Denmark, S.C., likened the Senate treatment of the president to the 18th century constitutional compromise that counted black men as equivalent to three-fifths of a person.

''I guess many of them are using this in the strictest construction that Barack Obama's serving three-fifths of a term or he's three-fifths of a human being, so he doesn't get to make this choice,'' Mr. Sellers said. ''It's infuriating.''

The anger and outrage that Mr. McConnell's position has touched off among African-Americans could have implications for the presidential election. Leading African-American Democrats are trying to use it to motivate rank-and-file blacks to vote in November, the first presidential election in a decade in which Mr. Obama will not be on the ballot and in which Democrats fear black participation could drop.

''Anger becomes action when it's directly tied to a moment, and the moment now is the election on Nov. 8,'' said Stacey Abrams, a Democratic state representative from Georgia and the House minority leader there, adding that Mr. Scalia's death meant that this presidential campaign could no longer be construed as a mere ''thought exercise.''

For Hillary Clinton, who is increasingly relying on nonwhite voters to ensure her success against Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, the court issue could be especially crucial. Should she defeat Mr. Sanders, who has electrified many liberals, she will need a motivating issue to bring Mr. Obama's loyalists to the polls. She moved swiftly Tuesday to tap into the anger of blacks over the opposition of Senate Republicans to Mr. Obama's naming a replacement for Justice Scalia.

''Now the Republicans say they'll reject anyone President Obama nominates no matter how qualified,'' Mrs. Clinton said in remarks before a predominantly black audience in Harlem. ''Some are even saying he doesn't have the right to nominate anyone! As if somehow he's not the real president.''

Doing so, Mrs. Clinton added, is in keeping with a longstanding pattern of mistreatment.

''They demonize President Obama and encourage the ugliest impulses of the paranoid fringe,'' she said. ''This kind of hatred and bigotry has no place in our politics or our country.''

Republicans are especially sensitive about the notion that they are diminishing Mr. Obama because of his race, and spokesmen for several Republican senators, including Mr. McConnell and Senator Tim Scott of South Carolina, declined to comment or would not make the senators available for comment.

The suggestion that racism is playing a role angers Mr. McConnell's friends, who point out that his formative political experience was working for a Republican senator who supported civil rights, that he helped override President Ronald Reagan's veto of sanctions against the apartheid government in South Africa and that he is married to an Asian-American woman.

But in the aftermath of Mr. McConnell's statement on Saturday, a growing chorus of black voices is complaining that such a refusal to even consider a Supreme Court nominee would never occur with a white president.

''It's more than a political motive—it has a smell of racism,'' said Representative G. K. Butterfield, Democrat of North Carolina, the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus.

''I can tick instance after instance over the last seven years where Republicans have purposely tried to diminish the president's authority,'' Mr. Butterfield said. ''This is just really extreme, and leads me to the conclusion that if this was any other president who was not African-American, it would not have been handled this way.''

Even as Mr. Obama's popularity has risen and fallen, his base of support among black voters has been unshakable. A Gallup tracking poll this month showed that some 85 percent of African-Americans approved of the president's performance compared with only 36 percent of whites. And many African-Americans strongly identify personally with Mr. Obama, and have watched his tenure with pride.

Mr. Butterfield said that he believed that the effort to undermine, and even delegitimize, Mr. Obama began soon after he was sworn in, and that Congressional Republicans had blocked Mr. Obama's agenda wherever they could. Even more stinging were the suggestions from some on the right that Mr. Obama, a Christian, is actually a Muslim and that he was not born in the United States.

In interviews, members of the Congressional Black Caucus also bitterly recounted indignities, such as demands—most pointedly from the current Republican front-runner in the polls, Donald J. Trump, in 2011—that Mr. Obama prove he was born in Hawaii, and not in Kenya, as some critics claimed. Others recalled the calls to impeach Mr. Obama over his use of executive authority.

''You hear the thing about: 'He's not a citizen. He oversteps his bounds. He's divisive.' One thing after another,'' said Representative Marcia L. Fudge, Democrat of Ohio. ''This has been going on since the day he was elected in 2008.''

Republicans have had more success than Democrats in recent decades galvanizing their voters over who should control the courts. But Jennifer McClellan, a member of the Virginia House of Delegates and the Democratic National Committee, said the dispute over how to replace Justice Scalia could now become ''an issue for the average citizen.''

Ms. Abrams agreed, saying the Supreme Court and its powerful influence on people's lives is especially resonant with blacks. ''Congress is denying our president his rights as a president, but, more than that, they're denying the legacy of his presidency,'' she said. ''That will animate Democratic voters across the board but especially African-Americans, who realize more than many voters how great an impact the Supreme Court can have on freedom.''

[From the New York Times, Feb. 24, 2016]

SENATE REPUBLICANS LOSE THEIR MINDS ON A SUPREME COURT SEAT

(By the Editorial Board)

Following the death of Justice Antonin Scalia, Senate Republicans apparently believe they can profit by creating a political crisis that the nation has never seen before. On Tuesday, the leadership doubled down on its refusal to take any action on any nominee from President Obama to replace Justice Scalia.

Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, the majority leader who seems to have lost touch with reality and the Constitution, accused Mr. Obama of plunging the nation into a ''bitter and avoidable struggle'' should he name anyone to the court.

Forget an up-or-down vote on the Senate floor. Top Republicans are pledging not to hold hearings or even to meet with a nominee.

In a statement dripping with sarcasm, Mr. McConnell said that Mr. Obama ''has every right to nominate someone,'' and ''even if doing so will inevitably plunge our nation into another bitter and avoidable struggle, that is his right. Even if he never expects that nominee to actually be confirmed but rather to wield as an electoral cudgel, that is his right.''

Senator John Cornyn of Texas, the majority whip, said, ''We believe the American people need to decide who is going to make this appointment rather than a lame-duck president.''

These statements are so twisted that it's hard to know where to begin. Let's take them one by one.

First, Mr. Obama is not a ''lame-duck president.'' The lame-duck period is broadly understood to run from after the November election until a new president is inaugurated in January. November is more than eight months off. Based on the average number of days it has taken the Senate to act on previous Supreme Court nominees, the seat could be filled by this spring.

Second, no matter how often Republicans repeat the phrase ''let the people decide,'' that's not how the system works. The Constitution vests the power to make nominations to the court in the president, not ''the people.'' In any case, the people have already decided who should make this appointment: They elected Mr. Obama twice, by large margins.

Third, it is preposterous to accuse Mr. Obama of causing a ''bitter struggle'' by nominating someone who will not be confirmed. The only reason a nominee would not be confirmed is that the Senate has preemptively decided to block any nominee sight unseen. Mr. Obama is once again the only adult in the room, carrying out his constitutional obligation while Senate Republicans scramble to dig up examples of Democrats trying to block nominees. But those examples show only that Democratic senators have pushed hard for Republican presidents to pick ideologically moderate nominees. Until now, neither party has ever vowed to shut down the nomination process entirely, even before it has begun.

Only two Republican senators, Mark Kirk of Illinois and Susan Collins of Maine, were brave enough to say that they would vote on President Obama's nominee. This is what passes for moderation in today's G.O.P.: simply stating a willingness to do the job you were elected to do.

Unfortunately, for too many Republicans moderation now equals apostasy. These Republicans have stubbornly parked themselves so far to the right for so many years that it is hard to tell whether they can hear how deranged they sound.

The truth is they are afraid—and they should be. They know Mr. Obama has a large pool of extremely smart and thoroughly mainstream candidates from which to choose a nominee. They know that if the American people were allowed to hear such a person answer questions in a Senate hearing, they would wonder what all the fuss was about.

So Mr. McConnell and his colleagues plan to shut their doors, plug their ears and hope the public doesn't notice. The Republican spin machine is working overtime to rationalize this behavior. Don't be fooled. It is panic masquerading as strength.

Ms. LEE. One of the titles of these articles is ''Blacks See Bias in Delay on a Scalia Successor.'' The other is The New York Times article, ''Senate Republicans Lose Their Minds on a Supreme Court Seat.''

Likewise, Judiciary Committee Chair CHARLES GRASSLEY of Iowa led a letter to the majority leader signed by all the Republican Committee members confirming their resolve to not have hearings or a vote on the nominee.

This is downright ludicrous. Republicans cannot and should not use the Supreme Court to push their radical political agenda.

The Constitution is clear, Mr. Speaker. Article II, section 2, ''He shall have power, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate . . . shall appoint ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, Judges of the Supreme Court.''

Nowhere in the Constitution does it say, ''except in an election year'' or ''except when the President is a Democrat'' or ''when Republicans have spent the last 7 years actively working to subvert every policy proposed by a President elected by nearly 70 million Americans.'' The Constitution doesn't say that. This is simply unacceptable, and the American people deserve better.

For more than a century, every single Supreme Court nominee has received a vote on the floor of the United States Senate. Just like all the Presidents before him, President Obama should nominate a Supreme Court Justice, and the Senate should determine if he or she is fit to serve on this Nation's High Court.

Instead, Republicans are holding the Supreme Court and the American people hostage.

Their action, in the words of The New York Times, is simply, ''panic masquerading as strength.'' The Senate has a responsibility to at least consider the President's Supreme Court nominee, and by refusing to do so, they are failing their constituents and their Nation.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is really past time for Majority Leader MCCONNELL and the rest of the Republican leadership to do their jobs and work together to get a new Supreme Court Justice. The Supreme Court is way too important to be used as a political bargaining chip. Enough is enough.

So, once again, I join my colleagues, Congressman JEFFRIES, Congresswoman BEATTY, members of the Congressional Black Caucus, and the American people in saying, ''Do your job.''

Once again, thank you for giving me the opportunity to join with you tonight.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank the distinguished gentlewoman from California for making several important points as it relates to the absence of any partisanship exception in the United States Constitution, the absence of any exception whereby the Senate will do its job unless, of course, President Barack Obama happens to occupy 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. I see that nowhere within the four corners of the United States Constitution. I don't see an election year exception in the United States Constitution. So I am perplexed as to what is the situation we find ourselves in right now.

I thought that I may ask the distinguished gentlewoman, my colleague, my coanchor from Ohio, to reflect upon, if you might, a few comments that could shed light on the situation we find ourselves in right now as it relates to the Supreme Court vacancy made by Senate Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL over the years during his time here in Congress.

In 1986, MITCH MCCONNELL said: ''I believe that a heavy burden must be met by those who would have this nominee rejected. Under the Constitution, our duty is to provide advice and consent to judicial nominations, not to substitute our judgment for what are reasonable views for a judicial nominee to hold.'' That was in 1986.

Then in 1990, he said: ''It is clear under our form of government that the advice and consent role of the Senate in judicial nominations should not be politicized.'' That was MITCH MCCONNELL in 1990.

In 2005, he said: ''Our job is to react to that nomination in a respectful and dignified way, and at the end of the process, to give that person an up-or-down vote as all nominees who have majority support have gotten throughout the history of the country.''

I am trying to figure out what has changed, Representative BEATTY.

Mrs. BEATTY. Thank you so much, Congressman JEFFRIES.

Hearing you quote those things, three things come to mind. First, let me say that Congressman STENY HOYER was absolutely right when he says that this issue of not filling the vacancy is not related to only one group. So I want to say, after hearing what you said and many others of our members of the Congressional Black Caucus, it is important for us to know why we are calling on the Senate Republicans to do their job, and that is because we are the voice for those who are not often represented. We are the voice for those when you talk about issues related to women and women's rights, when you talk about issues that are related to things that affect you and me, and when you talk about the article that Congresswoman BARBARA LEE entered into the RECORD, ''Blacks See Bias in Delay on a Scalia Successor.''

Now, that article says it all. That article specifically states that many folks believe, in this wonderful America that we live in, that it is also because of the color of his skin. I think that is another reason that we come as a strong 46 members of the Congressional Black Caucus, because the facts work against them.

Think about it. When we look at the number of people who have been appointed, when we look at the number of days, if you look at since 1975, it has only taken an average of 67 days to confirm a President's nominee to the Supreme Court. The Senate has never taken more than 125 days to vote on a Supreme Court nominee, and there are 325 days left in President Obama's term.

□ 2000

Since the early 1900s, six Supreme Court Justices have been confirmed in an election year. When I think about your question and I think about your sharing with us some of the comments that Senate Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL has said, let me add this one to the RECORD. And it is something he got right.

He said that the American people should have the right to choose the President who will pick the next Supreme Court Justice deciding the future balance of the Nation's highest court. Well, he got that right. Because you know what. The people did pick the President when they picked President Barack Obama in 2012, who won the election by 5 million votes.

I am calling on him and the Senate Republicans to do their job, to allow the President to do what the Constitution tells us, to allow the President, who has already said that he is going to bring somebody who is full of scholarship, he is going to bring someone who is committed and capable to doing the people's work—I wanted to add that to your statement and share with everyone tonight that is why we are here.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I really appreciate that.

As we are simply trying to point out, all we are asking for is for the Senate to adhere to its constitutional responsibilities and, when the President sends forth a nominee, to conduct a rigorous hearing process before the American people and then, at the end of that process, provide that nominee with an up-or-down vote before the Judiciary Committee and then, ultimately, the floor of the United States Senate.

Now, I have been in this institution for a little over 3 years. If I had a dollar for every time some of my colleagues mentioned strict adherence to the United States Constitution, I would be a billionaire right now. For the life of me, I can't understand what is so complicated about this particular issue.

As Representative BEATTY so ably pointed out, from this moment, there are 325 days remaining in the Presidency of Barack Obama.

As this chart illustrates, if you just take a look at the current occupants of the Supreme Court, Justice Roberts, the Chief Justice, the most important position on the Supreme Court, a 23-day confirmation process; Justice Scalia, confirmed in 85 days; Justice Kagan, 87 days; Justice Sotomayor, 66 days; Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, a/k/a the notorious RBG—one of my personal favorites—50 days; Justice Clarence Thomas, 99 days.

You can add some of these confirmation periods together and you still wouldn't get to 325. So what is the problem?

Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining on my Special Order today?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York has 12 minutes remaining.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, one of the concerns that I think we in the Congressional Black Caucus have as it relates to the Presidency of President Obama—and Representative BEATTY pointed this out—is that there is a feeling in many corners of America that this President is treated differently.

I am not sure if it is because there are some people here in the Capitol who have something against folks from Hawaii. I am not sure if it is his Kansas roots. I don't know if they dislike the fact that he was a community organizer in terms of one of the jobs that he held after school.

I don't know if they dislike the fact that he is so well educated from Columbia and Harvard Law Schools. I don't know if it is the fact that he was the President of the Harvard Law Review or a constitutional law professor at the University of Chicago Law School, one of the top five law schools in this country.

I don't really know what it is about Barack Obama that they want to treat him differently than almost any other President who has served at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. I am trying to figure it out. What is it about Barack Obama that he has to be treated with such disrespect?

The amazing thing to me is that they have actually failed to stop this President. They gave him no assistance as it relates to trying to turn the economy around.

He inherited a train wreck from George W. Bush and has gotten the economy back on track. Not a single Member from the other side of the aisle voted for the stimulus package, which was necessary to stabilize the economy and then build it up.

There was 71 consecutive months of private sector job creation, and 14 million-plus private sector jobs were created under this Presidency. The unemployment rate has gone from over 10 percent to under 5 percent. The stock market has gone from 6,000 to over 16,000.

The deficit has been reduced by more than $1 trillion. Gas prices are below $2 per gallon. More than 18 million previously uninsured Americans now have health coverage.

Not a single one of those accomplishments occurred with a vote from the other side of the aisle. What is it about this President that they don't like?

Now, in his final term—and, by the way, speaking to strict constructionists—when you look at the United States Constitution, I can't find a 3-year term. I can't find it. It is a 4-year term with 325 days left.

All we are asking is that they just do their job. It is pretty simple. Give whoever the President puts forth a fair hearing. They have the votes to defeat any of his nominees.

Let me ask my colleague from Ohio. What I haven't been able to understand is this Justice who I have disagreed with on many issues. Although he was strong—Justice Scalia—on the privacy rights of the American people, the Fourth Amendment—was concerned about the criminalization of politics, these are areas where there is some common ground.

And certainly he was a giant in terms of legal thought. The news of his demise was barely out for public consumption when MITCH MCCONNELL issued a statement saying: We are not considering anyone that President Obama puts forth.

How do you explain that? How do you interpret that reaction? We couldn't even respect the death of Justice Scalia before the vacancy was politicized, before he was even buried and funeralized.

Mrs. BEATTY. Congressman JEFFRIES, I think you answered that question for me when you gave the long list of successes that this President has done without their help.

That gave me pause to think: What is it that is keeping them from doing their job? Why is it that they are so threatened?

Maybe it is the success that this President has brought forth not for you and I, not for the 435 Members of us, but he has done this for this Nation. He has made it a better place.

When we look at what the Justices do and represent, when we think about liberties and freedoms and the economy and our rights, I think they are afraid that he will appoint someone who will have that same scholarship, who will have that same success, someone who will bring balance. I think they are afraid of the balance.

In the words of another one of our colleagues, I might add, from the great State of Ohio, Congresswoman MARCIA FUDGE, former chair of the Congressional Black Caucus—she has words that she is entering, but I would like to quote from her words to remind us why we are saying: Senate Republicans, do your job.

She reminds us, as Members of Congress, we made a promise to our constituents that we would faithfully discharge the duties and the oath of office which we took, which we were elected to. She reminded me in her words that it is so important for us to say tonight to the Senate: Do your job. Do your job.

I think they are afraid. So I am going to issue a challenge. Congresswoman BARBARA LEE said that you are here tonight initiating this topic because we are sounding the alarm, we are ringing the bell.

I challenge them to answer that question. I challenge them to share with not only the Congressional Black Caucus, not only the Members of Congress, not only the Members of the Senate, but they have an obligation to America, to the citizens of these United States, Mr. Speaker, for them to tell us why they are not doing their job.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank the distinguished gentlewoman for those very powerful words. I can only hope, as we close this Special Order hour, that our colleagues from across this Capitol will see fit simply to adhere to their constitutional responsibilities to consider any nominee put forth by President Obama comprehensively and fairly and to faithfully execute those obligations consistent with their oath of office, not for the good of this President, not for the good of this Article I Congress, but for the good of the United States of America.

I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. CULBERSON (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today and March 1 on account of district business.

Ms. JACKSON LEE (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and March 1 on account of representational duties in her congressional district.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and March 1.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today through March 4.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 12 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, March 1, 2016, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

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

4494. A letter from the Acting Principal Deputy for the Under Secretary, Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter authorizing ten officers to wear the insignia of the grade of major general or brigadier general, as indicated, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 777(b)(3)(B); Public Law 104-106, Sec. 503(a)(1) (as added by Public Law 108-136, Sec. 509(a)(3)); (117 Stat. 1458); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4495. A letter from the Acting Principal Deputy for the Under Secretary, Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter authorizing Colonel Paul H. Pardew, United States Army, to wear the insignia of the grade of brigadier general, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 777(b)(3)(B); Public Law 104-106, Sec. 503(a)(1) (as added by Public Law 108-136, Sec. 509(a)(3)); (117 Stat. 1458); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4496. A letter from the Acting Principal Deputy for the Under Secretary, Personnel

and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of General John F. Campbell, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

4497. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a letter regarding the potential for a public health emergency that exists involving the Zika virus, pursuant to 21 U.S.C. 360bbb-3; June 25, 1938, ch. 675, Sec. 564 (as added by Public Law 1 08-136, Sec. 1603(a)); (117 Stat. 1684); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4498. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, Transmittal No.: DDTC 15-134, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); (82 Stat. 1326); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4499. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, Transmittal No.: DDTC 15-052, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); (82 Stat. 1326); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4500. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, Transmittal No. DDTC 15-086, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); (82 Stat. 1326); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4501. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, Transmittal No. DDTC 15-123, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); (82 Stat. 1326); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4502. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, Transmittal No. DDTC 15-100, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); (82 Stat. 1326); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4503. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Commerce, transmitting a certification for calendar year 2015, consistent with the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling, and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, adopted by the Senate of the United States on April 24, 1997, and Executive Order 13346 of July 8, 2004; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4504. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Crab Rationalization Program [Docket No.: 151223999-6040-01] (RIN: 0648-BF68) received February 26, 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 Natural Resources.

4505. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the Report of the Attorney General to the Congress of the United States on the Administration of the Foreign Agents Registration Act, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 621; June 8, 1938, ch. 327, Sec. 11 (as amended by Public Law 104-65, Sec. 19); (109 Stat. 704); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4506. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a letter and relevant documentation concerning the implementation of commitments in the Joint Plan of Action, pursuant to the Iran Freedom and Counter-Proliferation Act of 2012, the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996, the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012, and the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012; jointly to the Committees on Foreign Affairs, the Judiciary, Oversight and Government Reform, Financial Services, and Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

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

Mr. SHUSTER: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 1471. A bill to reauthorize the programs and activities of the Federal Emergency Management Agency; with an amendment (Rept. 114–436). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. MCCAUL: Committee on Homeland Security. H.R. 4401. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide countering violent extremism training to Department of Homeland Security representatives at State and local fusion centers, and for other purposes (Rept. 114–437). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. SMITH of Texas: Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. H.R. 4084. A bill to enable civilian research and development of advanced nuclear energy technologies by private and public institutions and to expand theoretical and practical knowledge of nuclear physics, chemistry, and materials science; with an amendment (Rept. 114–438). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 4557. A bill to allow for judicial review of any final rule addressing national emission standards for hazardous air pollutants for brick and structural clay products or for clay ceramics manufacturing before requiring compliance with such rule (Rept. 114–439). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. KILMER (for himself and Mr. HECK of Washington):

H.R. 4648. A bill to provide incentives for investment in green stormwater infrastructure, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Ms. JACKSON LEE (for herself, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. BASS, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. LEWIS, Ms. LEE, Ms. MOORE, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. MEEKS, and Ms. SEWELL of Alabama):

H.R. 4649. A bill to support the International Decade for People of African Descent, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. BUCHANAN (for himself and Mr. PASCRELL):

H.R. 4650. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for an extension of certain Medicare long-term care hospital payment rules; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MCCAUL (for himself, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. MEEHAN, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. HURD of Texas, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. DONOVAN, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, and Mr. REICHERT):

H.R. 4651. A bill to establish in the legislative branch the National Commission on Security and Technology Challenges; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, and Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. TAKAI (for himself, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. HONDA, Ms. NORTON, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. MOORE, Mr. PALLONE, Ms. LEE, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. NOLAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. RANGEL, and Ms. JACKSON LEE):

H.R. 4652. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to codify the Revised Pay As You Earn Repayment plan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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. TONKO (for himself, Mr. PALLONE, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, and Mr. MCNERNEY):

H.R. 4653. A bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to increase assistance for States, water systems, and disadvantaged communities; to encourage good financial and environmental management of water systems; to strengthen the Environmental Protection Agency's ability to enforce the requirements of the Act; and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CARSON of Indiana (for himself, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. MARINO, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. PETERS, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. VARGAS, and Mr. YODER):

H. Res. 627. A resolution expressing support for the designation of February 29, 2016, as ''Rare Disease Day''; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. RICHMOND:

H. Res. 628. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the African-Americans who duly won election to the House during the post-Civil War Reconstruction Era but were wrongly denied the right to take their seats should be recognized as former Members of the House; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. THOMPSON of California (for himself, Mr. COSTA, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. LEE, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. TSONGAS, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. PASCRELL, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. BONAMICI, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms.

BORDALLO, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. DELAURO, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. HAHN, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. SIRES, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. NADLER, Mr. KIND, Mr. POCAN, Mr. HINOJOSA, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. HONDA, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. TITUS, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. PETERS, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. ESTY, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. RUIZ, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. FARR, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. COHEN, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. JEFFRIES, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. VISCLOSKY, and Mr. HUFFMAN):

H. Res. 629. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Women's History Month; 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. KILMER:

H.R. 4648.

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

Clauses 1 and 3 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Ms. JACKSON LEE:

H.R. 4649.

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

This bill N. is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clauses 3 and 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. BUCHANAN:

H.R. 4650.

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

United States Constitution, Article I, Section 8, clause 1

The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

By Mr. MCCAUL:

H.R. 4651.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18, ''To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States or in any Department or Officer thereof.''

By Mr. TAKAI:

H.R. 4652.

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

Article 1, Section 7 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. TONKO:

H.R. 4653.

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

Article I, Section 8 Clause 18: The Congress shall have power to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

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

H.R. 114: Mr. COFFMAN.
H.R. 223: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.
H.R. 346: Mr. PASCRELL.
H.R. 578: Mr. WEBSTER of Florida and Mr. GIBSON.
H.R. 612: Mr. POE of Texas.
H.R. 662: Mr. ALLEN and Mr. RIGELL.
H.R. 670: Mr. LANCE and Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.
H.R. 799: Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan.
H.R. 842: Mr. RUIZ.
H.R. 865: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.
H.R. 915: Ms. TSONGAS.
H.R. 980: Mr. PALAZZO.
H.R. 1111: Ms. BROWN of Florida.
H.R. 1130: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.
H.R. 1147: Mr. JONES.
H.R. 1188: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut and Miss RICE of New York.
H.R. 1197: Ms. MCSALLY.
H.R. 1221: Mr. FATTAH.
H.R. 1431: Mr. GOHMERT.
H.R. 1432: Mr. GOHMERT.
H.R. 1439: Mr. SMITH of Washington.
H.R. 1516: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 1567: Mr. KLINE.
H.R. 1608: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 1623: Mr. ROHRABACHER.
H.R. 1651: Mr. GIBSON.
H.R. 1686: Mr. ASHFORD.
H.R. 1728: Mrs. DINGELL.
H.R. 1942: Mr. HANNA.
H.R. 2059: Mr. GOODLATTE.
H.R. 2102: Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 2114: Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. RANGEL, and Ms. BASS.
H.R. 2170: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.
H.R. 2210: Mr. POSEY.
H.R. 2257: Mr. ZINKE and Mr. GIBSON.
H.R. 2293: Mr. CLAWSON of Florida, Mr. RIGELL, and Mr. BLUM.
H.R. 2404: Mr. CRAMER.
H.R. 2515: Mrs. BEATTY and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 2536: Mr. GUINTA and Ms. KUSTER.
H.R. 2646: Mr. RICE of South Carolina.
H.R. 2648: Mr. COOPER and Mr. CRAMER.
H.R. 2799: Mrs. BLACKBURN, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, and Mr. WALDEN.
H.R. 2802: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.
H.R. 2874: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 2896: Mr. RENACCI.
H.R. 2903: Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 2939: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. DELAURO, and Mr. LANGEVIN.
H.R. 2972: Ms. DELBENE.
H.R. 3048: Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. RATCLIFFE, and Mr. POSEY.
H.R. 3061: Mr. SWALWELL of California
H.R. 3071: Ms. ESHOO and Mr. QUIGLEY.
H.R. 3177: Mr. WALDEN.
H.R. 3180: Mr. BYRNE.
H.R. 3235: Ms. LEE and Ms. BASS.
H.R. 3244: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
H.R. 3294: Mr. RENACCI.
H.R. 3308: Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mrs. DAVIS of California, and Mrs. LAWRENCE.
H.R. 3355: Mr. DOGGETT.
H.R. 3363: Mr. GARAMENDI.
H.R. 3381: Mr. LAMALFA and Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 3406: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 3463: Mrs. BLACKBURN.
H.R. 3471: Mr. BECERRA.
H.R. 3516: Mr. SHUSTER.
H.R. 3551: Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. KING of New York, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN.
H.R. 3559: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.
H.R. 3608: Mr. REED.
H.R. 3643: Mr. MULVANEY.
H.R. 3687: Mr. RIGELL.
H.R. 3706: Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. JOYCE, Ms. SPEIER, and Mrs. DAVIS of California.
H.R. 3710: Mr. GOODLATTE.
H.R. 3741: Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 3779: Mr. POLIQUIN and Mrs. WAGNER.
H.R. 3808: Mr. RATCLIFFE.
H.R. 3846: Mr. BYRNE, Mr. BLUM, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. TSONGAS, and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 3852: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 3865: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 3880: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
H.R. 3956: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
H.R. 3958: Mr. STIVERS.
H.R. 3964: Ms. ESHOO and Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 3970: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida and Mr. TAKAI.
H.R. 4007: Mr. SMITH of Texas.
H.R. 4016: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
H.R. 4065: Mr. ROSS.
H.R. 4073: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa.
H.R. 4087: Mr. WESTMORELAND and Mr. GOODLATTE.
H.R. 4126: Mr. HILL and Mr. WALKER.
H.R. 4223: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 4319: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 4335: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.
H.R. 4336: Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. ROSS, Mr. SCHIFF, and Mr. CARNEY.
H.R. 4351: Mr. ASHFORD and Mr. DEUTCH.
H.R. 4362: Mr. LOUDERMILK.
H.R. 4371: Mr. ROUZER.
H.R. 4390: Ms. MOORE and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4401: Ms. SINEMA.
H.R. 4433: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4447: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Mr. NEAL.
H.R. 4463: Mr. ROKITA.
H.R. 4474: Mr. MOOLENAAR and Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 4488: Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. TAKANO, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 4497: Mr. GRIFFITH.
H.R. 4499: ROE of Tennessee and Mrs. BLACK.
H.R. 4508: Mr. PASCRELL.
H.R. 4519: Mr. COLE.
H.R. 4544: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 4554: Ms. DUCKWORTH.
H.R. 4570: Mrs. WAGNER, Ms. LEE, and Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 4597: Mr. JONES.
H.R. 4598: Mr. JONES.
H.R. 4612: Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, and Mr. WALKER.
H.R. 4614: Mr. THORNBERRY.
H.R. 4622: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi and Mr. COSTA.
H.R. 4625: Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. SIRES, Mr. ENGEL, and Mr. KING of New York.
H.R. 4639: Mr. CONNOLLY.
H.R. 4646: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H. Con. Res. 51: Mr. MCGOVERN.

H. Con. Res. 89: Mrs. WAGNER and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.

H. Res. 28: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.

H. Res. 62: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. MOORE, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Ms. KUSTER, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H. Res. 112: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.

H. Res. 487: Mr. POLIQUIN.

H. Res. 615: Mrs. HARTZLER.

H. Res. 616: Ms. MOORE, Ms. KAPTUR, and Mr. SERRANO.

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Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 162 WASHINGTON, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 2016 No. 32

Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JONI ERNST, a Senator from the State of Iowa.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Lord of life, hear our prayers. Fill us with Your Spirit so that we may please You. Empower our lawmakers. Help them not to have an excessive focus on temporary things while ignoring an eternal perspective. May their lives bring glory and honor to Your Name, as You create in them humble and contrite hearts that are willing to serve You and humanity.

And Lord, as our Nation prepares to elect a new President, may Your providence, not our wisdom, prevail. Demonstrate Your power so that we may remember that nothing is too difficult for You.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer 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.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, February 29, 2016.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JONI ERNST, a Senator from the State of Iowa, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. ERNST thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, there is an epidemic sweeping across our Nation, ripping through communities, tearing families apart, striking at the vulnerable—even babies who have yet to take their first breath. The prescription opioid and heroin epidemic does not discriminate by demographic or socioeconomic status, by age or by gender. It touches parents and children, neighbors and coworkers in all 50 States. It is ending lives at recordbreaking rates, and it is getting worse. Deaths from opioids have surged by 200 percent over the last decade and a half alone. In my home State of Kentucky, drug overdoses continue to outpace the number of fatalities from traffic accidents.

This is an issue we have been combating for some time, and we have made some important strides along the way, but there is a lot more to do. This week we have an opportunity to take an important step forward. One of the most painful aspects of this epidemic, as I mentioned, is the increasing number of infants who are born dependent on opioids such as prescription pain killers and heroin. These children start their lives suffering from drug dependence, which is nearly as hard to imagine as it is heartbreaking.

Last year, I sponsored a bipartisan measure designed to help address this specific issue. I appreciate the senior Senator from Pennsylvania, Mr. CASEY, for working across the aisle with me to advance the Protecting Our Infants Act through Congress, and I am proud to say it was signed into law just a few months ago. It is an example of one of the many steps we have already begun to take as we address this epidemic.

We took another step forward last week when the Senate voted to confirm a new FDA Commissioner. I have been very clear that the FDA must take a stronger approach in regard to this epidemic and its prevention efforts, which is why I appreciated Dr. Califf's expressed vision for positive change at the agency. I voted for his nomination last week, but as I told him, he should know that we will continue to ensure oversight over his agency's response going forward.

This week, we have another opportunity to take a step forward—an important step forward. Before us today is bipartisan legislation that would help combat the prescription opioid and heroin epidemic at every level. The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, or CARA, is the product of a lot of hard work and bipartisan work by a number of Senators.

I would like to recognize the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, the Senator from Iowa, and the ranking member, the Senator from Vermont, for acting swiftly to pass this bill through committee on a voice vote. I appreciate the assistance and cooperation of other leaders on this important issue, such as the chairman of the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions and the ranking member from the State of Washington.

I also want to thank the sponsors of this bill, the junior Senators from Ohio, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island, and the senior Senator from Minnesota. These leaders understand the toll this epidemic is taking on our communities. They have studied the issue closely in their home States, and

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

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they have worked with Senators from across the aisle to advance this legislation through the legislative process. It is thanks to their hard work that we are debating this bipartisan bill today.

The junior Senator from Ohio has called CARA the only bipartisan legislation that includes a comprehensive and evidence-based approach to help communities combat this epidemic. It would strengthen prescription drug monitoring programs, it would improve treatment initiatives, it would expand prevention and education, and it would give law enforcement more of the tools it needs to fight back against this epidemic.

It is no wonder this bipartisan legislation is supported by more than 130 national anti-drug groups. In a recent letter, they noted the only way to ''stop and reverse current trends'' was with a comprehensive approach, such as that included in the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2015, that leverages evidence-based law enforcement and health care services, including treatment.

So this bill takes the kind of comprehensive approach that is needed and at the same time, as these groups also noted in their letter, ''the cost of the bill is kept low'' with ''no impact on mandatory spending.''

I ask colleagues to join with us in working to pass this bipartisan authorization bill. We will also have opportunities through the appropriations process this spring to continue important funding, just as we did last year. Indeed, just a few months ago we appropriated $400 million to opioid-specific programs—nearly one-third more than what the Senate appropriated the preceding year—and we understand that all $400 million of those funds still remains available to be spent today. That is right. All $400 million remains available to be spent.

I sincerely hope our friends across the aisle will join us in supporting this legislation to address our national crisis. This is an important bill for each of us in this Chamber, and I look forward to taking action today to get us closer to seeing it become law. I have talked about the urgency and the multifaceted complexity associated with this epidemic, and I want to underline the hard work being done in the Senate to address it.

The chairs of the Judiciary Committee and the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, whom I recognized earlier, have been looking at ways to both improve law enforcement tools and increase education and awareness respectively. The chair of the Committee on Finance has, as his committee explored in a hearing last week, been focused on how this issue affects our child welfare system. And of course, we again recognize the cooperation of Members of both parties—chairs and ranking members and a bipartisan list of sponsors on both sides of the aisle.

Working together across the aisle—with State and local governments, agencies and law enforcement—we can help end this crisis once and for all. I look forward to taking the next step toward that objective later today.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. REID. Madam President, ''History won't forget this misstep by Grassley,'' this poster says. ''History won't forget this misstep by Grassley.'' That is from the Burlington Hawk Eye, Iowa's oldest newspaper. That is what they said. It is the headline from the oldest newspaper, as I indicated—the Burlington Hawk Eye.

The misstep referenced here is the unprecedented statement by the senior Senator from Iowa and the Republican leader to deny the President the right to fill the current Supreme Court vacancy. The article ends with this declaration:

> A few weeks back, when the longest-tenured U.S. Senator from Iowa passed a vote that gave him the record of most consecutive votes in the Senate, we lauded his service to us. We noted in casting votes on matters before the Senate, he was doing what Iowans elected him to do. We gave Grassley an attaboy for that. We take it back.

''We take it back.'' That is a blistering statement, a revealing statement, a substantive statement. ''We take it back.''

There is a lesson that Senator GRASSLEY and my Republican colleagues should learn from this editorial. By refusing to give President Obama's Supreme Court nominee a meeting, a hearing or a vote, they are abandoning the oath of office they swore when they became Senators. This abdication of their constitutional responsibilities will epitomize their work as Senators. Whatever they may have accomplished during their careers will be secondary to their decision to place electoral politics over their job.

Remember that our job here is to vote. That is what we swore to do—to follow the Constitution. And the Constitution couldn't be clearer on this issue. So the stakes should even be higher for Senator GRASSLEY and the other Republican Senators. Why? Because as chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Senator GRASSLEY presides over one of the most important and prestigious committees in the entire Senate. This has been the case for 200 years—200 years.

The Senate Judiciary Committee was established 200 years ago. In 1816, it was one of the original 11 standing committees. Twenty decades have passed. That is how long the committee has been in operation. Throughout history, Judiciary Committee chairs have traditionally wielded immense power—from President Martin Van Buren, when he was in the Senate, to Senator Ted Kennedy, Senator Arlen Specter, and Senator JOE BIDEN.

Judiciary Committee chairmen have historically prized their independence and guarded it at all costs from being manhandled for partisan purposes. It was so independent, in fact, that past chairmen have stood firm in the face of opposition from Presidents and Senate leadership.

At crucial times in American history, the Senate and the Nation have looked to the Judiciary Committee to do the right thing. During the Civil War, Chairman Lyman Trumbull of Illinois and his committee authored the Thirteenth Amendment. The Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery during the Civil War. We know that during that period of time there was great consternation as to what should be done. Even the great President Lincoln had trouble deciding what should be done during the early days of the Civil War.

In 1889, Chairman George Hoar of Massachusetts and his committee drafted the Sherman Antitrust Act, refusing to give in to the special interests of Carnegie, Vanderbilt, and the Rockefeller monopolies. That was big-time independence.

In 1937, Chairman Henry Ashurst from Arizona, who was born in Winnemucca, NV, led his committee in standing firm against President Franklin D. Roosevelt's attempt to pack the Supreme Court. Chairman Ashurst was a Democrat, just like President Roosevelt. Yet Ashurst and his committee maintained their independence, even against the wishes of Senate Majority Leader Alben Barkley, a longtime Senator who became Vice President later. Imagine that. He was the Senate majority leader. He was from Kentucky. Imagine that Judiciary Committee chair standing up to a majority leader from Kentucky.

The accomplishments of these powerful chairmen and many others are the historic models against which the senior Senator from Iowa will be measured. If he keeps his current obstruction, history will not be kind to his tenure as chairman of the committee. As of today, the chairman has yielded his committee's long-held authority and independence to the Republican leader for the sole purpose of weakening President Obama, of weakening the Presidency of the United States, and obstructing the Senate's work.

The chairman has turned the impartial reputation of the Judiciary Committee into an extension of the Trump campaign. Just last month Chairman GRASSLEY spoke at a rally for Donald Trump in Iowa. At that rally, the chairman said:

> We've had this trend going this way, away from the basic principles that established our government. And so we have an opportunity, once again, to make America great again.

Before I close, let's remember what he said: ''We've had this trend going this way, away from the basic principles that established our government.''

My friend from Iowa would do well to look at his own committee as it trends away from—again, the quote, ''away from the basic principles that established our government.'' That is what the Senator from Iowa said at the Trump rally.

Even now, he and his committee are wasting millions in taxpayer dollars developing partisan opposition research on Secretary Clinton. It has been going on for many months, more than a year, including asking for maternity leave records for staffers and time sheets from her office—just basic staff people. For months, Senator GRASSLEY blocked the confirmation of vital State Department officials, even career Foreign Service officers who are here, so we could give them a raise after their valiant service all around the world. He held that up, and people couldn't understand it. It had nothing to do with Secretary Clinton. He did it as a way to weaken the Presidency of President Obama. What he has done is damage U.S. diplomacy worldwide.

Election day is more than 8 months away, but it is affecting nearly every action taken by the Grassley Judiciary Committee. There is much more at stake than Senator GRASSLEY's reputation. When the committee's independence is threatened by partisan politics, the future of this institution hangs in the balance, and when the Senate is undermined, our democracy is undermined. Future generations will suffer irreparably if the Senator from Iowa continues to do the bidding of the Republican leader and the Donald Trumps of the new Republican Party.

Senator GRASSLEY and I have worked together for three decades. I served a couple terms in the House. Then I came here. My seat was way back there. When I gave my maiden speech, my first speech, I talked about the Taxpayer Bill of Rights, an idea I had in the House and I couldn't get past first base.

Presiding in the Senate that day was Senator David Pryor from Arkansas, who was chairman of the subcommittee on the Internal Revenue Service. Senator GRASSLEY was also listening. They both contacted me. In fact, I received a note from Senator Pryor and a call from Senator GRASSLEY saying: I like that legislation. I will work to help you. And they did, and we got that passed. So I have nothing personal against Senator GRASSLEY. I like him. He helped me pass something that was landmark legislation as a brandnew freshman Senator, but today, as a U.S. Senator, I have a duty to speak when the Republican Senate refuses to follow its constitutional obligations to provide advice and consent on the President's Supreme Court nomination.

As a Senator, I have a duty to demand that the Judiciary Committee considers important judicial nominees, especially—especially—someone to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court. As Senate Judiciary chair, the senior Senator from Iowa has a job to do. I repeat, my criticism is not personal. It is professional and it is substantive.

The senior Senator from Iowa outlined that job himself when he assumed the chairmanship of the Judiciary Committee. When he took over as chairman, he promised Republicans would ''restore the Senate to the deliberative body that the founders intended.'' Listen to that. That is what he said, to ''restore the Senate to the deliberative body that the founders intended.'' That is a quote.

Another quote. He said he took the responsibility of ''vetting of nominees for lifetime appointments to the federal judiciary very seriously.''

The senior Senator from Iowa is failing this commitment that he made to himself. He made it. He made the commitment to ''restore the Senate to the deliberative body that the founders intended.'' The Founders are the people who wrote the Constitution. He is the first chair of this important committee to take the unprecedented step of refusing to meet, conduct hearings or hold a vote on a Supreme Court nomination. He is following the Republican leader's call to refuse the President's nominee a meeting, a hearing or a vote. The senior Senator from Iowa, of all people, should know how important a vote is.

My friend has a lot of rollcall votes, 7,545 consecutive votes as of today, but what good are 7,500 consecutive votes if you simply sweep the votes you don't like to take under the rug? It taints this achievement. If he doesn't like President Obama's nominee, then he doesn't have to vote for the nominee, but don't run from a hard vote. Don't hide. What good is a chairmanship if it is just a rubberstamp for partisan politics? What good is a chairmanship if it is used to weaken the Senate and disrupt our Constitution's system of checks and balances? And that is what it does.

Last week the Des Moines Register published an open letter from one of Senator GRASSLEY's former employees. It was stunning. He worked in the Senate. This man's words capture what is at stake:

> The institution of the Senate has managed to perform its constitutional obligations for well over 200 years. Every single nominee for the Supreme Court that has not withdrawn from consideration has received a vote within 125 days. Today, I feel nothing but shame for the fact that my senator, my former friend, will be bringing that unbroken history to an end.

That was the headline last week in the Des Moines Register, Iowa's largest newspaper.

I hope the chairman of the Judiciary Committee doesn't continue down this path. It will not benefit him, his committee, the Senate, the State of Iowa or this great country. Instead, he should follow the examples of his predecessors and give President Obama's Supreme Court nominee a meeting, a hearing, and a vote. He simply should do his job. If he doesn't, history will never forget this unprecedented misstep. History will never forget this misstep by Senator GRASSLEY.

I yield the floor.

Madam President, I ask the Chair to announce the business for the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 5 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from West Virginia.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY BILL

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, as we are all sadly aware, the United States is experiencing an epidemic of drug overdose deaths. The statistics are just startling. Since 2000, the rate of deaths from drug overdoses has increased 137 percent, including a 200-percent increase in overdose deaths attributed to the use of opioids.

West Virginia has the unfortunate distinction of leading the Nation in drug-related overdose deaths—more than twice the national average. As I travel across the State, I hear constantly about the devastation caused by this epidemic. West Virginia communities are grappling with the seriousness and pain of addiction. No family or community—mine included—is immune from this pain.

As one of my constituents put it, ''We must give our young people a reason not to start using something that robs them of everything they have.''

Other West Virginians have bravely shared their family's stories of addiction's pain with me. In the powerful words of one of my constituents, ''It only takes a few seconds to use drugs—but a lifetime to fight.''

Drug addiction is a diseases that knows no boundaries, and West Virginia is certainly not alone in this fight. My colleagues in the Senate—including, I am sure, the Acting President pro tempore—return each week with similar stories. No matter our political party, we should all agree on one thing, we must act to change these horrifying statistics and to save lives.

Some steps have already been taken to address this drug epidemic. The appropriations bill we passed last December included funding to expand prevention efforts. It included improved data collection and new treatment services, training for our servicemembers who

are battling addiction, and training for the first responders who are responding to these drug overdoses.

Today we hope to begin debate on the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. I thank my colleagues Senator PORTMAN, Senator AYOTTE, and Senator WHITEHOUSE for their leadership on this important legislation.

This bipartisan bill, known as CARA, addresses the opioid epidemic by expanding prevention and education. It also promotes the resources needed for treatment and recovery. It includes reforms to help law enforcement respond to the drug epidemic, and it supports long-term recovery efforts—which, as we see in my State of West Virginia, we don't have enough treatment options, particularly in the long-term recovery area.

The legislation also expands the availability of naloxone, a lifesaving drug that helps to reverse the effects of an overdose, and we are also creating disposal sites for unwanted prescriptions.

CARA provides resources for treatment alternatives to incarceration, such as the successful and expanding drug court programs that operate in West Virginia and many other States. We just had a graduation the other day with some great success stories included in that from the drug court. According to the Beckley Register Herald, counties with drug courts have already seen cost savings and deep declines of recidivism rates among graduates.

CARA also provides a provision to improve treatment programs for pregnant women and mothers who have substance abuse disorder. Another startling statistic is the number of babies born with neonatal abstinence syndrome that has increased fivefold from the years 2000 to the year 2012.

Last fall, I introduced the Improving Treatment for Pregnant and Postpartum Women Act, with Senators AYOTTE, WHITEHOUSE, and KLOBUCHAR. The CARA act provides a provision that could play a critical role in preventing neonatal abstinence syndrome and getting treatment to pregnant women and new mothers.

Also, last fall I worked with Senator MARKEY and others to help restore drug take-back days and keep medications out of the wrong hands. We all probably have some medication in our own medicine chests that are no longer necessary and that we don't need to have. It might have been for a family member. It is time to clean out those medicine chests. I participated in last year's program in Charleston, WV, and was pleased to see the overwhelming response. CARA focuses on the programs that work and will streamline efforts across multiple Federal agencies.

In order to further address the needs of our communities, I am working on several bipartisan amendments on this bill. These amendments include solutions to improve prescribing practices and prevent overprescribing. Too many stories of addiction start with patients taking painkillers after a minor surgery or a minor injury.

That is why I am pleased to be working with Senator GILLIBRAND on an effort that would require clear CDC guidelines for prescribing opioids for acute pain—a tooth extraction, maybe a broken arm, something that doesn't last forever, but the pain is acute in the beginning but fades rather quickly.

I also am pleased to be working with Senator WARREN on an amendment that allows doctors to partially fill certain opioid prescriptions. These will reduce the number of unused painkillers sitting in our medicine cabinets and help to prevent future cases of drug abuse and addiction.

In order to reduce the number of overdose deaths, I am working with Senator KAINE to allow doctors to coprescribe the lifesaving drug naloxone when they prescribe an opioid. This would make naloxone more widely available in Federal health care settings, such as community health centers, VA clinics, and DOD facilities. I am also focused on tackling one of the saddest realities of this epidemic.

In my State of West Virginia, babies born exposed to opioids during pregnancy are approximately three times the national average. Every 25 minutes in this country a baby is born with addiction. Nationwide, this condition has increased fivefold from the years 2000 to 2012.

This amendment will provide clear guidelines to encourage the creation of residential pediatric recovery centers, like the wonderful Lily's Place in Huntington, WV. I am pleased to be working with Senator KING from Maine and Congressman EVAN JENKINS from West Virginia on this effort.

CARA represents a positive step forward in addressing the opioid crisis. The four amendments that I have outlined, I believe, will strengthen the bill. They would prevent addiction, promote recovery, and curb the scourge of drug addiction in my State and in others across this country. There is much work ahead for all of us in this area. The actions we are hopefully taking here this week in Washington are simply first steps.

This bill builds on the tireless work being done at the State and local levels by communities, law enforcement, and health professionals all across this country. They are working together. By working together, we can change these statistics and stop more tragedies from occurring—stop the human tragedy of losing a loved one, of losing a mother or father.

I urge my colleagues to begin debate on CARA this evening and to support this important legislation. I am concerned we are in jeopardy of losing the next generation. So we have much work to do.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, as we have heard from the Senator from West Virginia, this week the Senate will begin consideration of a bipartisan bill that targets an epidemic that is raging across the country, but apparently it is especially hard-hitting in places such as West Virginia, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and the like. But this abuse of prescription painkillers and heroin is not just isolated to those areas, even though the leaders of this particular legislation come from places such as Minnesota, Rhode Island, Ohio, and New Hampshire. Sadly, Texas has been no exception.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that in Texas opioid-related drug deaths have increased by 30 percent since 2002. Houston is widely recognized by the DEA and law enforcement officials as a key hub for the trafficking of illicit prescription drugs. In South Texas, right next to the U.S.-Mexico border, the transnational criminal organizations are exploiting our porous border to import increasingly large amounts of hard narcotics like heroin, which ultimately wreaks havoc in towns and cities across America.

In 2014 alone, drug cartels successfully smuggled more than 250,000 pounds of heroin across our borders and into the United States at a street value of approximately $25 billion. These are the same criminals who traffic in human beings, including young girls and boys. These are the same people who traffic in illegal immigrants. These are the same people who traffic in illegal drugs. Indeed, this has become such big business and the network so large that these transnational criminal organizations are basically in on everything and anything that will make them money, including transporting these terrible drugs like heroin across the border.

As we all know and have heard, this epidemic destroys families, it increases the crime rate, and it robs millions of Americans of their future. As I mentioned a moment ago, thousands are dying every year. That is why the bill we are voting on this afternoon, called the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, is so important. It will help give families and law enforcement additional resources to beat drug addiction through proven treatment programs. I am proud to cosponsor the legislation.

The reason we have been able to move this bill forward so far—and it passed unanimously out of the Senate Judiciary Committee 2 weeks ago—is because it reflects bipartisan input as well as bipartisan concern with this epidemic.

As I mentioned earlier, I wish to particularly recognize the junior Senators from Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Ohio—Senators WHITEHOUSE, PORTMAN, and AYOTTE—for their laserlike focus on this legislation and making sure that it is at the top of our list of things we need to do this legislative session. By highlighting how bad the problem is in our country and providing legislation to address it, they

are helping us attack this epidemic head-on.

I must say that while so far this legislation has moved forward on a strong bipartisan basis, there are some signals on the horizon that indicate some potential trouble. At a press conference after the Judiciary Committee unanimously passed the bill, several of our friends on the other side of the aisle were explicit. They said that if the Senate did not add hundreds of millions of dollars in duplicative funding, they might withhold their support.

This legislation is an authorization bill, and it does not appropriate funds. Our friends across the aisle know that if an appropriation is added to this legislation, particularly if it is duplicative, it causes a number of problems. First of all, a spending bill can't originate here in the Senate. So it raises a so-called blue-slip problem. But perhaps just as importantly, this is not an orderly process by which we determine what is actually needed and to make sure that we are appropriating money in a fiscally responsible sort of way.

I don't have to remind the Acting President pro tempore or anybody else who is listening that we have a $19 trillion debt in our country, and recklessly throwing money at a problem rather than carefully targeting it in a fiscally responsible way is simply irresponsible.

It seems to be part of the message: Give us what we want or we might hijack a bipartisan bill that would literally save lives. I hope I am wrong, and I hope the signals on the horizon don't prove to ultimately be true. But it does seem like this is part of a new political strategy.

Earlier this month, we know that our Democrat colleagues blocked a bipartisan Energy bill from moving forward on an unrelated issue—something on which Senator MURKOWSKI has shown the patience of Job, trying to work through this process so we can get back on the Energy bill rather than having it hijacked by an extraneous subject that could well and should well be handled in a different way, certainly separately.

This is not the way the Senate gets anything accomplished. As I have said before, playing political games with important issues like fighting drug addiction is what lost our friends the majority in 2014. I urge the Democratic leadership to listen to those in their own caucus who have worked alongside Republicans in a responsible fashion to draft and put forward this bill that is so clearly needed in this country.

This afternoon I hope we will move forward on the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. I hope we will consider it and consider amendments that are being offered in good faith on both sides to try to improve the legislation. But what we should not do is allow anyone to hijack this important legislation for partisan purposes. I think we should restrain ourselves from any impulse to do so. It happened, unfortunately, on the bipartisan Energy bill. It has been threatened on this legislation. But my hope is that cooler heads will prevail.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I rise today to speak in support of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2015, also known as the CARA Act. Our country is facing a prescription drug epidemic, and today is a good step toward addressing this crisis. This is a crisis I have been dealing with since my days as Governor of the great State of West Virginia.

Opioid abuse is not only ravaging my State, it is ravaging the country. Drug overdose deaths have soared by more than 700 percent since 1999. We lost 600 West Virginians to opioids last year alone. But our State is not unique; every day in our country, 51 Americans die from opioid abuse, and since 1999 we have lost almost 200,000 Americans to prescription opioid abuse. Think about that. That is more people than we have in any city in the State of West Virginia.

This bill is an important first step. First of all, it will authorize $77.9 million in grant funding for prevention and recovery efforts. It will expand prevention and educational efforts—particularly aimed at teens, parents and other caretakers, and aging populations—to prevent the abuse of opioids and heroin and to promote treatment and recovery. It will expand the availability of naloxone to law enforcement agencies and other first responders to help in the reversal of overdoses to save lives. It will expand disposable sites for unwanted prescription medications to keep them out of the hands of our children and adolescents. It will launch an evidence-based opioid and heroin treatment and intervention program to expand best practices throughout the country. It will also strengthen prescription drug monitoring programs to help States monitor and track prescription drug diversion.

While this bill is a good start and addresses critical problems, there is more that needs to be done. I will be offering several amendments to improve the bill by changing the FDA's mission, providing grants for consumer education, and requiring prescriber training.

I firmly believe we need cultural change at the FDA, and that is why I introduced Changing the Culture of the FDA Act. It simply does exactly what it says—it changes that culture. My amendment to CARA, based on the Changing the Culture of the FDA Act, would amend the FDA's mission statement to include language that will require the agency to take into account the public health impact of the Nation's opioid epidemic when approving and regulating opioid medications and will hold the agency responsible for addressing the opioid epidemic. It is hard to believe that right now as all of these new drugs are coming to the market and all of these pharmaceutical manufacturers are producing this new product, basically the mission statement has never taken into account the impact of the opioid epidemic on the public's health in this Nation. Now that we see it is truly an epidemic, we think this is a much needed change, and hopefully it will be approved.

This builds on and solidifies the FDA's recently stated goal to fundamentally reexamine the risk-benefit calculations for opioids and ensures that the agency considers the wider public health effects. We need a change in the culture of the FDA, but we also need to make sure the advocacy groups that fight this battle every day are armed with the resources they need to stem this tide.

I am also submitting an amendment that will establish consumer education grants through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to raise awareness about the risk of opioid addiction and overdose.

This epidemic is one that needs to be fought on all fronts, but most importantly, we need to fight it on the frontlines with the prescribers, those people whom we trust to get the training they need. That is why I will also submit an amendment that will require that medical practitioners receive the needed training on the safe prescribing of opioids prior to renewing their DEA registration to prescribe controlled substances. If you talk to any of our medical physicians throughout the country, they get very little training as far as the effects of these drugs, and we think it is well past time that they get the needed education, as well as continuing education, so that we can keep ahead of the prescriptions they are putting on the markets and basically keep them from harming people every day.

According to the National Institutes of Health, in 2012, more than 250 million prescriptions were written in the United States for opioid painkillers. That equals one bottle of pain pills for every U.S. adult. Can you imagine one bottle of pain pills for every U.S. adult in this country? It is unbelievable. We are the most addictive Nation on Earth. Five percent of the population in the United States of America—there are 330 million of us and 700 billion humans on the planet Earth—consumes 80 percent of the opioids in the world. It is just unheard of.

Until we ensure that every prescriber has a strong understanding of safe opioid prescribing practices and the very great risk of opioid addiction, abuse, and overdose deaths, we will continue to see too many people prescribed too many of these dangerous

drugs which can lead them down a tragic path, and that is why we need to educate people.

There is one other subject I wanted to address, and I hope the FDA and this administration will look at it very seriously, and that is the professionals on advisory committees. When an opioid is coming to market, I believe and I believe a lot of Americans believe that this goes through a review process. These professionals basically are looking at this, and they make a recommendation as to whether this drug should be on the market, the need for this drug, and the effect this drug will have on people's lives. If they rule against this drug—and let's say they have an 11-to-2 ruling, such as Zohydro did—then the request for that drug to come to market should have to come before Congress. The FDA—the director and the staff—needs to basically come and explain to Congress why this potent drug needs to come on the market when basically their advisory committee and those people who are the professionals basically agree not to let it come to market.

This is a conversation that has to be had. We have to make sure we understand why we are putting all of these products on the market and the effect they are going to have on the public. That is another topic we hope to address also as this bill comes to the floor.

The bottom line is that I am pleased the Senate is working in a bipartisan manner. This is how we need to work to solve the major challenges our country faces. By working in a bipartisan way, we will have, as I understand, an open amendment process which is so needed and critical to move this legislation through. I appreciate that.

I believe my amendments will strengthen this bill, but I also believe more needs to be done. We must provide the critical resources needed to stem this tide. I look forward to working with my colleagues to strengthen this bill and to begin to address this crisis head-on.

This country has faced every crisis we have ever had, and we have overcome it. This is one we haven't attempted. For some reason, it is a silent killer—out of sight, out of mind. It will take all of us being Americans and basically using our faith that we have that we can fix these problems, to save Democrats, save Republicans, save Independents, and save everybody. This cannot be a partisan issue because I can tell my colleagues that opiates and the addiction of opiates have no partisan home. It is truly bipartisan. It attacks us all.

I appreciate my colleagues, and I look forward to working with them to work through this important piece of legislation.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WOMEN'S RIGHT TO HEALTH CARE

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, this week the Supreme Court—which is lacking a ninth Justice for the foreseeable future for reasons that most of the American public doesn't understand since my fellow Senators—my Republican colleagues—simply refuse to do their job—will hear arguments on yet another case that threatens women's right to health care. The case the Supreme Court will hear on Wednesday—Whole Women's Health v. Hellerstedt—originated in Texas, but, as all Supreme Court cases do, this case has implications for the entire country. It is part of a sustained, coordinated attack on women's right to make personal, private health care decisions for themselves. It is Big Government reaching into women's homes and bedrooms, getting between the women and their health care providers, between the women and their religious counselors; it is reaching into women's homes, telling women that they no longer have the right to make personal, private health care decisions for themselves and to access safe and affordable care.

If the Court rules in favor of the Texas law, which has closed health clinics across the State—imagine that. You are a legislator taking an oath of office in Austin, TX, to do the best you can for your State, and you pass legislation that closes health clinics not for financial reasons but for ideological reasons. So if the Court rules in favor of this Texas law, which, as I said, closes health clinics across the State, it will set a dangerous precedent that could lead to more clinic closures across this country. My interest is especially Ohio. Ohio will be weakened by this too.

These clinics are often the only place women and men have to turn for their basic health services. Most of the health care women are getting at these clinics has nothing to do with abortions, but it is the kind of care that women need in these clinics. Millions of women rely on Planned Parenthood and other clinics like it for lifesaving screenings, for testing, for preventive care, and for treatment.

In Ohio, Planned Parenthood centers provide health care services to 100,000 men and women each year. Many of them have nowhere else to turn. Many of them are moderate-income women. Many of them are women working two jobs. Many of them go to Planned Parenthood because, first, it gives good care; second, it takes care of them in kind, decent, empathetic ways; and third, it is what they can afford. They either cannot afford health care elsewhere or they live too far away to have access to health care.

A new law in Ohio threatens that access. The bill was passed by the Ohio Legislature and signed by Governor Kasich—that is Governor Kasich of Presidential primary fame, Presidential Republican debate fame. The bill, which was signed by Governor Kasich a week ago, will strip Federal funding not only from Planned Parenthood—why they would want to do that is all about ideology and playing to their far-right political base—will strip Federal funding not only from Planned Parenthood but any health care facility that could be perceived as ''promoting'' safe and legal abortion. But these health care clinics are mostly not about abortion; they are about providing health care to women—mostly to women. This includes health clinics that simply work with other providers to refer women to other facilities so that women can make decisions that should be between them and their doctors.

Now, I repeat, so many of my colleagues love to talk about Big Government, but when Big Government—mostly a bunch of privileged—if I may, privileged, White men on the other side of the aisle, mostly—when they want to inject themselves between women and their doctors, between women and their families, between women and their religious counselors, it strikes me as—let's just say hypocritical.

We are talking about a rule that is far, far more sweeping than just defunding—that is what they like to say, ''defunding''—Planned Parenthood.

If you are watching the Republican debates week after week, even when they sound like food fights, which it did last week—when you are watching these debates, you can see that whenever one of these White, privileged men—candidates running for President and one other privileged African-American man running for President on the Republican side—whenever they say ''defund Planned Parenthood,'' the crowd goes wild. They play to that base to defund Planned Parenthood, that base that for whatever reason, with their ideological agenda, doesn't seem to care much about women's health.

Let's be clear. This isn't about defunding abortion. The Federal Government doesn't provide funding for abortion, period. I will say that again. The Federal Government does not provide funding for abortion, period.

Health officials in Ohio—health officials that play it straight, which is 99-point-something percent of providers—real doctors, real health providers, real health care officials are scared that the new law could take funding away from local health departments, if we can imagine that. The director of public health policy in Columbus—the State's capital—told the Columbus Dispatch that the law would have a ''significant impact'' on their department's ability to coordinate with hospitals and insurance companies.

So stand back for a second and see what they are doing. A bunch of right-wing, privileged, mostly White men in the legislature have decided that their political agenda trumps everything else, and they are willing to follow their—so that they can play to their far-right base, they are willing to jeopardize women's health. They are willing to go right up against what the Columbus Dispatch says—few papers in America are more conservative—when they talk about a significant impact on the department's ability to coordinate with hospitals and insurance companies. Why would they do that? They do it because they are playing to this far-right base who votes overwhelmingly in primaries.

The director said that because the bill is so broadly written, ''we wouldn't be able to work with any hospital in our jurisdiction.''

This Ohio law explicitly targets critical health and health education services for women. Don't take my word for it; all you have to do is read the bill. This chart shows that it prohibits Ohio clinics and hospitals from using Federal dollars—and I am quoting directly from the bill—for any of the programs established by the Violence Against Women Act, the Minority HIV/AIDS Initiative, the Infertility Prevention Project, the Personal Responsibility Education Program, and the Breast and Cervical Cancer Mortality Prevention Act. Think about that—the Mortality Prevention Act. This bill prohibits Ohio clinics and hospitals from using Federal dollars to implement these laws.

It means no Federal dollars for the program administered by the Administration for Children and Families in the Department of Health and Human Services to educate adolescents on abstinence and contraception for the prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. So this legislation that Governor Kasich signed that these privileged, mostly White men in the State legislature—politically far to the right, the majority of the State legislature—the bill they passed and Governor Kasich signed would mean that we wouldn't be able to use the Federal dollars we have to educate adolescents on abstinence and contraception for the prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections.

So what are they doing? The extremists on the other side are saying no Federal dollars for abortion. There aren't Federal dollars for abortion. But they are saying no Federal dollars to preach abstinence and to educate young people about abstinence and sexually transmitted diseases. So what are they doing and why are they doing this to the women in Ohio?

This law bars women from accessing cancer screenings, fertility services, AIDS prevention, and help coping with abuse and violence. Do these far-right members of the legislature know no low-income or moderate-income young women? Do they know no teenagers, no female teenagers and young male teenagers, too, who maybe could benefit from some of these programs, including abstinence education, learning about contraceptives, and learning about how sexually transmitted diseases are in fact transmitted?

I support a woman's right to make personal, private health care decisions for herself with her doctor. But no matter your personal feelings about abortion, surely we can agree—although the legislature can't in my State—surely we can agree that cancer screenings and programs that have helped bring Ohio's teen pregnancy and STD rates down are a good thing.

I would say that Ohio right now—and this is embarrassing for me to say on the Senate floor in front of colleagues—my State is 50th for Black babies and infant mortality and 47th overall in infant mortality. We are 47th overall, 50th for Black infant mortality.

The legislature underfunds public health, and they then undercut—because of this legislature's action with Governor Kasich's signature—they undercut the Violence Against Women Act, they undercut minority HIV and AIDS education, they undercut the personal responsibility education program, they undercut breast and cervical cancer mortality prevention, and they undercut infertility prevention projects. I just don't get it.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent for an additional 5 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BROWN. A woman in New Carlisle wrote to me saying:

> There was a time when I could not find full-time employment, I did not have health insurance, and I also was not eligible for any assistance from the government. My husband and I were newly married and trying to build a responsible life together.
>
> I was 21. I had a family history of breast cancer and ovarian cancer, so access to healthcare was crucial for me. Planned Parenthood was the only place that would help me look after my health and plan my own family and lifestyle in a way that I could afford.

Another woman went on to say: ''Planned Parenthood made an impoverished young woman feel safe and comfortable and valued.''

Another woman in Boardman, OH, wrote: ''Along with many other women, I was treated at Planned Parenthood, and I received a referral to a specialist, which saved my reproduction.''

Another woman wrote saying that she had a child at 13 and gave up the child for adoption. After that she made the choice to get educated about family planning and birth control. She couldn't afford to go to a family doctor, so Planned Parenthood was where she turned to make sure she never had to go through that experience again.

A young woman from Columbus told the Canton Repository newspaper that while she was speaking at the statehouse. Half of the lawmakers looked like they were about to fall asleep. Many were looking at their cell phones. They didn't want to listen to a young, low-income woman talk about her personal life and what Planned Parenthood meant to her.

What is happening is not all that different in Ohio than across the country. There is an organized attack on women's rights to make health care decisions for themselves. It is not about health or safety. Look at these examples. It is about politicians thinking they know better than women and their doctors. It is happening as we speak. These so-called TRAP laws in Ohio and in dozens of other States have created gaps in care that threaten women's ability to see the providers of their choice.

Health clinics in Texas have shut their doors. If the Supreme Court upholds the Texas law being challenged, the remaining clinics in the State may be forced to turn their patients away for good.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, in the last 2 minutes I would like to say a few more words about the Supreme Court vacancy.

Four former U.S. attorneys from Ohio, Washington State, California, and Virginia published an op-ed that went around the country urging the Senate to promptly consider a Supreme Court nominee to replace Justice Scalia.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the writings of the former U.S. attorneys.

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

> Steve Dettelbach, Jenny Durkan, Melinda Haag and Tim Heaphy are Democratic former U.S. attorneys for, respectively, Northern Ohio, Western Washington, Northern California and Western Virginia. As former U.S. attorneys in diverse districts that are home to more than 20 million Americans, we urge that the president promptly nominate, and the Senate promptly consider, a Supreme Court nominee to replace Justice Antonin Scalia. Both the plain language of the Constitution and plain truths regarding public safety and national security demand that result.
>
> For federal prosecutors, agents and criminal investigations, a year is a lifetime. We have seen real threats, whether it is the heroin epidemic or the threat of ISIS recruitment, facing the people in our communities each day.
>
> While law enforcement stands ready to protect the public from those threats, they need to know the rules of the road. Uncertainty about those rules impedes their efforts. Just as with the economy, uncertainty prevents good agents and prosecutors from deciding on investigative strategies and tactics, and making important charging decisions. The Supreme Court is the ultimate arbiter of the hardest and most important questions facing law enforcement and our nation.

Even as we write today, unsettled legal questions regarding search and seizure, digital privacy and federal sentencing are either pending before the Supreme Court or headed there. It is unfair and unsafe to expect good federal agents, police and prosecutors to spend more than a year guessing whether their actions will hold up in court. And it is just as unfair to expect citizens whose rights and liberties are at stake to wait for answers while their homes, emails, cell phones, records and activities are investigated. Equally important, as lawyers and former public officials committed to the Constitution and the rule of law, it is incredible to us that anyone who claims fidelity to those ideas can argue that either the president or the Senate should not fulfill their duties. And we should be clear on what those duties are. Announcing ahead of time that the Senate will reject any nominee, or refusing to hold fair hearings, does not fulfill the Senate's duty to provide ''advice and consent'' on court nominees. The ''advice'' called for in the Constitution does not include, ''Just forget it, Mr. President.''

It is ironic that the arguments being made by those urging a year-plus delay are precisely the types of arguments that Scalia abhorred. They are based on politics and some vague notions of Senate ''interpretations'' of the Constitution. As U.S. attorneys we were constantly assessing the strength of constitutional and other legal arguments. And there was no more demanding jurist than Scalia when it came to supporting those arguments with written law.

One argument is based on the ''Thurmond rule,'' named for the former senator from South Carolina, which calls for no confirmations in the final months of a president's term. But this ''rule'' has never been applied to the Supreme Court and it finds no home in the text of the Constitution. We would all have bought tickets to see Scalia question a lawyer who dared to raise an argument like that. Few things in the Constitution seem as unambiguous as term length. The president is elected for four years under Article II. There is no clause diminishing the president's duties in the last year, and as even Jeb Bush acknowledged, such notions are dangerous.

Should the president stop fighting ISIS in his last year? Should senators facing an election year not be allowed to vote on judicial nominees so that the ''people can decide?'' Certainly not. The people already did decide what would happen from January 2013 to January 2017. They elected President Obama. In both our communities and court system, we don't have more than a year to blithely waste for political reasons. The safety concerns and dangers are pressing, and our leaders in the White House and the Senate do not have built-in vacation time on our dime.

Mr. BROWN. I close just begging, urging, imploring, and beseeching my colleagues on the Republican side to move forward on the Supreme Court nominee.

We have not had a Supreme Court vacancy for as long as a year since the Civil War because we were at war in the 1860s. The average nomination process for confirming a Supreme Court nominee when there are 8 members of the Supreme Court is only about 6 weeks. The longest, Justice Thomas, took 99 days. The President of the United States is elected for 4 years—not a 3-year term. A 4-year term has 300-plus days in the term.

This Senator is disappointed—I will leave it at that—to hear that my colleagues have said there will not be hearings. Then they said that not only will there not be hearings for the President's nomination, they will not even meet with a nominee. This Senator finds it rather shameful for an institution with this kind of heritage and this kind of reputation that we don't do better than that. I urge my colleagues to do our jobs, do what we were elected to do, what we were sworn in to do, and do what we are paid to do to bring this nominee—vote against them if you like but bring up this nominee for real Senate consideration.

I yield the floor, and I thank Senator GRASSLEY for allowing me more time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Well, Madam President, it is another day and another tantrum from the minority leader, but it doesn't matter how much the minority leader jumps up and down or how much the minority leader stomps his feet, we aren't going to let liberals get away with denying the American people an opportunity to be heard. Letting the American people decide this question is a reasonable approach, it is a fair approach, and it is the historical approach. It is the approach the other side advocated when the shoe was on the other foot, and it is what the American people deserve.

They deserve an opportunity and responsibility that we do it right instead of rushing to judgment. Voters deserve the right to be heard. The American people want a reasonable justice, a person who will make the right decisions.

As the American people continue voting during the Presidential election, they face a choice: Do they want just another Justice who will look to her heart and apply her own ethics and perspective when deciding important constitutional questions that impact every American or do they want a Justice who, like Justice Scalia, adheres to the Constitution and the rule of law and decides cases based on wherever the text takes him or her. We can't overstate how critical it is for the American people to understand what is at stake in this debate.

Today take a little bit of time to discuss the impact that these two different visions would have on everyday Americans. Many leading Court observers believe that adding yet another liberal Justice to the Court whose decisions are unmoored from the constitutional text would lead to major changes in the Court's jurisprudence. As a recent New York Times article put it, adding another liberal to the Supreme Court ''would be the most consequential ideological shift on the Court . . . creating a liberal majority that would almost certainly reshape American law and American life.''

So it will impact all of us. According to the same article, a host of Supreme Court precedents on free speech, freedom of religion, the right to keep and bear arms, the death penalty, and abortion would be overturned. The article speculates that ''abortion rights would become more secure, and gun rights less so. . . . First Amendment arguments in cases on campaign finance, public unions, and commercial speech would meet a more skeptical reception.''

In that same article, one law school dean noted that with another liberal on the Court, ''the judicial debate over the fundamental possibility of ObamaCare would likely draw to an end.'' So let's consider just a few of the Supreme Court precedents that would likely be overturned with another liberal Justice on the Court.

First and foremost, it is our Second Amendment rights that would fall squarely within the liberals' sights. The Heller decision, authored by Justice Scalia, recognized, based on the intent of the Framers, that the Second Amendment guarantees an individual constitutional right to gun ownership.

Again, as one law professor noted in the New York Times, with another liberal in the Court, ''The five would narrow Heller to the point of irrelevancy.'' Another said: ''If we got a fifth liberal on the court, the pendulum would swing pretty quickly on gun control. . . . I expect that we'd see a major shift in the kind of gun control laws that get approved by the court.''

In other words, Heller and the individual constitutional rights it guarantees would be turned into a relic. It would be an ornament without any practical limiting effect on the government's infringement upon the constitutional right of an individual to have gun ownership. Once this happens, all bets are off on the right to keep and bear arms.

Next, the First Amendment right of the American people to make their voices heard would be drastically curtailed if the Court overturns Citizens United. In fact, as a University of Chicago Law School professor said in the New York Times, ''Citizens United is on every liberal's list of opinions that ought to go.''

Freedom of religion protections under the First Amendment wouldn't be far behind. Another liberal Justice could allow the government to force Americans to comply with laws that violate their deeply held religious views. For example, a new Justice could provide the fifth vote to overturn the Hobby Lobby decision, which recognized the right of the owners of a closely held corporation to resist laws on religious grounds, such as ObamaCare's contraception mandate.

Of course, we all know free speech protections are being eroded and diluted in this country. On college campuses across the country, speech isn't being protected because of the speaker's viewpoint. Rather than debate openly with opponents as Justice Scalia did, too many people today want to shut down debate and muzzle anybody who disagrees with them.

What other rights are at stake in this election? Incredibly important precedents under the First Amendment's establishment clause would be at risk. Of course, I am talking about Supreme Court cases allowing prayer at town-hall meetings or permitting low-income parents to receive public school vouchers to defray the cost of the child's private school, including religious schools. Of course, while yet another liberal Justice could read narrowly the First and Second Amendments that are in the Constitution, he or she could read broadly those rights that are not in the Constitution at all.

If yet another liberal is nominated to the Court, even reasonable restrictions on abortion enacted into law through the democratic process would be swept away. Just a few years ago the Court upheld the ban on partial birth abortion by a 5-to-4 vote in the case of Carhart. Partial birth abortion is a horrific practice that crushes an unborn baby's skull, killing it while its head is still in the womb. It is one very small step short of infanticide. If the American people elect a liberal during this Presidential election, and that President nominates another liberal to replace Justice Scalia, we can all expect a constitutional right to abortion on demand without limitation. In the words of one law professor, ''At-risk precedents run from campaign finance to commerce, from race to religion, and they include some signature Scalia projects, such as the Second Amendment. . . . Some would go quickly, like Citizens United, and some would go slower . . . but they'll go.''

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I ask unanimous consent for 4 more minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRASSLEY. That leads me to a broader point. There is more at stake than the results of any particular case as important as those cases are. The American people need to consider whether they want their next Justice to decide cases based on the text of the Constitution as it was understood at the time it was adopted or whether Justices are free to update the Constitution according to their own moral and political philosophies. Should Justices apply accepted legal principles through sound reasoning of new facts or should they do legal back flips to reach their desired public policy goals?

Of course, this second approach is not law. Instead, it is what Justice Scalia called ''legalistic argle-bargle'' and ''jiggery-pokery.'' Justice Scalia knew the rule of law was a law of rules. The rule of law is not a law of whatever is in the Justice's heart. When a Justice believes, as President Obama does, that any time he views the Constitution as unclear, he can apply his own life experience and empathy for his or her favorite causes. The Justice has a clear incentive to think the Constitution is unclear, but a Justice isn't entitled to read those views into the Constitution and impose them on the American people. Our Constitution sets up a Republic, not a government by judiciary.

Unless the Constitution specifically prohibits the democratic process from reflecting the will of the people, the decisions are made by elected individuals who are accountable to the voters. The Supreme Court plays a very important role in keeping the branches of the Federal Government within constitutional powers, keeping the Federal and State governments within their constitutional sphere, and it ensures the government complies with the Bill of Rights. That is the basis for its legitimacy.

When the Court reads the Constitution in ways that reflect the Justice's personal policy views rather than the text, it does not act legitimately. Instead, it denies the people the legal right to govern themselves. Justice Scalia understood this better than anyone. The more the Court reaches out and grabs power it is not entitled to hold, the more it legislates from the bench, the more decisions it robs from the American people.

As a direct result, step-by-step and inch-by-inch, liberty is lost. As John Adams observed, ''Liberty, once lost, is lost forever.''

Since the days of the Warren Court, this is what liberal Justices have done. Under the guise of constitutional interpretation, they have imposed liberalism on the American people. They have done it on issues and in ways they couldn't achieve through the ballot box.

This is the decision facing the American people during this Presidential election. If the American people elect a liberal as their next President, and he or she nominates a like-minded judge to replace Justice Scalia, liberalism will be imposed on the American people to a degree this country has never before witnessed. I hope anyone who cares about these important issues will take very serious note.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Nebraska.

BEEF AGREEMENT WITH ISRAEL

Mrs. FISCHER. Madam President, I rise to congratulate Nebraska's beef producers for continuing to reach new areas of the world with our very high-quality American beef. Earlier this month it was announced that WR Reserve, a beef-processing plant in Hastings, NE, will have the honor of delivering the first U.S. shipments to Israel in nearly 13 years. In December 2003, Israel was one of many countries to suspend imports of U.S. beef, following a confirmed case of BSE in the United States. Because of this, America's beef producers have been unable to ship their products to this close friend and ally. However, during my visit to Israel last fall, U.S. Ambassador to Israel Dan Shapiro asked me to begin a dialogue with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and find a way to bring Nebraska beef to Israel. The Ambassador was especially interested in serving that Nebraska beef at the Embassy's annual 4th of July celebration.

Over the last few months, I have worked with the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service and with officials at the Nebraska Department of Agriculture in a concerted effort to find a solution. I am extremely pleased to inform this body that an agreement was achieved, the ban was lifted, and Nebraska will supply the first shipments of beef to Israel in over a decade.

Ambassador Shapiro was quick to praise this breakthrough, noting:

> This agreement gives Israeli consumers access to the world's highest-quality beef. At the same time, it creates and supports jobs in the great state of Nebraska.

I couldn't agree with the Ambassador more. Israel is a critical ally of the United States, and I was pleased to work with the USDA and the Israeli Government to supply the first American beef shipments to Israel in over a decade.

Nebraska's beef producers are the best in the world, and this agreement is a testament to their tireless commitment to delivering safe and high-quality beef to millions of dinner tables around the world. In Nebraska, cattle outnumber people more than 3 to 1. With nearly $7.2 billion in annual cash receipts, our beef production is the largest sector of the State's economy, and Nebraska leads the Nation in every aspect of beef production. I would also like to note that this agreement shows that science-based trade can overcome myth and misinformation.

By ending this ban, Israel becomes one of the last countries to reopen its market to U.S. beef and abide by international trade regulations. In doing so, this agreement reinforces the progress made by the U.S. beef industry to eliminate BSE-related trade restrictions.

I also join the Nebraska Agriculture Department director, Greg Ibach, in congratulating WR Reserve. Their hard work made this agreement possible after complying with a rigorous inspection process that included regular visits from the Israeli Government.

Prior to this agreement, according to the USDA, Israel imported beef products from other nations worth $405 million in 2014. Ninety-five percent of these imports originated in Latin America with smaller volumes coming from Australia and the European Union.

Now the United States will have the opportunity to showcase our world-famous beef to a new global market, and Nebraska is very proud to lead that charge. I was honored to work collaboratively with State, Federal, and international officials to ensure that Nebraska's beef producers achieved those necessary approvals.

I am proud to represent the people of Nebraska. Through this agreement, new markets are now open to Nebraska's producers, businesses, and to the communities that rely on them for economic progress. I will continue to work to ensure Nebraska's beef producers have the opportunity to do what they do best—feed the world.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

PHIL NOWAK

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, last month I came to the floor—in fact, I come to the floor just about every month—to highlight the great work being done by the men and women of the Department of Homeland Security.

Last month I focused on the folks who work at FEMA, which is one of 22 agencies that collectively make up the Department of Homeland Security—the newest, youngest Department in the Federal Government.

Just a few days before my speech, much of the east coast was inundated, as you may recall, by one of the largest snowstorms we have had in a long time, and on that day FEMA was working around the clock to prepare for and respond to what could have been a much more devastating storm. We were hit hard, but we would have been a lot worse off if not for the preparation and the training FEMA had done in not just the days, weeks, and months, but literally years ahead leading up to the storm in order to make us better prepared.

For more than a year now, I have come to the floor and I have focused on a different agency within the Department of Homeland Security. It will take about 2 years to knock them all out, but we are making some progress, and I have done so to highlight the exemplary and important work done by more than some 200,000 people who comprise the Department of Homeland Security. They work around the country, and they work outside our country—in Mexico, Central America, South America, Europe, and all over the place in order to make us safer in this country.

These men and women perform a wide range of vitally important work, and they do it every day. They inspect the fruit and vegetables that arrive at our ports of entry, much like the Port of Wilmington in my State. It is the top banana port in the country. They patrol our borders, like the Border Patrol agents dealing with increased migration from Central America. They defend our computer networks in cyber space, responding to a new and growing 21st-century threat. They keep our Presidents and Vice Presidents and their families and former Presidents and their families, as well as candidates for those positions, along with visiting foreign dignitaries, safe from harm. They have a lot of work to do.

The work of these DHS personnel deployed at the frontlines is made possible in part because of the dedicated work of the men and women behind the scenes at the Department of Homeland Security's Management Directorate. As my colleagues have often heard me say, management really does matter. I will say it again: Management really does matter. And there are few places where that is more true than at the Department of Homeland Security.

The Management Directorate works to support the missions and employees of all 22 component agencies which together comprise the Department of Homeland Security. They rent field offices, they buy essential equipment and vehicles, and they help to ensure that Department employees receive the paychecks and benefits they have worked for and earned. Within the Management Directorate, the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer works to ensure that the Department is doing what is best for its employees, while providing the Department managers with the guidance and resources they need to help DHS take care of their own.

One member of the Management Directorate is an especially committed fellow whose name is Phil Nowak. He is committed to DHS employees—his fellow colleagues. He is the Chief of Staff in the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer.

Phil grew up not in Iowa or Delaware, he grew up in San Francisco, not far from where I served in the Navy for a while. He joined the U.S. Coast Guard right after college. After serving in the Coast Guard for 20 years, he retired as a commander. I was once a commander—my favorite rank. Both of us served and exchange salutes all the time, Madam President. But Phil retired as a commander in 2007 and joined the Federal Emergency Management Agency to help coordinate disaster response. In 2010 Phil moved to the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer, and in 2013 he took over as Chief of Staff.

As Chief of Staff, Phil supports the work of the Chief Human Capital Officer in managing the workforce of the third largest Cabinet agency in our Federal Government—the third largest. With 22 component agencies and DHS employees stationed literally around the world, Phil and his team of 200 men and women certainly have their work cut out for them. Supporting the Department employees and providing them with the resources they need to excel and grow in their work is critical to maintaining a motivated, effective, and capable Department.

With some notable exceptions, we know many of the components of this relatively young Department have struggled with employee morale almost from its inception. Each year the Partnership for Public Service releases its ''Best Places to Work in the Federal Government'' survey, and each year the Department of Homeland Security ranks at or near the bottom of all the agencies when it comes to overall employee morale.

With Congress imposing shortsighted budget cuts across government, imposing pay freezes, and just last week threatening a shutdown of the Department of Homeland Security in the middle of our fight against ISIS, it is no wonder that sometimes DHS employees feel unappreciated. We probably would too. Despite these setbacks, leaders such as Phil Nowak are working every day and every night to right the ship and improve morale at DHS. And a bunch of us here in the Senate, Democrats and Republicans, are trying to be helpful in that regard.

In providing leadership and direction for human capital management for the Department, Phil Nowak makes sure that the Department's efforts to improve morale translate to each of the 22 different component agencies of the Department of Homeland Security and are felt by each of its 240,000 employees. To help do this, Secretary Jeh Johnson has created what he calls a Unity of Effort Initiative to bring the Department of Homeland Security components together and make the Department greater than the sum of its parts. Phil leads one of the Unity of Effort Initiatives. It is called the Human Capital Leadership Council, which brings together human resources managers from across the Department. Through this coordination and other Unity of Effort Initiatives, Phil's team works hard to better ensure that the Department's 240,000 employees feel like part of a larger DHS family.

In such a large agency, with so many people with diverse talents and backgrounds spread around the world, it is easy to focus on the broader mission and lose sight of the individuals who help the Department achieves its many missions, but Phil, I am happy to say, hasn't lost sight of them. Phil and his team do yeomen's work, and they focus on the value that each and every employee adds to the Department's mission. It is fitting, then, that Phil's colleagues describe him as caring deeply for them and for other employees throughout the Department. His commitment to them is clear, it is welcome, and it is unwavering.

In his own life, Phil values professional resilience, and in a job that is sometimes overlooked, yet incredibly important, I think that is a necessary trait. It is also a fitting quality for a runner, and Phil is an avid runner. I like to run, but this man, Madam President is the real deal. He has completed both the Marine Corps Marathon and the JFK 50 Mile ultra-marathon

twice. I am not fit to carry his running shoes. When he isn't running, Phil is building or fixing something around the house, cheering on those San Francisco 49ers and the San Francisco Giants—I hope it is not when they are playing my Detroit Tigers—and spending time with his wife of 26 years, Cristy, and their three children, Sam, Elizabeth, and Andrew. We are grateful to them for sharing their husband and their dad.

Phil Nowak is just one example of the thousands of men and women at the Department of Homeland Security who work behind the scenes every day to support their colleagues and make our country safer for all of us. Phil and his team focus on individuals, they bring together components through a unity of effort, and they work tirelessly to improve employee morale. Management really does matter, and without Phil and his colleagues at the Management Directorate, the Department's mission to protect our homeland would suffer.

To Phil Nowak and to his team in the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer, to every other hard-working employee at the Department of Homeland Security and at the Directorate for Management, I want to say a couple of words: Thank you. Let me say them again: Thank you.

This past week I was doing some traveling and going through some airports. We usually try to use the TSA precheck, which goes a little more smoothly because people have been prescreened. At one place we were flying out of, they advertised TSA precheck was open, but it wasn't, so we had to be regular, ordinary people. At each of those places, the folks at TSA—right there at the frontline trying to protect us as we fly around the country, around the world in these airplanes—they were doing their job. It is a hard job, and I would say probably a thankless job. Everyone wants to get through. They do not want to take their shoes off or their belts off or have to take their toiletries out. They want to get through there, get on the plane, and go someplace, but not get harmed and arrive safely.

When I fly, a lot of times I will tell the folks at TSA who I am and the committee I serve on just to let them know we appreciate the work they do for all of us. Every now and then—including over the weekend—a TSA officer will say to me: Nobody has ever thanked me before. How about that. Nobody has ever thanked me before.

So I say: Well, let me thank you again. And keep doing your job well, and hopefully you will get a lot of thanks.

But to all the folks at DHS who are taking on a hard job and doing it well, we thank you for what you do every day to protect our country, the land of the free and the home of the brave. And may God bless you.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, this is a day-night double header. That was the day game, and what I want to do now is focus on the second half of the story as long as time will allow me to do that.

As the Presiding Officer knows, I come from the State of Delaware. Delaware is noted for a number of things, and one of the things we are noted for is that before any other State ratified the Constitution, we did it. For 1 whole week, Delaware was the entire United States of America. We opened it up and we let in Maryland and New Jersey and Pennsylvania, ultimately Iowa and other States, and I think it has turned out pretty well most days. But we were the first to ratify the Constitution.

My family and I live in northern Delaware, and just up the road from us is Philadelphia. That is where the Constitution was first debated, and folks from throughout the 13 Colonies came and argued for and against different provisions and how we should set up the structure of our government. One of the hardest provisions they argued on and debated was whether there should be a legislative branch at all, and if there should be, should it just be unicameral—just one entity, one body within that legislative branch—or should there be two. Should the number of votes and the power that States have be in accordance with the size of their State, how many people they have, or how would they balance things out.

Some of them worked out the Connecticut Compromise that said that every State will have two Senators—the same number—and they will be part of the U.S. Senate, and the House of Representatives would be comprised such that the more people who live in a State, the more Representatives they would have. That was the Connecticut Compromise. It was worked out. It was maybe not a perfect compromise in the eyes of some, but it enabled them to move forward, and most people think it is fair and reasonable.

Another really tough issue they wrestled with in those days was with respect to the third branch of government. We have the executive and the legislative and the judicial branch. The question was, What are the judges going to do, these Federal judges? How are they going to be appointed? Who is going to pick them? And if it is the Chief Executive Officer, should the President be able to name by himself or herself who the judges are going to be, the Federal judges and the Supreme Court Justices? Should it be left up to the Senate? Should it be left up to the House of Representatives? Should it be a joint effort by the House and the Senate? Should there be some role for the President, the Chief Executive, to play? How should it work out?

Time and again they voted on this issue at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. Finally, after a number of votes that were just not successful—they couldn't come to a successful conclusion—they actually called out for clergy to come in and called on Divine intervention to get over this issue on how to pick, how to select Federal judges. I don't know if it was Divine intervention, but at the end of the day the deal said: The President shall nominate—not appoint, not name, but shall nominate—folks to serve as Federal judges, including the Supreme Court, and the Senate would have an opportunity to provide advice and consent to the President.

We have argued a lot over the years about what advice and consent should be, but it makes very clear that the President has a job to do with respect to the naming of judges. I believe we have a job to do as well.

About 300 yards from the tavern where the Constitution was first ratified on December 1787 in Delaware, with one hand on the Bible I raised my other hand and took an oath to defend the Constitution as Governor of Delaware. I had never thought very much about what kind of qualities I would look for in a judge.

With my Republican opponent in the Governor's race, a wonderful guy named B. Gary Scott, in 1992, we had 35 joint appearances together, debates. In all those forums, no one ever asked: What quality would you look for in the people you would nominate to be a supreme court justice for the State of Delaware or a member of the court of chancery, which is a court that has a national and international role to play?

The superior court also hears not just Delaware cases but national cases as well. In all those forums, nobody ever asked me: What would you consider? As it turned out, that was a very important part of my job. I am proud to say the Delaware judiciary is one of the highest regarded of any State judiciaries that we have. We have a very unusual system where there has to be an equal balance between Democrats and Republicans on the judiciary. It is not a spoils system. If there is one more Republican than a Democrat and there is a vacancy, you have to name a Democrat. That is the way the system works.

When I was Governor, we had a person who had been chancellor of the court of chancery, which is a high honor. He decided he was going to leave. So we had a vacancy to fill. I named a Republican. In that case, I actually had the flexibility to name a Democrat or Republican. I wanted to name the best person that I thought was interested in serving. The criteria I used in nominating people to serve on the judiciary in Delaware was that I wanted people who were really smart. I wanted to nominate folks who knew the law. I sought to nominate people who embraced the Golden Rule, who treat other people the way they want to be treated, so that folks who came before them in a courtroom received

fair and equal treatment. I wanted to nominate people who worked hard. I wanted to nominate people who had good judgment. I sought to nominate people who were able to make a decision. Sometimes people can have a lot of those qualities but have a hard time making a decision. I didn't want to do that. I wanted to have people who could do all those things.

My hope is that this President will look at Democrats, Republicans, and Independents and find among them the man or woman who meets all that criteria and more. That is the President's job.

I was up at the Detroit Auto Show. I know the Presiding Officer has a lot of assembly and supply operations in his State. Delaware used to, until fairly recently, build more cars and trucks per capita than any other State. So I care a lot about who is running GM and Chrysler. We lost both plants a few years ago when they went into bankruptcy. But I still go back to the Detroit Auto Show most years to keep in touch with the industry.

This last January, a month ago, I was in Detroit. It was the opening day of the Detroit Auto Show, with tens of thousands of people converging on the Detroit Auto Show, going this way and that way to see the different reviews and different vehicles, concept cars or new production vehicles that are going to be launched maybe later this year.

During the afternoon, I was looking for a restroom. I found one and so did hundreds of other people—in and out of this one restroom. I noticed an older gentleman who was a custodian standing with his cart, his mop and bucket, and his broom, outside of the mass of humanity. I walked in. In spite of all of those people, the place was remarkably clean.

I figured he was the janitor who had responsibility for this restroom. When I came out, I said to him: I just want to say, sir, that this is a really clean restroom. With all the different kinds of people you have coming in and out of here, I don't know how you do it. I just want to say thank you for doing your job really well.

He looked me in the eye and said: That is my job. He said: This is my job. And he said: I try to do my job well. He said: Everybody has a job, and everybody should try to do their job well.

I thought to myself: Wow, wow, what insight, what a message.

Under the Constitution, the President has a job. Apparently he is moving—not with haste, but I think with dispatch—to try to meet his responsibilities. I know we have had any number of times when Presidents have nominated Supreme Court Justices in a Presidential election year. I know a dozen or more times it has happened. I think every single time we had hearings for that nominee. There has been the opportunity to debate the nominee, question the nominee, meet with the nominee, debate here on the floor, and vote on the nomination up or down. I don't know of any time when we have not done that, even when a nominee came to us during a Presidential election year.

I know we are in a crazy election season. It is still 8 months, 9 months before the election. But I hope that, at the end of the day, just like that janitor at the Detroit Auto Show intent on doing his job, the rest of us have the feeling that we have a job to do and that we should be in town doing our job. We have that need. We have that responsibility. I hope we will fulfill it.

(Mr. COATS assumed the Chair.)

Mr. President, the other thing I want to say is ''baseball.'' When the Presiding Officer and I were House Members together, we used to play baseball. We played in the congressional baseball game maybe 10 years ago—me on the Democratic side, him on the Republican side. For a year or two, I was almost selected as the most valuable Republican player—and I am a Democrat. So I wasn't always a great player, but I gave it my best.

I was in Florida for an event over the weekend, and last week in Florida and Arizona something wonderful happened. What happened was that spring training camps opened. Pitchers and catchers reported, and then the full teams started to report. When they start the spring training games in a day or two—maybe tomorrow—teams will take the field and they will take the field with nine players.

When Justice Roberts was going through his confirmation hearing before the Judiciary Committee, he was asked: What is the job of the Supreme Court? How would you describe it, in a simple way?

He said: Our job basically is to call balls and strikes.

When baseball teams take the field, they have nine players in nine positions. When the Supreme Court is in session, they have nine justices—or at least they did until the death of Justice Scalia. Just like you can't have a baseball team take the field without the shortstop or without the catcher or even without the second baseman or the center fielder and play well and do their job, at the end of the day, the Supreme Court is a team. They need nine—not players but nine justices—to be able to do their job well. Let's keep that in mind.

The last thing I would say is that the American people are frustrated with us and our inability to get things done. Sometimes I can understand why they would feel that way. We have a great opportunity to get something done. I hope the President will nominate a terrific candidate, and I hope our Republican friends will at least have the courtesy of meeting with that man or woman, give him or her a chance to present themselves and explain what they are about, have a hearing on that person, and then give them the honor of a vote. I think they deserve that.

Mr. President, I yield the floor for my friend from Vermont, the senior Democrat on the Senate Judiciary Committee, Mr. LEAHY.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY ACT OF 2015—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 524, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 369, S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 5:30 p.m. will be equally divided between the two managers or their designees.

The Senator from Vermont.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I appreciate the comments of the senior Senator from Delaware. We have plenty of time to get a nomination to the Supreme Court from the President and to confirm a Justice, just as this body has done 12 times in Presidential election years. I think probably the most recent, of course, was when Democrats controlled the Senate and we confirmed unanimously President Reagan's nomination in an election year, his final year in office. So it can easily be done. Besides, let us just do our job. We get paid to be here and to do our job. We ought to do it.

We also have the matter that each one of us has taken a very solemn oath before God to uphold the Constitution. The Constitution says the President shall nominate and the Senate shall advise and consent. We ought to do just what we all have solemnly sworn to do. I take my oath very seriously. I hope other Senators do too.

Now, Mr. President, today the full Senate is going to begin a discussion about one of the most challenging public health crises of our time—addiction to prescription painkillers and other opioids. In my home State of Vermont, there are few issues more pressing than opioid addiction. It is tearing apart families and communities—families and communities I have known all my life.

In March 2008, nearly 8 years ago, when I was chairman of the Judiciary Committee, I first held a hearing in Rutland, VT, about the challenges this epidemic presents in rural parts of our country. In subsequent field hearings, we learned about how communities like Rutland, VT—a beautiful community—were constructively seeking ways to get ahead of addiction. But we also learned—and I think we knew

this—that there are no easy answers, and we need a comprehensive approach. Education, prevention, and treatment are essential if we are to reverse the tide in this fight.

Vermont's all-hands-on-deck example serves as a model for other States and communities across the Nation. In fact, just last week an article in the Christian Science Monitor detailed how Vermont's pioneering approach has been embraced well beyond Vermont's borders.

So, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Christian Science Monitor article entitled ''How one state turned its 'heroin crisis' into a national lesson'' be printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks.

Opioid addiction is not a new issue. It is not new to me, and it is not new to Vermont. But it is about time that the full Congress gave this public health crisis the attention it deserves. The bill we begin to consider today, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, or CARA, represents a positive step forward, and I am proud to be a cosponsor of it.

For decades, the knee-jerk response in Congress to those who struggled with addiction was misguided. We embraced harsh and arbitrary mandatory minimums, we ignored effective treatment options, and we pushed addicts further underground and away from recovery. Such policies reflect a complete misunderstanding of the problem of addiction.

At my hearings and everywhere I went, we saw police officers, faith communities, educators, medical professionals, parents, and addicts coming together, saying that no one group had the answer but the community had to come together. Because we know addiction is a disease, we know our tools for combating addiction must be the same as other disease—a commitment to evidence-based education and proven techniques for prevention, treatment, and recovery programs.

As one who has served in law enforcement, I know that law enforcement is an important element in a comprehensive approach. That is why I worked to include in this bill an authorization for funding to expand State-led anti-heroin task forces. But this legislation is important because it treats addiction as the public health crisis that it is. The bill authorizes a crucial program that I helped create that expands access to medication-assisted treatment programs—programs that have been plagued by massive waiting lists. The clinic in Chittenden County, VT—that is the largest of our 14 counties—has seen its wait list lengthened to nearly a year. What happens when that wait list is long? Several people have overdosed and died while waiting for treatment. Those deaths were probably preventable. We shouldn't die waiting for treatment. We have to do better.

The bill also recognizes the devastating impact that opioid abuse has on rural communities. Just as in your State and every other State, we have rural communities. Vermont is predominantly rural communities. My home where my wife and I have lived since we got married is on a dirt road. We know rural America. We know it has been hit hard by addiction. Emergency medical services in rural communities are often limited. I am glad that the bill we reported out of committee includes my provision to support our rural communities for the overdose reversal drug naloxone.

Over the last decade, death rates from opioid overdoses have steadily climbed across the country. But there is a real disparity between rural communities and major cities. We found the more rural a location, the higher the death rate. Getting lifesaving drugs into more hands will save lives across the country, especially in our rural communities that are among the hardest hit.

This is not a partisan issue. I thank Senator WHITEHOUSE and Senator GRASSLEY for working with me on this legislation in our Judiciary Committee. I hope we will soon see its passage here in the Senate. But one authorization bill by itself is not going to end addiction. It is not going to end the deaths that we are seeing in rural America and in urban America.

We need a significant commitment of targeted funding to implement this bill. Senator SHAHEEN's $600 million emergency supplemental appropriations bill provides those resources, and I am proud to be a cosponsor of that legislation, as well.

In your State, my State, and the other 48 States right now, we passed larger emergency supplemental bills that addressed swine flu and Ebola. We do not have Ebola in our country, but we passed an emergency supplemental bill to address that. We need to address what we have right here within our country today. Swine flu and Ebola presented far, far fewer dramatic health risks to our communities. We need to take this challenge just as seriously.

The bill we are considering today has received strong bipartisan support and deservedly so. But I hope all the Senators supporting CARA today will also support Senator SHAHEEN's legislation. One goes hand in hand with the other. We need to authorize these advances in dealing with the opioid crisis, but then we actually need to fund them.

We cannot pretend that solving a problem as large as opioid addiction costs nothing. We have an opportunity to equip our communities with the support and resources they need to finally get ahead of addiction. Programs will save lives. That is a worthy investment.

It is very easy to say we will pass a law to stop opioid addiction. We can all feel good about voting for that. Who is going to vote for legislation to say ''let us continue opioid addiction''? But if we do not put the money in it, then, basically, we are saying we want to feel good but we are not going to do anything for you.

We spend money worldwide. Some of it is for good causes, and some of it is totally wasted. Here we have a problem in the United States of America, where our priorities are first and foremost to our country. If you saw some of the people I heard in these hearings all over our beautiful State, some of the families with whom I have talked across their kitchen tables, and a young woman who had been addicted and is now helping to counsel others and the story she told, or if you saw a movie or TV program, you would say it couldn't be that grim. Well, it was. It is.

These people go across all income brackets, all brackets of education. It is tearing apart parts of our communities across the country. Fortunately, we have had some very brave people stand up. I hope Senator SHAHEEN's appropriation goes through because, if it does not, we are saying all the right things, as we should, except for one thing: We are not going to pay for it. This is too important to say the check is in the mail; just wait and wait. We can do better. We can do better.

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

[From The Christian Science Monitor, Feb. 23, 2016]

HOW ONE STATE TURNED ITS 'HEROIN CRISIS' INTO A NATIONAL LESSON

(By Gail Russell Chaddock)

Paths to Progress: Vermont's pioneering focus on treatment amid an opioid crisis is being embraced by politicians of both parties—well beyond the state.

America's opioid addiction crisis, now claiming 78 lives a day, is sweeping aside party lines both at the state level and even in famously gridlocked Washington.

The nation's governors, from deep-red Alabama to bluest-of-the-blue Vermont, are moving rapidly to a strategy of treating illegal drug users rather than jailing them.

It's a shift that runs deep in public opinion, as well. Some two-thirds of Americans now typically say that they prefer providing treatment to long prison sentences.

''This is an area where I can get agreement from Bernie Sanders and Mitch McConnell,'' President Obama said at a White House meeting with governors on Monday. ''That doesn't happen that often, but this is one. And it indicates the severity of the issue.''

But the governors are, in fact, well ahead of Washington on this issue—as they were on welfare reform in the 1990s and, more recently, sentencing reform.

Gov. Peter Shumlin (D) of Vermont, a leader in the pivot from prisons to treatment, says he got into the addiction fight after talking to people in his state.

''I found we were doing almost everything wrong,'' he told a forum on opioid and heroin addiction at The Pew Charitable Trusts in Washington on Friday.

The best hope is to get more people into treatment, he said. And the best time to do that is ''when the blue lights are flashing and the handcuffs are on.''

Vermont, like other states in the Northeast, is facing severe opioid challenges. In 2014, Governor Shumlin devoted his annual State of the State address entirely to

Vermont's ''full-blown heroin crisis.'' Annual overdose deaths from opioids had nearly doubled since 2004. The number of people seeking treatment for opioid addiction had spiked 770 percent since 2000.

WHAT VERMONT HAS DONE

And so Vermont has taken a hard look at its approach. Instead of jail, nonviolent offenders are given the option of going into treatment. They start in one of the state's new central clinics (hubs) and move on to a family doctor, counselor, or therapist closer to home (spokes).

Vermont law also shields people seeking medical help for an overdose from prosecution for manufacturing or selling drugs, not just for minor crimes. It also was the first state to legalize the sale of naloxone over the counter in pharmacies—a drug aimed at reversing overdoses and saving lives.

Other states have moved toward treatment instead of incarceration, but Vermont has done it on a grander scale, experts say.

''You've seen some elected officials support legalizing marijuana, some want to reform sentencing, some talk about overdoses, but very few have tied all these together in a comprehensive narrative,'' says Bill Piper, senior director of national affairs for the Drug Policy Alliance in Washington.

''Vermont's governor is at the forefront, and what makes him unique is that he's one of the few elected officials that has connected the dots on the various issues,'' he adds.

As a pioneer state, Vermont has also identified some of the limits of a treatment-centric strategy.

''As you build out treatment, and particularly in rural America, we can't get enough docs who are able to meet the demand of our waiting lists,'' Shumlin told the president at the White House meeting Monday.

But the most important issue, he told Mr. Obama, is to ''come up with a more rational approach to prescribing prescription drugs.''

A BID TO REIN IN PRESCRIPTIONS

Governors see legal prescriptions for drugs like OxyContin as the gateway to heroin. ''Overprescribing of opioid painkillers has fueled the nation's addiction crisis,'' according to a report from the National Governors Association's Health and Human Services Committee. In a bid to rein in prescriptions, governors on that committee plan to develop a list of protocols to present to the full membership at the next NGA meeting in August.

''The United States represents 5 percent of the world's population and consumes 80 percent of the world's opioids,'' said Gov. Charlie Baker (R) of Massachusetts, who chairs the NGA's Health and Human Services Committee, on Saturday. That's ''fundamentally flawed.''

When prescriptions are too hard to get—or too expensive—addicts switch to heroin. ''Most of the heroin addicts we treat started by using prescription opiates,'' says Brian McAlister, author of ''Full Recovery'' and CEO of the Full Recovery Wellness Center in Fairfield, N.J.

''Some were prescribed by a doctor or dentist, others were stolen from family or friends' medicine cabinets, and others were purchased illegally just to party—but the party ends very quickly. These drugs are highly addictive, and when the supply runs out, the problems get worse.''

AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

The prospect of politicians reining in pharmaceutical sales is a stretch in the halls of Congress. In 1993, the GOP-controlled Congress explicitly barred government from negotiating lower drug prices with drug companies. Last year, Big Pharma spent more than $235 million to influence policy outcomes in Washington—the largest budget of any lobby group in Washington.

Governors could set protocols on prescribing practices for painkillers on their own, Shumlin told the president. ''But it takes time,'' and ''it doesn't apply to all 50 states.'' Instead, he asked Obama to ''consider a national approach which simply says, for minor procedures, we're going to limit this to 10 pills and after that you've got to come back for more.''

''To be candid, the docs, the AMA [American Medical Association] are resistant to listening to politicians like us talking about how many pills to prescribe. But is there something you could do on a national level that would help us get out of this tragic mess?'' he added. Obama answered, at length, but in the end deferred to the states. ''A very specific approach to working with the docs, the hospitals, the providers so that they are not overprescribing'' can be done at the national level, he said. ''But it is most profitably done, I think, if we have bipartisan support from the governors so that by the time it gets to the national level, there is consensus and there's not a lot of politics involved in it.''

In a recent blog, AMA president Steven Stack called the opioid epidemic a ''defining moment'' for the profession. ''Our nation is needlessly losing thousands of people to a preventable epidemic, and we must take action for our patients.''

Mr. LEAHY. I see nobody else seeking recognition, so I suggest the absence of a quorum, and I ask the time be equally divided.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 369, S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

Mitch McConnell, Daniel Coats, Dan Sullivan, Orrin G. Hatch, Shelley Moore Capito, John Cornyn, Lindsey Graham, Roy Blunt, Ron Johnson, Chuck Grassley, Rob Portman, Susan M. Collins, Jeff Flake, Cory Gardner, Lamar Alexander, John Barrasso, John McCain.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to S. 524, a bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted ''yea'', the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) would have voted ''yea'', and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) would have voted ''yea.''

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 89, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 27 Leg.]

YEAS—89

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

NOT VOTING—11

Alexander	McCaskill	Sullivan
Blunt	Rubio	Toomey
Boozman	Sanders	Vitter
Cruz	Shelby	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 89, the nays are 0.

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

The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, an historic epidemic of drug overdose deaths is gripping our country. Over 47,000 Americans died from overdoses in 2014, an alltime high. Incredibly, that is more deaths than resulted from either car crashes or gun violence.

Addiction to opioids, primarily prescription pain killers and heroin, is driving this epidemic. It is destroying lives, families, and communities. It is a crisis. And it demands action.

Thankfully, the Senate can act this week, when we consider S. 524, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, or CARA.

CARA is a bipartisan bill authored by two Democrats and two Republicans—Senators WHITEHOUSE, PORTMAN, KLOBUCHAR, and AYOTTE.

These Senators have shown extraordinary leadership on this issue. They deserve credit for crafting a bill that addresses many of the different aspects of this epidemic, through evidence-based solutions and best practices. This is a complex crisis that requires a multifaceted solution.

Over the past few months, I have worked hard with the bill's authors to refine it and move it through the Judiciary Committee. I am proud to say that a few weeks ago it passed the committee on a voice vote, with no opposition.

CARA is only the latest bipartisan legislative accomplishment by the Judiciary Committee this Congress. We have had 21 bills pass the Committee this Congress, all with bipartisan support. But there are a few major bills that stand out.

Last April, the committee passed the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act unanimously, 19–0. The bill enhances penalties for human trafficking and equips law enforcement with new tools to target predators who traffic innocent young people. The bill passed the Senate 99–0 and was signed into law by the President.

In October, the committee passed the landmark Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act with a strong 15–5 bipartisan vote. My bill would recalibrate prison sentences for certain drug offenders, target violent criminals, and grant judges greater discretion at sentencing for lower-level drug crimes. I am working hard to build additional support for the bill so that it can be taken up by the full Senate soon.

Then in December, the committee passed my Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act, again without opposition. The bill will ensure that at-risk youth are fairly and effectively served by juvenile justice grant programs. Again, we are working hard to move this bill through the full Senate.

The bipartisan reforms enacted by each of these bills address real problems that affect the lives of many people across the nation and in my home state of Iowa. I am proud of the work we have done so far—but there is a lot more to do.

And that brings me back to the heroin and prescription drug epidemic. It isn't as bad in Iowa as it is in many areas of the country, but the eastern part of my State has been hit hard recently.

The human cost of what is happening across so many of these communities is incalculable. Every life that is lost or changed forever by this epidemic is precious. Especially for many young people who fall victim to addiction early in their lives, there is so much human potential at stake.

Many Iowans have heard the story of Kim Brown, a nurse from Davenport, and her son Andy. Andy was prescribed pain pills when he had surgery at age 14. Whether it was connected to abuse of those pain pills or not, he developed a drug problem as a teenager that he couldn't shake. He overdosed on heroin a few times but survived. And finally, at age 33, he died of an overdose, tragically leaving behind two young sons. Ms. Brown now speaks out around the State about the heroin epidemic.

Her story reflects a larger pattern. Over the last 20 years or so, doctors have increasingly prescribed opioids to help their patients manage pain. For many, these medicines have been the answer to their prayers. But for others, they have led to a nightmare of addiction.

According to numerous studies, prescription opioid addiction is a strong risk factor for heroin addiction. In some cases, those addicted to painkillers turn to heroin to get a similar high, because recently, it has become cheaper and more easily available.

And as Ms. Brown's story reflects, this epidemic is a matter of life and death. In fact, nationally, heroin overdose deaths more than tripled from 2010 to 2014.

But Iowans are fighting back. Last year, with the assistance of a new Federal grant, the U.S. Attorney's office and the Cedar Rapids Police Department formed the Eastern Iowa Heroin Initiative.

This partnership is focused on stemming the tide of heroin abuse through enforcement, prevention and treatment. I have been invited to participate in a townhall with them to discuss the epidemic, and I plan to do so soon.

When I do, I want to tell them that the Senate has acted on this crisis by passing CARA. CARA supports so many of the efforts to help stem the tide of addiction that are underway in Iowa and across the country.

As its name reflects, the bill addresses the epidemic comprehensively, supporting prevention, education, treatment, recovery, and law enforcement.

CARA starts with prevention and education. It authorizes awareness and education campaigns, so that the public understands the dangers of becoming addicted to prescription painkillers.

It creates a national task force to develop best prescribing practices, so that doctors don't expose their patients to unnecessary risks of addiction.

The bill encourages the use of prescription drug monitoring programs like Iowa's, which helps detect and deter ''doctor shopping'' behavior by addicts.

And the bill authorizes an expansion of the Federal initiative that allows patients to safely dispose of old or unused medications, so that these drugs don't fall into the hands of young people, potentially leading to addiction.

In fact, along with a few other committee members, I helped start this ''take back'' program in 2010 through the Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act. It has been a highly successful effort. Since 2010, over 2,700 tons of drugs have been collected from medicine cabinets and disposed of safely. Iowa also has a similar ''take back'' program that's expanding rapidly.

CARA also focuses on treatment and recovery. The bill authorizes programs to provide first responders with training to use Naloxone, a drug that can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose and directly save lives. Naloxone was used hundreds of times by first responders in Iowa in 2014.

Importantly, the bill provides that a set portion of Naloxone funding go to rural areas, like much of Iowa that is being affected most acutely. This is critical when someone overdoses and isn't near a hospital.

The bill also authorizes an expansion of Drug Free Communities Act grants to those areas that are most dramatically affected by the opioid epidemic. And it also authorizes funds for programs that encourage the use of medication assisted treatment, provide community-based support for those in recovery, and address the unique needs of pregnant and postpartum women who are addicted to opioids.

Finally, the bill also bolsters law enforcement efforts as well. Amazingly, in 2007, only 8 percent of State and local law enforcement officials across the country identified heroin as the greatest drug threat in their area. But by 2015, that number rose to 38 percent, more than any other drug.

So the bill reauthorizes Federal funding for State task forces that specifically address heroin trafficking.

I am also pleased that I was able to include in the bill a reauthorization of the funding for the methamphetamine law enforcement task forces as well.

I held a Judiciary Committee field hearing in Des Moines last fall about the ongoing meth problem across Iowa. And one thing the hearing made clear is that our friends in State law enforcement need all the help we can give them on that front, too.

All in all, the bill authorizes about $78 million per year to address this crisis.

It is no wonder that the bill is supported by a diverse range of stakeholders, including the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America, the Partnership for Drug-Free Kids, the National District Attorneys Association, the Major County Sheriffs' Association, the National Association of Attorneys General, and so many organizations in the treatment and recovery communities.

I urge my colleagues to support it this week, when the Senate has the opportunity to act to address this epidemic. We owe it to those, like Kim Brown, who have lost sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, coworkers and friends to act now.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, first I thank my colleague and chairman of the Judiciary Committee, CHUCK GRASSLEY.

Many years ago I went to Iowa with Senator GRASSLEY to set up an anti-drug coalition. We had done one in Ohio. I was the chair of that, and CHUCK GRASSLEY asked if I would come. This was probably 20 years ago that Senator GRASSLEY—and I was in the House.

We had a great visit. We had a couple of townhall meetings. CHUCK GRASSLEY is a guy who understands the issue, cares about it, and has devoted a lot of time and resources to it in Iowa. The people of Iowa know he is sincere about it because he has been on the ground setting up these coalitions and dealing with this issue.

Frankly, it is a little disappointing—probably to him and to me—to see that some 20 years later we are still facing this issue now and even different issues. He mentioned methamphetamines. He mentioned, of course, the heroin and opiate addiction problems with prescription drugs.

Twenty years ago it was more marijuana and cocaine, but I think the lesson we have all learned is these drugs will come and go in terms of their severity and their impact on our communities and our families, but it is always going to be there, and we need to keep up the fight.

Right now we have an urgent problem. That urgent problem was outlined by Senator GRASSLEY, but it is this growing use of opiates that leads to a horrible addiction. It has a grip on so many of our constituents, so many of our loved ones.

Over the weekend I had a townhall meeting. I asked—after we had talked about taxes, trade, energy, and other issues—if people would just raise their hands if they had been affected by the heroin and prescription drug addiction problem. I said: Has anybody in your family and friends been affected? Half of the hands in the room went up.

Unfortunately, that is the reality of this situation. In Ohio last year we lost almost 2,400 just to overdose deaths. That doesn't account for the fact that so many people are being saved now by naloxone—which is something that is encouraged by our legislation and we will talk about it in a second. Narcan is being used, but even those who survive the overdoses, of course, are seeing their families broken apart, their communities devastated.

I talked to a prosecutor over the weekend in one of our more rural counties, and he said: ROB, over 80 percent of our crime is directly related to this issue now, heroin and prescription drugs. Often it is people committing crimes to pay for their habit.

The people who are the purveyors of these drugs have a business plan; that is, to get you hooked with a relatively low cost at first and then you need more and more to be able to feel the same high. It gets more expensive to the point that it might go from $50 to $100 the first time to $1,000 or $1,500 a day by the end of your addiction. This is how horrible it is and it leads to so many collateral consequences.

I am very pleased the Senate voted tonight to proceed to this legislation called CARA, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. CARA is a Federal response to this issue. It is attempting to make the Federal Government a better partner with State and local governments, with nonprofits, to be able to help to reverse this tide to deal with this urgent problem in our communities. I would call it an epidemic. It certainly is at epidemic levels in my State of Ohio. Sadly, we are the top five in the country in terms of overdose deaths, but again it goes well beyond just those deaths. There are so many people who are affected by it negatively and so many who have not been able to fulfill their God-given purpose because of this horrible addiction.

This legislation called CARA is bipartisan. It is comprehensive. As Senator GRASSLEY said, he got it through the Judiciary Committee. I appreciate that. He got it through with something very extraordinary around here, which is a unanimous vote—meaning nobody objected. That never happens around here. It just means that every Senator is addressing this issue back home, understands it, and wants to do something about it. This legislation is built on common sense, research, and experts from around the country who have come in.

I thank Senator SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, who is the lead Democrat on this legislation and my lead cosponsor. He and I are the coauthors of this legislation. I also thank Senators KELLY AYOTTE and AMY KLOBUCHAR, who have been terrific partners. Then there are 34 other bipartisan cosponsors. I thank them all for their support.

I am excited that if this bill can pass, it will pass in the House as well because there is companion legislation. In fact, the House bill has 88 cosponsors right now—also bipartisan. So the idea is to get this bill passed, get it through the House, and have it signed into law by the President of the United States. It is urgent we do it.

This is a bill that not only has a lot of support on both sides of the aisle, but—much more importantly to me—it has the support of people all over the country who are experts in this field: doctors; those in recovery; experts in prevention, treatment, and recovery; and law enforcement.

The legislation actually comes—I hope you can see on this chart, the words are kind of small—but it comes from the last few years, putting together these experts from all around the country. We had five different summit meetings in Washington, DC.

One was with the criminal justice system. We brought in experts from all around the country to talk about treatment and alternatives to incarceration. As you will see in this legislation, we have ways to divert people from incarceration into treatment programs, which we think is part of the way to solve this problem.

We then had one that focused on women, the special interests and needs of women who are facing addiction and how to ensure they get into treatment. As we will talk about later, this has a lot to do with one of the problems that is out there right now, which is more and more babies who are born with addiction and having to take those babies through withdrawal. The care and compassion involved in that is truly impressive, but that was a good forum for us. We had one on the science of addiction and addressing the consequences of addiction. There are a lot of good people around the country who understand the science of this and what medication might work and what future medication might be better to deal with it.

We talked about youth drug prevention and developing communities of recovery. This is a very important aspect of our legislation. We don't just talk about treatment, as important as that is, we talked about how you divert people from getting into it in the first place through better prevention and education.

Finally, we had a forum on veterans focusing on substance abuse and PTSD and other issues. I recently visited one of our veterans courts in Columbus, OH, and saw the good work they are doing. Most people going through that court have mental health issues. Most also now have, sadly, opioid addiction issues, usually starting with prescription drugs and moving to heroin.

As I said, there is strong bipartisan support for this legislation in the House and the Senate. It is endorsed by more than 130 groups nationwide. By the way, those groups include some groups you might not expect normally to be together on something such as this—the Fraternal Order of Police, the American Society of Addiction Medicine, the Faces and Voices of Recovery, the Coalition for a Drug Free America, the Children's Hospital Association, the National Association of Addiction Treatment Providers, the Partnership for Drug Free Kids, the American Society of Addiction Medicine, the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors, groups who are in all of our States, the National Council for Behavioral Health, and, of course, the Major County Sheriffs' Association. So law enforcement, treatment, recovery, education—everybody is coming together on this because we realize this is going to take that kind of comprehensive approach with all sectors of our community being involved and engaged.

CARA now has support not only of a lot of these groups from around the country, but because of these groups—they helped us write a better bill.

What does the bill do? Here are the basic elements of CARA:

First, with regard to prevention and education, it does establish new task forces to develop better practices for prescribers simply because there has been overprescribing, particularly of prescription drugs. These narcotics have been overprescribed to the point that many people end up on heroin as a less expensive alternative to the prescription drugs to which they have become addicted. The task force is an interagency task force that is reporting back to the Congress on how to develop these best practices for the medical community.

The bill also establishes a national awareness campaign with regard to prevention and education. That is critical for us to get the word out. It has grants to local coalitions. This is in the Drug-Free Communities Act area. The Drug-Free Communities Act goes back to the 1990s. Since 1998 there has been $1.3 billion spent under the Drug-Free Communities Act. I was the author of that in the House. It is good legislation that helped create over 2,000 community coalitions around America. I chaired ours in Cincinnati, OH, for 9 years and am still very involved with it, and they do great work. But, again, we now have this new issue, this new threat we must address. This helps with regard to specific grants where there is a high degree of opioid addiction and the negative consequences of it, to be able to blend with the drug-free community program.

Law enforcement. The bill provides for training for Narcan—what is known as naloxone—for first responders to prevent overdoses. I think everybody in this Chamber has run into this back home. I went to a firehouse recently because we had lost a brave firefighter in a house fire, and I went to talk to his shift about him and to thank them for their service. After talking to them about their fallen comrade, they wanted to talk about this issue. They told me: ROB, we are spending more time administering Narcan than we are fighting fires these days. In other words, they are going out and helping people who are having overdoses and are saving their lives.

A friend of mine who is a firefighter in Cincinnati told me just a couple of weeks ago that he was responding to an overdose, saving someone in front of a house, when, in an entirely different group in the back of the house, an overdose occurred.

In Toledo last week, there was a response by emergency medical services to somebody who had hit a telephone pole. They found him with a syringe in his arm. He had overdosed. While they were responding to him, there were two other overdose calls in Toledo—one city in Ohio. There were three at the same time. Two of the three were saved by Narcan. The third died.

Our folks in law enforcement and our first responders, our firefighters, are doing a terrific job. They need help. They need more Narcan and more training to be sure they can continue to do what they are doing to prevent these overdoses. It is not the answer. Of course, the answer is prevention, education, and better treatment. But in the meantime, we have to provide them the help they need.

The law enforcement side also expands these drug prescription take-back programs. They work very well, as Senator GRASSLEY said, in some of our States. We need to do more to expand those, and that is usually done through our law enforcement communities.

It also authorizes a task force to combat heroin and methamphetamines. These are the law enforcement task forces we talked about earlier, which will help to coordinate Federal, State, and local law enforcement to deal with this issue.

On the treatment and recovery side, it expands medication assisted treatment for opioid and heroin addiction. It creates diversion, education, and treatment programs in the criminal justice system. We talked about that earlier. That is so important.

I have been at roundtable discussions all around my State and at a number of treatment centers talking to recovering addicts about how they got into the situation they are in and what advice they have. A young man told me a classic story. He had an injury. He started using prescription drugs. He got addicted. He needed money to buy these expensive pain pills. He actually stole from a family member, and he ended up in the law enforcement system and in jail. It was in jail that he was told for the first time that it was actually cheaper to buy heroin. He got out and bought heroin and became a heroin addict. He is now in treatment. He hit rock bottom, as he said, and I think it was because he had an overdose.

This is something where we need to figure out a better way to get people diverted and use the criminal justice system to provide the incentive to get them into the right treatment program.

It also supports recovery for youth and building communities of recovery, again focusing on our youth to get them to make the right decisions but also steering our youth who are addicted into the recovery they need. Sadly, this is now necessary in many of our high schools and in our colleges and universities.

It also establishes a task force to review some of the recovery and collateral consequences. This is an interagency task force that is going to report back to us on what is truly working and what is not working in order to do a deeper dive to ensure we are using this money most effectively in order to make a difference.

It has treatment services for women and veterans included. This is a special interest of ours in this legislation—expanding treatment for pregnant women who are struggling with addiction, again to avoid this horrible situation where babies are born with an addiction.

It also supports care for our veterans. Our veterans right now can enter treatment, of course, following discharge with this legislation. This is important. Our veterans have some special needs and special circumstances—often trauma, PTSD, and other things related to their addiction. We find these veterans courts are incredibly helpful, to be able to have them surrounded by fellow veterans in order to make more progress. That is in here as well.

Finally, the legislation incentivizes the States themselves to enact comprehensive initiatives to address the opioid and heroin abuse problem—the prescription drug monitoring program, for instance. This is very important. The Federal Government has a big role to play here. Think about it. If you are in one State and you are monitoring someone's prescription drug medications, knowing where they are going and how much they are getting to avoid overprescribing, if that person crosses State lines, it is very difficult. So our legislation expands on what can be done there to ensure that, for instance, my State of Ohio knows whether someone has gone to Kentucky, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Indiana, or Michigan to get prescription drugs. So the prescription drug monitoring program will work better for every State.

Prevention and education on heroin abuses—this is to incentivize States to do a better job on the prevention and education side and, of course, to prevent overdose and to improve drug treatment.

These are all aspects of this legislation. It is comprehensive because the problem is complex and requires a comprehensive approach.

Here are some statistics—we have already talked about some this evening—that are shocking. We know that 28,647 Americans died in the last year for which we had data, which is 2014, from a drug overdose. The 2015 numbers will be higher than that. That is roughly 120 Americans dying every day.

There were 27,000 diagnosed cases of neonatal abstinence syndrome in 2013, the last numbers we have. It is even worse this year. This means babies were born with an addiction. A baby is born dependent on opioids every 19 minutes in America. So while I am speaking today, there will be another baby born who is addicted.

I have gone to hospitals in Cincinnati; in Lima, OH, to St. Rita's; to Rainbow Babies Children's Hospital in Cleveland, OH. They are incredible caregivers. My wife Jane was at Nationwide Children's Hospital today, actually, on this very issue. These are babies who are so tiny, you can almost hold them in the palm of your hand. They need caregivers to take them through a process where they go through withdrawal. And we are not

sure what the long-term consequences are because we don't have the data yet because this is such a new issue. There has been a substantial increase over the last several years. In Ohio, the same thing I said earlier—750 percent increase in the number of babies diagnosed with neonatal abstinence syndrome since 2004. There has been a 750-percent increase in babies born addicted.

These are the issues this legislation gets at. Again, it does so in a way that is not just bipartisan, which is important, and not just House and Senate, which is important—the House has its own companion bill, one the President will be able to sign into law—but most importantly, it is because of the input of people from all over this country, the experts, people who are recovering themselves, and those who are most affected by this, that this legislation makes sense, and not just for my State but for our country.

The Judiciary Committee had a number of good witnesses. One was a woman named Tonda DaRe. Tonda DaRe is from Ohio. She had a daughter named Holly. On her 21st birthday, Holly, who had a bright future ahead of her—she was engaged to be married, and she had been very involved in her high school and active in sports—tried heroin for the first time. She became addicted. She went into recovery, and unfortunately, as in many cases, she had a relapse. At age 23 her young life ended in an overdose.

Her mom, Tonda DaRe, set up an organization called Holly's Song of Hope. She testified before the Judiciary Committee about the importance of her work—talking to other mothers and fathers and sons and daughters about the devastating consequences of this heroin and prescription drug addiction. This legislation needs to be passed so that we can help Tonda. She testified on behalf of this legislation because she has looked at it and knows it will make a difference in her life and her community.

This is an urgent problem, as I said earlier. It is also one we have a lot of bipartisan consensus around. There will be opportunities during this debate to hear from a lot of different people on a lot of different ideas on amendments to the legislation. That is good. It is good to have a debate. But I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will keep focused on the importance of getting this done. It is important to get it done in terms of providing immediate help to our communities and also providing a structure to more effectively spend funds this year—and yes, we have funds to spend this year that have been appropriated consistent with CARA—but also next year and the year after and the year after. Some will support more resources, and that is fine. We need to have that debate. I myself think it is a priority, and we should be providing the resources to be able to deal with this issue.

I would also urge my colleagues to ensure that we get this over the finish line. It is too important. We can't play politics with it. This is one of those issues, again, like so few around here, that got out of the committee without a single dissenting vote. We have done the right thing on a bipartisan basis to bring in the experts. We have a good solution to an urgent problem we all face.

I am pleased with the vote tonight, and I urge my colleagues to have a good debate on the floor. Let's get this done for the sake of Tonda DaRe and so many other mothers, fathers, and others out there who deserve to have a little help in their fight against opioid addiction.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I just want to congratulate the Senator from Ohio for his extraordinary leadership on this issue. This is an epidemic that affects us all, and he has definitely been at the fore in providing exceptional leadership on this, and I want to commend him for that.

MORNING BUSINESS

BLACK HISTORY MONTH AND THE PULLMAN PORTERS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this year marks the 90th anniversary of historian and scholar Dr. Carter G. Woodson's launch of Negro History Week—and is the 40th anniversary of the inaugural Black History Month. This year, as Black History Month is coming to a close, I want to celebrate by paying tribute to a Chicago neighborhood that has played a significant part in our country's African-American and labor history—the Pullman Historical District.

One year ago this month, President Obama designated the South Side Chicago's Pullman Historic District as the Nation's 406th national park. The Pullman National Historical Park has a special place in our Nation's history. It has been the site of some major historical events. The men and women of the Pullman community—the birthplace of the Nation's first Black labor union—the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters—helped shape our country as we know it today. By fighting for fair labor conditions in the 19th century, the Pullman workers advanced America's civil rights movement.

In the 1890s, the Pullman community was the catalyst for the first industry-wide strike during one of the worst economic depressions our Nation ever faced—and led to the creation of Labor Day as a national holiday. These railroad workers aren't always mentioned in the history books or picked to join the parades during Black History Month—but they made history and deserve to be honored. One hundred and one years ago, fearing that the history of African Americans was fading into obscurity, Dr. Carter G. Woodson founded the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History. His goal was to raise awareness of African Americans' contributions to civilization. He believed that truth could not be denied—and realized that past contributions by African Americans needed to be documented and taught. He once said, ''if a race had no recorded history, its achievements would be forgotten and, in time, claimed by other groups.'' I agree with Dr. Woodson—and so does the A. Philip Randolph Pullman Porter Museum in Chicago.

Earlier this month, with the help of DePaul University, the A. Philip Randolph Pullman Porter Museum launched a new online registry that gives voice to the stories of Black railroad workers. By capturing stories from scholars and the relatives of these workers, we will preserve oral histories that otherwise might be lost to history. If you listen to the oral histories, you will hear stories from people like Theodore Berrien, who worked as a Pullman porter from 1940 to 1969. Berrien worked on President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's funeral train from Georgia to Washington, DC. On the registry, Berrien's grandson says: ''He spoke of how kind Mrs. Roosevelt was and thanked him for his services during the trip.''

Or take Blaine McKinley Fitzgerald, who worked as a Pullman porter on the Illinois Central and Louisville and Nashville railroads from 1920 to 1946—his relatives wrote: ''Blaine's major route was from Birmingham to New York. He also worked the Rose Bowl trips to California when Alabama was a major contingent.'' You will hear how Blaine raised a family of six children on his salary as a Pullman porter—all college educated—who became teachers, lawyers, and engineers. Blaine's story is just one of many examples of how the Pullman porters helped build the African-American middle class in Chicago.

But even as the African-American middle class expanded in Chicago and across the country, the struggle for justice, equality, and equal opportunities for African Americans in this country has continued.

And the State of Illinois has played a significant role in that struggle. Springfield, IL native President Abraham Lincoln led our Nation through a war to save the Union, abolished slavery, and began the work we continue today to end discrimination. In 1909, the centennial of Lincoln's birth, 2,000 people gathered at a dazzling gala to honor the centennial of Lincoln's birth. Even though this was an event celebrating the centennial of the President that helped abolish slavery—like most in America at that time, it was segregated.

The Chicago Tribune reported, that it ''is to be a lily white affair from start to finish.'' But across town, the Black community organized its own Lincoln centennial at the African

Methodist Episcopal Church. The Reverend L.H. Magee spoke at that gathering and noted the widespread feeling of hurt over the exclusion of people of color from the main Lincoln banquet. Reverend Magee made a prediction about the bicentennial of Lincoln's birth in 2009—100 years in the future: ''prejudice shall have been banished as a myth and relegated to the dark days of Salem witchcraft.''

In many ways, his prediction was correct. We have come a long way to banish discrimination in our communities—our legal system recognizes that all men and women are created equal and should be free from discrimination in schools, housing, and employment. And in 2009, President Barack Obama, a former Illinois Senator, was sworn in as the first African-American President of the United States of America.

Pastor Magee had a vision of a new America, but he may not have imagined that bricks laid by the hands of slaves would make a home in our White House for a family of color. But, while progress has been made, we cannot ignore that we still have more to do. When one in three African-American men will go to prison in their lifetime, we have more to do. When the unemployment rate for African Americans are more than double the rate for Whites, we have more to do. And when efforts exist across the country to make it harder to vote, rather than easier, we have more to do. But it is when the climb is the steepest that we can come together as Americans, to take the mountaintop once and for all.

This month, let's celebrate these achievements and honor Dr. Carter G. Woodson's legacy by remembering all the contributions of the extraordinary men and women of the civil rights movement—including the Pullman porters. We have come a long way, but we still have work to do to fulfill the promise to make our Nation fairer and more equal and to do what Lincoln called on us to do: ''nobly save . . . the last best hope of earth.''

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

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for today's vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to S. 524, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2015. I would have voted yea.•

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD–423.

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

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 15–75, concerning the Department of the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Jordan for defense articles and services estimated to cost $115.1 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 15–75

NOTICE OF PROPOSED ISSUANCE OF LETTER OF OFFER PURSUANT TO SECTION 36(B)(1) OF THE ARMS EXPORT CONTROL ACT, AS AMENDED

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Jordan.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:
Major Defense Equipment:* $0 million
Other: $115.1 million
TOTAL: $115.1 million

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Scheduled and unscheduled depot module maintenance, in addition to Augmenter Module support, for fifty-two (52) F100–PW–220E F–16 A/B (Block 15) Engines.

(iv) Military Department: USAF (QCC).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: FMS Case: JO–D–QAW–17 APR 12–$14M.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: None.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: FEB 25 2016.

*as defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

JORDAN-REPAIR AND RETURN OF F–16 ENGINES, SUSTAINMENT AND SUPPORT

The Government of Jordan has requested approval to amend its F–16 engine program for repair and return of its F100–PW–220E engine modules. This effort is in support of the Royal Jordanian Air Force's ongoing scheduled maintenance activities for its 52 F100–PW–220E engines. Services requested under this proposed sale include contract support for parts, components, accessories, and labor to remanufacture the current propulsion fleet at scheduled maintenance intervals. There is no Major Defense Equipment associated with this case. The overall total estimated value is $115.1 million.

The proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to improve the security of a friendly country which has been, and continues to be, an important force for political stability and economic progress in the Middle East. Jordan is a key partner in the coalition working together to defeat Islamic State in Iraq and Levant (ISIL) forces. This engine and sustainment program will maintain Jordan's fighter aircraft capabilities and support its national defense. Jordan will have no difficulty absorbing this support.

The proposed sale of this equipment, services, and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

Jordan has accounted for the cost of engine sustainment in its budget over the course of multiple years.

The prime contractor will be Pratt and Whitney, East Hartford, Connecticut. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will entail periodic Program Management Reviews in the United States or Jordan. There are no additional U.S. Government or contractor representatives anticipated to be stationed in Jordan as a result of this potential sale.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

ANNIVERSARY OF PROTESTS IN BAHRAIN

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, this month marks 5 years since Bahrainis of all backgrounds took to the streets in Manama in peaceful protest, calling for reform in their country. As Senators have heard me recount here before, the Government of Bahrain responded with violence and repression, torture and retaliation. In response, the monarchy set up an independent commission: the so-called Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry, or BICI. And I say this is important to recall because many of the BICI's 26 specific, concrete recommendations remain unfulfilled 5 years later.

That certainly isn't what the government of Bahrain wants you to believe. In fact, the regime's representatives continue to insist that they have fully implemented all of the BICI recommendations. As they tell it, they have turned the page on that chapter of Bahrain's history.

But members of Bahrain's peaceful opposition feel trapped in a never-ending story. Nongovernmental organizations like Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain, Amnesty International, Human Rights First, Human Rights Watch, and the Project on Middle East Democracy have all documented the regime's ongoing repression. The State Department's most recent annual human rights report for Bahrain states that protestors face ''arbitrary deprivation of life,'' ''arrest and detention of protesters . . . occasionally leading to their torture,'' and ''restrictions on civil liberties, including freedom of speech, press, assembly association, and religion.'' And as some colleagues know, the State Department could last

certify that Bahrain had only fully implemented 5 of the 26 BICI recommendations. That is a pretty far cry from full implementation.

As the son of a journalist, I want to take a minute to highlight one particular aspect of the regime's repression: the crackdown on speech and expression. As recently as this month, a Bahraini court sentenced an internationally known photographer to serve jail time for participating in an unlicensed protest. The regime has similarly targeted bloggers as well as prominent and award-winning photojournalists for merely capturing Bahrain's ongoing unrest. And just this month, a Bahraini court sentenced a Sunni opposition leader to 1 year in prison for giving a political speech.

Despite these concerns, the Obama administration chose last year to resume selling or transferring certain arms to the Government of Bahrain. I was one of the biggest proponents of the arms ban dating back to 2011, and I saw no reason to revisit the policy last year. In fact, I introduced the bipartisan BICI Accountability Act, legislation that would block the administration's decision to overturn the weapons ban until the State Department could certify that all 26 BICI recommendations were fully implemented.

I am not here to make broad pronouncements about what the Government of Bahrain should look like—that is very much a conversation for Bahrain's people and its rulers to have. But as President Obama said in 2011, ''you can't have a real dialogue when parts of the peaceful opposition are in jail.'' For Bahrain to move forward, the government will need to release the opposition leaders still languishing in its prisons.

The United States and Bahrain have ties that go back decades; our countries are partners and allies. Indeed, I am not disappointed with the Government of Bahrain despite our bilateral relationship; I am disappointed with the Government of Bahrain because of our bilateral relationship. The United States of America has an obligation, it strikes me, to ask more of her friends and allies around the world. And when they falter or fail, the U.S. has a duty to help them live up to their potential. And of course, there is always the real danger that continued unrest or even greater instability could impact the safety of our soldiers in Bahrain or the future of the American presence there.

For these reasons, I speak out today against further oppression, and I call again for reconciliation and reform in Bahrain.

HONORING SENIOR DEPUTY PATRICK DAILEY AND SENIOR DEPUTY MARK LOGSDON

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the tragic deaths of two fellow Marylanders. Senior Deputy Patrick Dailey and Senior Deputy Mark Logsdon of the Harford County Sheriff's Office were killed in the line of duty on February 10. I join the people of Maryland and law enforcement communities across the country in mourning the loss of two dedicated public servants. The men and women of law enforcement put themselves at great risk to protect our communities. Law enforcement officers are the embodiment of the rule of law. An attack on them is an attack on the rule of law itself.

The word ''hero'' does not do justice to the legacies of Senior Deputies Dailey and Logsdon. Both men served the people of Harford County with distinction. On his 16th birthday, Deputy Patrick Dailey began his career in public service by joining the Joppa-Magnolia Volunteer Fire Company. His two sons, Bryan and Tyler, are also members of Joppa-Magnolia Volunteer Fire Company. Deputy Dailey was a member of the U.S. Marine Corps before joining the Harford County Sheriff's Office where he would serve for 30 years.

On Christmas Eve 2002, Deputy Dailey saved the life of a teenager traveling in an SUV that collided head on with a cement mixing truck. Deputy Dailey, a number of fellow sheriffs, and two civilians emptied six fire extinguishers in an attempt to quell a fire that threated to engulf the vehicle and the unresponsive driver. Using only their bare hands and batons, the group managed to free the driver seconds before the fire consumed the passenger compartment. The teen was able to thank his rescuers 3 months later at the Harford County Sheriff's Office awards banquet.

Deputy Logsdon also served in the military before becoming a Harford County Sheriff. He was a member of the 115th Military Police Battalion and deployed to Iraq in 2003 with the Maryland National Guard.

Exactly 11 years before his death, Deputy Logsdon confronted a suicidal man who was armed with a loaded shotgun. In a display of great bravery and at great risk to himself, Deputy Logsdon managed to talk the man into surrendering his weapon. After the man was disarmed, Deputy Logsdon continued to help the man by transporting him to the hospital where he received medical care.

The deaths of Deputy Dailey and Deputy Logsdon represent a profound loss for the people of Maryland. In the days since the February 10 shooting, Marylanders across the State have responded with a groundswell of support for the Dailey and Logsdon families, as well as the Harford County Sheriff's office. I think that speaks to the character of Marylanders and the esteem in which law enforcement officers are held.

I would like to offer my most sincere thanks to other deputies who responded to the call, the Abingdon and Joppa Magnolia Volunteer Fire Departments, the University of Maryland Shock Trauma Center, and University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Medical Center, all of whom administered aide to both deputies. On behalf of my fellow U.S. Senators, I offer my deepest condolences to the Dailey and Logsdon families as they navigate this difficult time.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise today, as I have every year since I came to the Senate, in commemoration of Black History Month, to recognize an individual who has made a considerable contribution to society and the African-American community.

Today, we honor the Reverend Dr. W. Wilson Goode, Sr., a trailblazing figure whose public service and private works have touched lives in Pennsylvania and around the country. Dr. Goode was born to tenant farmers in North Carolina, rose to become the first African-American mayor of Philadelphia, and now runs a nationally renowned organization called Amachi that mentors children whose parents have been incarcerated. Wilson Goode's story is a story of faith and perseverance and also provides an appropriate backdrop this Black History Month to talk about some of the barriers standing in the way of young people in this country today.

Dr. Goode has dedicated his life after leaving elected public office to Amachi because, in his words, in these communities, ''the children were invisible.'' This ethos—a commitment to serving those whom the Bible calls ''the least of these''—has guided Dr. Goode's life and career since long before he helped organize Amachi. Empowering young people to achieve their potential is personal for Dr. Goode, who had to overcome a series of roadblocks himself growing up in the Jim Crow South.

Dr. Goode went to segregated lower schools in Northampton County, NC, and Greensville County, VA, before moving to Philadelphia at the age of 16. He arrived in Philadelphia on the first Monday in January in 1954. That same Monday 30 years later, this sharecroppers' son, who grew up drinking from separate fountains and eating at separate counters, was sworn in as the first African-American mayor of Philadelphia. In the intervening years, Dr. Goode's career proved a testament to all that can go right when young people are allowed a fair chance to succeed based purely, as a great man once said, on the ''content of their character.''

Dr. Goode graduated from John Bartram High School in Philadelphia in 1957 and went on to earn a bachelor's degree from Morgan State University, a master's degree from the University of Pennsylvania, and a doctorate of ministry from Palmer Theological Seminary. He also served as an officer in the U.S. Army for 2 years.

Along the way, Wilson Goode helped found the Black Political Forum, a Philadelphia-based group that brought

together a coalition of Black community and business leaders to elect African Americans to public office. The forum transformed the political landscape in the city and Dr. Goode's career along with it.

Dr. Goode was later chosen as Pennsylvania's first Black member of the Public Utilities Commission. In less than 6 months, he rose to become the first Black chairman of the PUC and soon thereafter was recruited to become the managing director of the city of Philadelphia under Mayor Bill Green in 1980. When Mayor Green did not seek reelection in 1983, Wilson Goode ran, won the election, and was sworn in as the first African-American mayor of Philadelphia on January 2, 1984, exactly 30 years after he first set foot in the city.

During his two terms in office, Dr. Goode accomplished a great deal. He worked to transform the city's skyline, helping businesses to grow and create jobs. He helped to level the playing field for minorities to work in city government and minority-run businesses to win government contracts. He created the Mayor's Commission on Literacy, which has now helped over 550,000 Philadelphians get the skills they need to live productive lives. He created the Philadelphia Anti-Graffiti Network, PAGN, and the Mural Arts Program, two pioneering programs to make Philadelphia a nicer place to live and work.

And he always looked to help those who needed it most, whether through his consistent advocacy for AIDS support programming or through his tireless efforts to reduce the number of homeless people living on the streets. The latter goal still animates him today—he is the chairman and CEO of Self, Inc., a nonprofit dedicated to serving homeless men and women.

Dr. Goode left the mayor's office after two terms in 1992, but his commitment to public service remained. He went on to work as a Deputy Assistant Secretary of Education in the Clinton Administration. There, he devoted himself to the task of improving our education system for 7 years until a unique opportunity presented itself. John J. DiIulio, Jr., President Bush's first director of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, invited Dr. Goode to lead a mentoring organization that would later be called Amachi.

Amachi's model, which is based on DiIulio's research, is quite simple: identify neighborhoods disproportionately impacted by incarceration and seek out children living in those neighborhoods to mentor. Amachi matches one mentor and one child for at least 1 hour, at least once a week, for at least 1 year. The goals are equally simple: it is a success if, after a year, the kids improve their school attendance, their grades, their behavior, and their relationships with the adults in their lives.

Part of the reason for Amachi's success is its simplicity. It makes sense. The real power of the Amachi philosophy comes from its inherent recognition of how much young people can achieve with a consistently positive and loving mentoring presence in their lives. And young people growing up in communities impacted by over-incarceration, the invisible children that Dr. Goode takes the time to see, stand to benefit most.

Amachi now receives Federal, State, and private funding, but it has modest roots. To find the first mentors, Dr. Goode walked around throughout Philadelphia, neighborhood by neighborhood, to community churches where he would recite neighborhood statistics on incarceration to local pastors. The terrible reality was that one in nine Black children has a parent in prison, compared to 1 in 57 white children—one in nine. People of faith were interested in mentoring because two out of three families with an incarcerated member are unable to meet their basic needs and since 50 percent of the over 2.5 million children with an incarcerated parent in this country are age 9 or younger.

These numbers motivated Wilson Goode to recruit his mentors and to travel to prisons seeking parents whose kids he could help. This is what he means when he says he is ''on a rescue mission.'' Standing in front of these prisoners, his message was simple: ''I am here on behalf of your children.''

And they believed him. He recruited 500 children his first year. Maybe they believed him in part because he could relate to these challenges—his own father was sent to prison when he was a teenager. His mother worked hard to make ends meet while Wilson Goode sought refuge in his church and in God. He found it, and now he works to provide the same refuge to young people in need.

Doctor Goode's story perfectly embodies the idea of Amachi. Amachi is a West African word that means: ''who knows but what God has brought us through this child.'' Who knew that Dr. Goode, who grew up without electricity, who saw his father imprisoned in his adolescence, who gazed up at the leadership in his city and saw no one who looked like him, would be elected mayor of one of America's largest cities. ''Who knows but what God has brought us through this child.'' I have often said that every child is born with a light inside them, and it is our obligation to make sure that that light burns as brightly as the full measure of his or her potential. Dr. Goode's work with Amachi is a testament to this idea.

But as we commemorate Black History Month, we must acknowledge that reality is unkind to this worthy aspiration for all our children: in this country, nearly half of Black men are arrested by the time they hit their mid-20s, and Black men are six times more likely to be incarcerated than White men, a worse disparity than in the 1960s. This means that the bright shining light of potential for an African-American child is too often extinguished by the darkness of a jail cell.

Looking at the system can be abstract and overwhelming—it is hard to see a child's potential from 30,000 feet. So Dr. Goode works on the ground—because he knows we have to break this cycle. Today Amachi-modeled programs have helped over 300,000 children in more than 250 cities nationwide. Maybe this is what Dr. King meant when he talked about ''dangerous unselfishness.'' Dr. Goode is up against an abstract and overwhelming system, but wields from the goodness of his heart the power to disrupt the status quo.

Dr. Goode has faith that, in the months and years to come, we will see our criminal justice system reshaped to be fairer and more effective in targeting the people who pose the most danger to society. He has faith that we will make progress in helping those released from prison more easily reintegrate into their communities. But as he often says, ''no entry is the best reentry plan.'' So his work continues.

Every day Amachi-trained mentors work to help thousands of children overcome the wide variety of challenges related to having a parent in prison or living in an area with a high rate of incarceration. In addition to the common financial struggles, these kids need help navigating the relationship changes that often take place when a loved one is sent to or returns from prison; or channeling powerful and confusing emotions into constructive activities; or overcoming the stigma that comes with having an incarcerated parent. What began as a local partnership between faith-based organizations has expanded to include volunteer mentors from a variety of sources on a national scale.

All of this can be traced to Dr. Goode's deeply held belief that God has a very special interest in how we treat our children and that helping the children who need it most is God's work. His conviction has earned him great acclaim, whether through receiving the Civic Ventures Purpose Prize, the Philadelphia Inquirer's Citizen of the Year Award, or being honored by the White House as a Champion of Change.

But I imagine the biggest reward for Dr. Goode is knowing he has created something lasting that will benefit generations to come. There are more than 81,000 children with a parent in prison in Pennsylvania. How many future doctors, lawyers or CEOs, preachers, teachers or Presidents may be among these children? They have infinite potential, and with God in his heart, the Reverend Dr. W. Wilson Goode, Sr., has stood alongside them.

On the Senate floor today, we express our profound gratitude for his service on behalf of the children of Philadelphia, our Commonwealth and our country.

Thank you.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF NCIS

Mr. KING. Mr. President, today I ask the Senate to join me in honoring the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, or NCIS, as it celebrates 50 years of service in support of the Department of the Navy, its military and civilian personnel, their families, and the communities in which they live. I am proud to add my voice to those who applaud the consistent and effectual work of this elite organization.

NCIS has deep roots in our military history, dating back to 1882, when Secretary of the Navy William H. Hunt established the Office of Naval Intelligence, or ONI, to collect technical information on the world's major naval powers. Since that time, as the United States' role in the world evolved, the need for an elite and specialized investigative branch of ONI became apparent. The Naval Investigative Service, now called NCIS, was born and has fulfilled a vital role in mitigating threats and protecting our Nation.

Since then, NCIS has played a vital role in investigating and defeating threats to safety of our Navy and Marine Corps. The organization has grown to employ approximately 2,000 elite personnel and deploys to more than 150 locations around the globe. As such, the organization's broad, yet agile scope has enabled it to ensure the safety of our brave men and women, wherever they are stationed. Their missions have had such broad scope as deployment of special agents to Vietnam, response to the USS Cole and the September 11 terror attacks, and establishment of the Multiple Threat Alert Center for the Department of the Navy. NCIS has executed their duties with distinction and poise under the most strenuous circumstances.

I congratulate NCIS on 50 years of success as a premier Federal law enforcement agency. We owe them a debt of gratitude for the elite work they perform in service to our Nation, and I wish them continued success for years to come.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE NATIONAL FOOD AND BEVERAGE FOUNDATION

• Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, today I am honored to acknowledge the National Food and Beverage Foundation, an institute based in New Orleans and one that portrays the distinctive culture of Louisiana through its food and drink.

Louisiana is known for many things: its bald cypress swamps, Mardi Gras, and its delicious food. Louisiana's cuisine is as unique as the people who make it. From beignets to etouffee and jambalaya to gumbo, food is one of the many characteristics that make Louisiana culture so remarkable. The New Orleans branch of the National Food and Beverage Foundation, or NFBF celebrates that culture through education and is home to the Southern Food and Beverage Museum, praised by CNN as one of the top 11 food museums in the entire world.

The National Food and Beverage Foundation is a tremendous example of a group of people using culinary practices to highlight Louisiana's culture while simultaneously enhancing the lives of the people around them. The NFBF has dedicated $5 million for a project to develop one of New Orleans' communities. The project is designed to reestablish sections of New Orleans as a hub of culinary commerce and aid the community in reaching their economic potential. NFBF is also dedicated to education, as evidenced by the John & Bonnie Hospitality and Culinary Library, and to providing free cooking classes for children. The library contains over 17,000 volumes and houses culinary and mixology literature from across the globe. The foundation's Culinary Entrepreneurship Program, a program that aids small businesses, restaurant startups, and product manufacturers, helps young businesses get off the ground. This program and programs like them are invaluable to small businesses throughout Louisiana.

The National Food and Beverage Foundation celebrates and encourages Louisiana culture, but it also celebrates cultures through cuisine nationwide. The NFBF is rapidly expanding across the country; Pacific Food and Beverage is based in Los Angeles and celebrates the culture of food and drink of the Pacific coast and the American West. Specifically, Pacific Food and Beverage focuses on contributions made by immigrants who have shaped our Nation's cuisine. Knowing firsthand how important food is to our culture, the preservation of culinary practices and history throughout our country is a crucial endeavor.

I want to thank the National Food and Beverage Foundation for all the work it has done with communities in my State and throughout the Nation to preserve and enhance the idea of culture through culinary means. From free children's cooking classes that teach the heritage and nutritional aspects of healthy food, to the Culinary Entrepreneurship Program, NFBF has made a tremendous contribution to Louisiana and the culture loved by so many. I am proud to have such a tremendous initiative in my State, one that explores something so embedded in the Louisiana culture and gives back to the community while doing so. I wish the National Food and Beverage Foundation nothing but successes now and in the future.•

TRIBUTE TO DR. CONNIE ADLER AND ELIZABETH WARD SAXL

• Mr. KING. Mr. President, I wish to honor two remarkable women, Dr. Connie Adler and Elizabeth Ward Saxl, who are new inductees to the Maine Women's Hall of Fame. Through their induction, we celebrate the tremendous impact that these women have on their communities and on women throughout the State of Maine.

Dr. Connie Adler, from Woolwich, ME, currently serves as secretary of the board of directors of Franklin Memorial Hospital in Farmington, as well as on the boards of the Maine Health Access Foundation and Maine Family Planning. During her illustrious career, she has played a leading role in the pursuit of reproductive rights and the prevention of domestic violence. She has also established programs to increase access to health care for women living in rural and impoverished areas. Connie's work has been integral to keeping our communities healthy and safe.

Elizabeth Ward Saxl, from Vassalboro, ME, has served as the executive director of the Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault for the last 16 years. She is a passionate advocate for joining public policy solutions with community-based approaches that address the complex problems impacting Maine's women and girls. Undertaking daunting projects like eliminating statute of limitations on child sexual abuse and creating housing protections for victims of sexual assault, Elizabeth has been a champion of abuse victims across the State. Her work also extends to immigrant, refugee, elder, and native populations, making her a valuable asset to all of Maine's marginalized populations.

Congratulations to both Connie and Elizabeth for their induction into the Maine Women's Hall of Fame. With this well-deserved honor, they join the likes of Senator Margaret Chase Smith as shining examples of character and fortitude. I thank Connie and Elizabeth for all that they have done for Maine women and for our State as a whole. Maine is fortunate to have such tireless advocates fighting for health, safety, and prosperity.•

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF ATLANTIC REGIONAL FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

• Mr. KING. Mr. President, today I wish to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Atlantic Regional Federal Credit Union. This nonprofit institution has a long history of serving the people of Maine, and I am proud to add my voice to those in our grateful State in recognizing this milestone.

In 1941, Atlantic Regional Federal Credit Union began as St. John's FCU, with just 37 members, in the town of Brunswick. Strong leadership and steadfast dedication to community service has enabled it to become one of the largest credit unions in our State and a bedrock of a thriving Maine midcoast. This truly impressive and steady growth was only possible through a tireless commitment to good service and sound business ethics.

Through fundraising, scholarships, donations, and volunteering, Atlantic

Regional has promoted the education, health, and wellness of the communities in which it serves. Perhaps most notably, they have undertaken a campaign against hunger by raising funds to donate to local hunger prevention programs. Through the Atlantic Regional Ending Hunger Campaign and Maine CU's Ending Hunger initiative, Atlantic Regional has been at the forefront of an effort that has raised over $5.3 million to help end hunger in Maine. It is through actions like these that Atlantic Regional Federal Credit Union has developed a meaningful connection with its members and the greater community.

I extend my congratulations to the Atlantic Regional Federal Credit Union, its employees, its members, and I wish them many years of success to come.●

TRIBUTE TO LACHLAN FORRESTER

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize the hard work of my Commerce Committee intern Lachlan Forrester. Lachlan hails from Yarrawonga, Australia, where he is a student at the Australian National University, studying law, political science, and Spanish.

While interning on the Commerce Committee, Lachlan has assisted the Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries, and Coast Guard Subcommittee, as well as the Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure Subcommittee. In addition to being a dedicated intern, Lachlan was also fortunate enough to see falling snow for the first time while here in the Nation's Capital. I again would like to thank Lachlan and wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Under the order of the Senate of January 6, 2015, the Secretary of the Senate, on February 26, 2016, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker had signed the following enrolled bill:

S. 238. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to authorize the Director of the Bureau of Prisons to issue oleoresin capsicum spray to officers and employees of the Bureau of Prisons.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 3:03 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2406. An act to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3624. An act to amend title 28, United States Code, to prevent fraudulent joinder.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH) announced that on today, February 29, 2016, he has signed the following enrolled bill, which was previously signed by the Speaker of the House:

S. 238. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to authorize the Director of the Bureau of Prisons to issue oleoresin capsicum spray to officers and employees of the Bureau of Prisons.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 3624. An act to amend title 28, United States Code, to prevent fraudulent joinder; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, without amendment with a preamble:

S. Res. 377. An original resolution directing the Senate Legal Counsel to bring a civil action to enforce a subpoena of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations (Rept. No. 114–214).

By Mr. BARRASSO, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 1419. A bill to promote the academic achievement of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children with the establishment of a Native American language grant program (Rept. No. 114–215).

S. 1436. A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to take land into trust for certain Indian tribes, and for other purposes (Rept . No. 114–216).

S. 1776. A bill to enhance tribal road safety, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–217).

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. WARNER (for himself, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. KING, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. BENNET, and Mr. HELLER):

S. 2604. A bill to establish in the legislative branch the National Commission on Security and Technology Challenges; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. KING):

S. 2605. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide States with an option to provide medical assistance to individuals between the ages of 22 and 64 for inpatient services to treat substance use disorders at certain facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. CRAPO):

S. 2606. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide that the volume cap for private activity bonds shall not apply to bonds for facilities for the furnishing of water and sewage facilities; to the Committee on Finance.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. JOHNSON:

S. Res. 377. An original resolution directing the Senate Legal Counsel to bring a civil action to enforce a subpoena of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations; from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. JOHNSON (for himself, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. RUBIO, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. KAINE):

S. Res. 378. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the courageous work and life of Russian opposition leader Boris Yefimovich Nemtsov and renewing the call for a full and transparent investigation into the tragic murder of Boris Yefimovich Nemtsov in Moscow on February 27, 2015; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. REID, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. COONS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. WICKER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. WARNER, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CARPER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. REED, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. KAINE, Ms. WARREN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. BENNET, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. BURR, Mr. MORAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. PAUL, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. PETERS, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. LEAHY):

S. Res. 379. A resolution celebrating Black History Month; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. WICKER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. WARREN, Mr. COONS, and Mr. HATCH):

S. Res. 380. A resolution designating February 29, 2016 as ''Rare Disease Day''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 524

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) and the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) were added as cosponsors 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.

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 524, supra.

S. 553

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 553, a bill to marshal resources to undertake a concerted, transformative effort that seeks to bring an end to modern slavery, and for other purposes.

S. 968

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) 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. 1555

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1555, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Filipino veterans of World War II, in recognition of the dedicated service of the veterans during World War II.

S. 1597

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1597, a bill to enhance patient engagement in the medical product development process, and for other purposes.

S. 1641

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1641, a bill to improve the use by the Department of Veterans Affairs of opioids in treating veterans, to improve patient advocacy by the Department, and to expand availability of complementary and integrative health, and for other purposes.

S. 1651

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1651, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the Government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions.

S. 1775

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1775, a bill to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to accept additional documentation when considering the application for veterans status of an individual who performed service as a coastwise merchant seaman during World War II, and for other purposes.

S. 1890

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

S. 2236

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2236, a bill to provide that silencers be treated the same as long guns.

S. 2344

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

S. 2390

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the names of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) were added as cosponsors of S. 2390, a bill to provide adequate protections for whistleblowers at the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

S. 2408

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2408, a bill to direct the Secretary of Labor to issue an occupational safety and health standard to reduce injuries to patients, nurses, and all other health care workers by establishing a safe patient handling, mobility, and injury prevention standard, and for other purposes.

S. 2423

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) were added as cosponsors 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. 2426

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2426, a bill to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) and the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) were added as cosponsors of S. 2426, supra.

S. 2437

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2437, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the burial of the cremated remains of persons who served as Women's Air Forces Service Pilots in Arlington National Cemetery, and for other purposes.

S. 2454

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2454, a bill to limit the period of authorization of new budget authority provided in appropriation Acts, to require analysis, appraisal, and evaluation of existing programs for which continued new budget authority is proposed to be authorized by committees of Congress, and for other purposes.

S. 2487

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2487, a bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to identify mental health care and suicide prevention programs and metrics that are effective in treating women veterans as part of the evaluation of such programs by the Secretary, and for other purposes.

S. 2540

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2540, a bill to provide access to counsel for unaccompanied children and other vulnerable populations.

S. 2549

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2549, a bill to require the Transportation Security Administration to conduct security screening at certain airports, and for other purposes.

S. 2602

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2602, a bill to prohibit the Federal Communications Commission from reclassifying broadband Internet access service as a telecommunications service and from imposing certain regulations on providers of such service.

S. RES. 372

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 372, a resolution celebrating Black History Month.

AMENDMENT NO. 3324

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3324 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. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. KING):

S. 2605. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide States with an option to provide medical assistance to individuals between the ages of 22 and 64 for inpatient services to treat substance use disorders at certain facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2605

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 ''Medicaid Coverage for Addiction Recovery Expansion Act''.

SEC. 2. STATE OPTION TO PROVIDE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE FOR RESIDENTIAL ADDICTION TREATMENT FACILITY SERVICES; MODIFICATION OF THE IMD EXCLUSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1905 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(16)—

(A) by striking ''effective'' and inserting ''(A) effective''; and

(B) by inserting '', and (B) effective January 1, 2018, residential addiction treatment facility services (as defined in subsection (h)(3)) for individuals over 21 years of age and under 65 years of age'' before the semicolon; and

(2) in subsection (h)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''paragraph (16) of subsection (a)'' and inserting ''subsection (a)(16)(A)''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(3)(A) For purposes of subsection (a)(16)(B), the term 'residential addiction treatment facility services' means inpatient services provided—

''(i) to an individual for the purpose of treating a substance use disorder that are furnished to an individual for not more than 2 consecutive periods of 30 consecutive days, provided that upon completion of the first 30-day period, the individual is assessed by the facility and determined to have progressed through the clinical continuum of care, in accordance with criteria established by the Secretary, in consultation with the American Society of Addiction Medicine, and requires continued medically necessary treatment and social support services to promote recovery, stable transition, and discharge; and

''(ii) in a facility that—

''(I) does not have more than 40 beds; and

''(II) is accredited for the treatment of substance use disorders by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, the Council on Accreditation, or any other nationwide accrediting agency that the Secretary deems appropriate.

''(B) The provision of medical assistance for residential addiction treatment facility services to an individual shall not prohibit Federal financial participation for medical assistance for items or services that are provided to the individual in or away from the residential addiction treatment facility during any 30-day period in which the individual is receiving residential addiction treatment facility services.

''(C) A woman who is eligible for medical assistance on the basis of being pregnant and who is furnished residential addiction treatment facility services during any 30-day period may remain eligible for, and continue to be furnished with, such services for additional 30-day periods without regard to any eligibility limit that would otherwise apply to the woman as a result of her pregnancy ending, subject to assessment by the facility and a determination based on medical necessity related to substance use disorder and the impact of substance use disorder on birth outcomes.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to items and services furnished on or after January 1, 2018.

SEC. 3. GRANT PROGRAM TO EXPAND YOUTH ADDICTION TREATMENT FACILITIES UNDER MEDICAID AND CHIP.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a program under which the Secretary shall award grants to States for the purpose of expanding the infrastructure and treatment capabilities, including augmenting equipment and bed capacity, of eligible youth addiction treatment facilities that provide addiction treatment services to Medicaid or CHIP beneficiaries who have not attained the age of 21 and are in communities with high numbers of medically underserved populations of at-risk youth.

(2) USE OF FUNDS.—Grant funds awarded under this section may be used to expand the infrastructure and treatment capabilities of an existing facility (including through construction) but shall not be used for the construction of any new facility or for the provision of medical assistance or child health assistance under Medicaid or CHIP.

(3) TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION; DURATION.—

(A) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall award grants under the grant program.

(B) DURATION.—The Secretary shall award grants under the grant program for a period not to exceed 5 years.

(b) APPLICATION.—A State seeking to participate in the grant program shall submit to the Secretary, at such time and in such manner as the Secretary shall require, an application that includes—

(1) detailed information on the types of additional infrastructure and treatment capacity of eligible youth addiction treatment facilities that the State proposes to fund under the grant program;

(2) a description of the communities in which the eligible youth addiction treatment facilities funded under the grant program operate;

(3) an assurance that the eligible youth addiction treatment facilities that the State proposes to fund under the grant program shall give priority to providing addiction treatment services to Medicaid or CHIP beneficiaries who have not attained the age of 21 and are in communities with high numbers of medically underserved populations of at-risk youth; and

(4) such additional information and assurances as the Secretary shall require.

(c) RURAL AREAS.—Not less than 15 percent of the amount of a grant awarded to a State under this section shall be used for making payments to eligible youth addiction treatment facilities that are located in rural areas or that target the provision of addiction treatment services to Medicaid or CHIP beneficiaries who have not attained the age of 21 and reside in rural areas.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section:

(1) ADDICTION TREATMENT SERVICES.—The term ''addiction treatment services'' means services provided to an individual for the purpose of treating a substance use disorder.

(2) CHIP.—The term ''CHIP'' means the State children's health insurance program established under title XXI of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397aa et seq.).

(3) ELIGIBLE YOUTH ADDICTION TREATMENT FACILITY.—The term ''eligible youth addiction treatment facility'' means a facility that is a participating provider under the State Medicaid or CHIP programs for purposes of providing medical assistance or child health assistance to Medicaid or CHIP beneficiaries for youth addiction treatment services on an inpatient or outpatient basis (or both).

(4) MEDICAID.—The term ''Medicaid'' means the medical assistance program established under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.).

(5) MEDICAID OR CHIP BENEFICIARY.—The term ''Medicaid or CHIP beneficiary'' means an individual who is enrolled in the State Medicaid plan, the State child health plan under CHIP, or under a waiver of either such plan.

(6) MEDICALLY UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS.—The term ''medically underserved populations'' has the meaning given that term in section 330(b)(3) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b(b)(3)).

(7) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated $50,000,000 to carry out the provisions of this section. Funds appropriated under this subsection shall remain available until expended.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 377—DIRECTING THE SENATE LEGAL COUNSEL TO BRING A CIVIL ACTION TO ENFORCE A SUBPOENA OF THE PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS

Mr. JOHNSON submitted the following resolution; from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs; which was placed on the calendar:

S. RES 377

Whereas the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations (in this preamble referred to as the ''Subcommittee'') is currently conducting a duly authorized investigation of human trafficking on the Internet pursuant to section 12(e)(3) of Senate Resolution 73, 114th Congress, agreed to February 12, 2015, which authorizes the Subcommittee to issue subpoenas for the production of documents;

Whereas on October 1, 2015, the Subcommittee issued a duly authorized subpoena to Carl Ferrer, Chief Executive Officer of Backpage.com, LLC, directing him to produce certain documents to the Subcommittee by 10:00 a.m. on October 23, 2015;

Whereas on October 23, 2015, counsel for Mr. Ferrer and Backpage.com, LLC submitted to the Subcommittee legal objections to the compelled production of documents under the subpoena issued by the Subcommittee and declined to comply with the subpoena;

Whereas, having considered the legal objections that had been submitted by counsel for Mr. Ferrer and Backpage.com, LLC, on November 3, 2015, the Subcommittee overruled those objections in their entirety and ordered and directed that Mr. Ferrer comply with the subpoena issued by the Subcommittee by 10:00 a.m. on November 12, 2015;

Whereas Mr. Ferrer has refused to comply with the subpoena issued by the Subcommittee as ordered and directed by the Subcommittee; and

Whereas under sections 703(b) and 705 of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 (2 U.S.C. 288b(b) and 288d), the Senate Legal Counsel shall bring a civil action under section 1365 of title 28, United States Code, to enforce a subpoena of a Senate subcommittee when directed to do so by the adoption of a resolution by the Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate Legal Counsel shall bring a civil action in the name of the

Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations to enforce the subpoena issued by the Subcommittee to Carl Ferrer, Chief Executive Officer of Backpage.com, LLC, and that the Senate Legal Counsel shall conduct all related civil contempt proceedings.

SENATE RESOLUTION 378—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE COURAGEOUS WORK AND LIFE OF RUSSIAN OPPOSITION LEADER BORIS YEFIMOVICH NEMTSOV AND RENEWING THE CALL FOR A FULL AND TRANSPARENT INVESTIGATION INTO THE TRAGIC MURDER OF BORIS YEFIMOVICH NEMTSOV IN MOSCOW ON FEBRUARY 27, 2015

Mr. JOHNSON (for himself, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. RUBIO, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. KAINE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 378

Whereas February 27, 2016, marks the first anniversary of the murder of former Russian Deputy Prime Minister, Boris Yefimovich Nemtsov (referred to in this preamble as ''Dr. Nemtsov'');

Whereas Dr. Nemtsov dedicated his life to the causes of freedom and human rights for the Russian people and sought to reduce the corruption in the government of Russia;

Whereas on February 27, 2015—

(1) Dr. Nemtsov was murdered on the Bolshoi Moskvoretsky Bridge in Moscow in view of the Kremlin; and

(2) President Obama called for a ''prompt, impartial, and transparent'' investigation into the murder of Dr. Nemtsov;

Whereas on March 1, 2015, tens of thousands of people marched through central Moscow in remembrance of Dr. Nemtsov;

Whereas the Russian courts and the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation have consistently rejected requests to qualify the murder of Dr. Nemtsov under Article 277 of the Russian Criminal Code as ''an attempt on the life of a public statesman'';

Whereas within 10 days of the murder of Dr. Nemtsov, Chechen suspect Zaur Dadayev admitted to killing Dr. Nemtsov at the behest of Ruslan Geremeyev, a senior officer in the Sever Battalion of Chechnya;

Whereas on March 8, 2015, Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov called Zaur Dadayev a ''true patriot'';

Whereas on March 9, 2015, Mr. Kadryov was awarded the Order of Honor by Russian President Vladimir Putin;

Whereas on January 20, 2016, Aleksandr Bastrykin, the chief of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation responsible for investigating the murder of Dr. Nemtsov, declared that the case had been fully solved;

Whereas the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation charged only Ruslan Muhudinov, the driver of Ruslan Geremeyev, with organizing the murder of Dr. Nemtsov;

Whereas on May 26, 2015, Russian opposition activist Vladimir Kara-Murza, a close friend and colleague of Dr. Nemtsov, was severely poisoned by an unknown assailant, resulting in multiple organ failures and a coma;

Whereas on January 25, 2016, the daughter of Dr. Nemtsov, Zhanna Nemtsova, appealed to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe to investigate the murder of her father;

Whereas on February 1, 2016, Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov posted a video on Instagram that shows Russian opposition leaders Mikhail Kasyanov and Vladimir Kara-Murza through the crosshairs of a sniper rifle accompanied by the comment, ''Those who did not understand, will understand''; and

Whereas the Russian Federation is a member of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe, which have the capacity to conduct a more credible investigation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the legacy of courageous Russian opposition leader Boris Yefimovich Nemtsov, who dedicated his life to fighting corruption and promoting the principles of democracy, rule of law, and the inherent dignity of human beings;

(2) encourages the public release of all surveillance tapes in the area surrounding the crime scene to aid in the investigation;

(3) urges the United States Government, in official contacts with representatives of the Russian government, to emphasize the importance of bringing to justice all of the conspirators in the murder of Boris Yefimovich Nemtsov; and

(4) calls on the President to significantly increase United States Government support for the causes for which Boris Yefimovich Nemstov gave his life.

SENATE RESOLUTION 379—CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. REID of Nevada, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. COONS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. WICKER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. WARNER, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CARPER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. REED of Rhode Island, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. KAINE, Ms. WARREN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. BENNET, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. BURR, Mr. MORAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. PAUL, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. PETERS, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. LEAHY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 379

Whereas in 1776, people envisioned the United States as a new nation dedicated to the proposition stated in the Declaration of Independence that ''all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness . . .'';

Whereas Africans were first brought involuntarily to the shores of America as early as the 17th century;

Whereas African Americans suffered enslavement and subsequently faced the injustices of lynch mobs, segregation, and denial of the basic and fundamental rights of citizenship;

Whereas in 2016, the vestiges of those injustices and inequalities remain evident in the society of the United States;

Whereas in the face of injustices, people of good will and of all races in the United States have distinguished themselves with a commitment to the noble ideals on which the United States was founded and have fought courageously for the rights and freedom of African Americans and others;

Whereas African Americans, such as Lieutenant Colonel Allen Allensworth, Maya Angelou, Arthur Ashe Jr., James Baldwin, James Beckwourth, Clara Brown, Blanche Bruce, Ralph Bunche, Shirley Chisholm, Holt Collier, Frederick Douglass, W. E. B. Du Bois, Ralph Ellison, Medgar Evers, Alex Haley, Dorothy Height, Lena Horne, Charles Hamilton Houston, Mahalia Jackson, Stephanie Tubbs Jones, B.B. King, Martin Luther King, Jr., Thurgood Marshall, Constance Baker Motley, Rosa Parks, Walter Payton, Bill Pickett, Homer Plessy, Bass Reeves, Hiram Revels, Amelia Platts Boynton Robinson, Jackie Robinson, Aaron Shirley, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, Booker T. Washington, the Greensboro Four, and the Tuskegee Airmen, along with many others, worked against racism to achieve success and to make significant contributions to the economic, educational, political, artistic, athletic, literary, scientific, and technological advancements of the United States;

Whereas the contributions of African Americans from all walks of life throughout the history of the United States reflect the greatness of the United States;

Whereas many African Americans lived, toiled, and died in obscurity, never achieving the recognition they deserved, and yet paved the way for future generations to succeed;

Whereas African Americans continue to serve the United States at the highest levels of business, government, and the military;

Whereas the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass inspired the creation of Negro History Week, the precursor to Black History Month;

Whereas Negro History Week represented the culmination of the efforts of Dr. Carter G. Woodson, the ''Father of Black History'', to enhance knowledge of Black history through the Journal of Negro History, published by the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, which was founded by Dr. Carter G. Woodson and Jesse E. Moorland;

Whereas Black History Month, celebrated during the month of February, originated in 1926 when Dr. Carter G. Woodson set aside a special period in February to recognize the heritage and achievement of Black people of the United States;

Whereas Dr. Carter G. Woodson stated: ''We have a wonderful history behind us. . . . If you are unable to demonstrate to the world that you have this record, the world will say to you, 'You are not worthy to enjoy the blessings of democracy or anything else.' '';

Whereas since the founding of the United States, the Nation has imperfectly progressed toward noble goals;

Whereas the history of the United States is the story of people regularly affirming high ideals, striving to reach those ideals but often failing, and then struggling to come to terms with the disappointment of that failure, before committing to trying again;

Whereas on November 4, 2008, the people of the United States elected Barack Obama, an African-American man, as President of the United States; and

Whereas on February 22, 2012, people across the United States celebrated the groundbreaking of the National Museum of African American History and Culture on the National Mall in Washington, District of Columbia, which will open to the public in the fall of 2016: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) acknowledges that all people of the United States are the recipients of the wealth of history provided by Black culture;

(2) recognizes the importance of Black History Month as an opportunity to reflect on

the complex history of the United States, while remaining hopeful and confident about the path ahead;

(3) acknowledges the significance of Black History Month as an important opportunity to commemorate the tremendous contributions of African Americans to the history of the United States;

(4) encourages the celebration of Black History Month to provide a continuing opportunity for all people in the United States to learn from the past and understand the experiences that have shaped the United States; and

(5) agrees that, while the United States began as a divided country, the United States must—

(A) honor the contribution of all pioneers in the United States who have helped to ensure the legacy of the great United States; and

(B) move forward with purpose, united tirelessly as a nation ''indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.''.

SENATE RESOLUTION 380—DESIGNATING FEBRUARY 29, 2016 AS ''RARE DISEASE DAY''

Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. WICKER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. WARREN, Mr. COONS, and Mr. HATCH) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 380

Whereas a rare disease or disorder is one that affects a small number of patients and, in the United States, typically fewer than 200,000 individuals annually are affected by a rare disease or disorder;

Whereas, as of the date of approval of this resolution, nearly 7,000 rare diseases affect approximately 30,000,000 people in the United States and their families;

Whereas children with rare genetic diseases account for about ½ of the population affected by rare diseases in the United States;

Whereas many rare diseases are serious and life-threatening and lack an effective treatment;

Whereas, as a result of the Orphan Drug Act (Public Law 97–414; 96 Stat. 2049), there have been important advances made in the research of and treatment for rare diseases;

Whereas the Food and Drug Administration (in this preamble referred to as the ''FDA'') has made great strides in involving the patient in the drug review process as part of the Patient-Focused Drug Development program, an initiative that originated in the Food and Drug Administration Safety and Innovation Act (Public Law 112–144; 126 Stat. 993);

Whereas, although approximately 500 drugs and biological products for the treatment of rare diseases have been approved by the FDA, millions of people in the United States have a rare disease for which there is no such approved treatment;

Whereas lack of access to effective treatments and difficulty in obtaining reimbursement for life-altering, and even life-saving, treatments still exist and remain significant challenges for people with rare diseases and their families;

Whereas rare diseases and conditions include epidermolysis bullosa, progeria, sickle cell anemia, spinal muscular atrophy, Duchenne muscular dystrophy, Tay-Sachs disease, cystic fibrosis, pulmonary fibrosis, many childhood cancers, fibrodysplasia ossificans progressiva, Smith-Magenis syndrome, Batten disease, and hemophilia;

Whereas people with rare diseases experience challenges that include difficulty in obtaining accurate diagnoses, limited treatment options, and difficulty finding physicians or treatment centers with expertise in the rare diseases;

Whereas the rare disease community made significant progress during the 113th Congress, including the passage of the National Pediatric Research Network Act of 2013 (Public Law 113–55; 127 Stat. 644), which calls special attention to rare diseases and directs the National Institutes of Health (in this preamble referred to as the ''NIH'') to facilitate greater collaboration among researchers;

Whereas the rare disease community continued this progress through the first session of the 114th Congress, including the passage of the Ensuring Access to Clinical Trials Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–63; 129 Stat. 549) and through increased funding for orphan products and rare disease research;

Whereas both the FDA and the NIH have established special offices to advocate for rare disease research and treatments;

Whereas the National Organization for Rare Disorders (in this preamble referred to as ''NORD''), a nonprofit organization established in 1983 to provide services to and advocate on behalf of patients with rare diseases, remains a critical public voice for people with rare diseases;

Whereas 2016 marks the 33rd anniversary of the enactment of the Orphan Drug Act and the establishment of NORD;

Whereas NORD sponsors Rare Disease Day in the United States and partners with many other major rare disease organizations to increase public awareness of rare diseases;

Whereas Rare Disease Day is observed each year on the last day of February;

Whereas Rare Disease Day is a global event, first observed in the United States on February 28, 2009 and observed in more than 80 countries in 2015; and

Whereas Rare Disease Day is expected to be observed globally for years to come, providing hope and information for rare disease patients around the world: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates February 29, 2016 as ''Rare Disease Day'';

(2) recognizes the importance of improving awareness and encouraging accurate and early diagnosis of rare diseases and disorders; and

(3) supports a national and global commitment to improving access to and developing new treatments, diagnostics, and cures for rare diseases and disorders.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3326. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3327. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3328. Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. DURBIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3329. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3330. Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. KING) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3331. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3332. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3333. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3334. Mr. KIRK submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3335. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3336. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3337. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3338. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3339. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3340. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3341. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3342. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3343. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3344. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3345. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3346. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3347. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3348. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3349. Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mr. JOHNSON, Mrs. ERNST, and Mr. BROWN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3350. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself and Mr. HATCH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3326. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be

proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

____. LIMITATION ON COPAYMENTS FOR NALOXONE.—Section 2713(a) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300gg-13) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in paragraphs (3) and (4), by striking the period and inserting a semicolon;

(3) in paragraph (5), by striking the period and inserting ''; and''; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

''(6) the prescription of naloxone or any opioid overdose anecdote drug.''.

SA 3327. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 65, after line 23, insert the following:

SEC. 504. ELIMINATION OF COPAYMENT REQUIREMENT FOR VETERANS RECEIVING OPIOID ANTAGONISTS OR EDUCATION ON USE OF OPIOID ANTAGONISTS.

(a) COPAYMENT FOR OPIOID ANTAGONISTS.—Section 1722A(a) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(4) Paragraph (1) does not apply to opioid antagonists furnished under this chapter to a veteran who is at high risk for overdose of a specific medication or substance in order to reverse the effect of such an overdose.''.

(b) COPAYMENT FOR EDUCATION ON USE OF OPIOID ANTAGONISTS.—Section 1710(g)(3) of such title is amended—

(1) by striking ''with respect to home health services'' and inserting ''with respect to the following:

''(A) Home health services''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(B) Education on the use of opioid antagonists to reverse the effects of overdoses of specific medications or substances.''.

SA 3328. Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. DURBIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

TITLE ____—OVERDOSE PREVENTION

SEC. __01. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Overdose Prevention Act''.

SEC. __02. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, each day in the United States, more than 100 people die from a drug overdose. Among people 25 to 64 years old, drug overdose causes more deaths than motor vehicle accidents.

(2) The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that nearly 44,000 people in the United States died from a drug overdose in 2013 alone. More than 80 percent of those deaths were due to unintentional drug overdoses, and many could have been prevented.

(3) Deaths resulting from unintentional drug overdoses increased more than 300 percent between 1980 and 1998, and more than tripled between 1999 and 2013.

(4) Nearly 92 percent of all unintentional poisoning deaths are due to drugs. Since 1999, in the United States the population of non-Hispanic Whites and the population of Indians (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b)) have seen the highest rates of unintentional drug poisoning deaths.

(5) Opioid medications such as oxycodone and hydrocodone were involved in nearly 46 percent of all unintentional drug poisoning deaths in 2013.

(6) Unintentional drug poisoning deaths involving heroin nearly tripled between 2010 and 2013 and were 23 percent of all unintentional drug poisoning deaths in 2013.

(7) Between 1999 and 2010, opioid medication overdose fatalities increased by more than 400 percent among women and 265 percent among men.

(8) Military veterans are at elevated risk of experiencing a drug overdose. Veterans who served in Vietnam, Iraq, or Afghanistan and who have combat injuries, posttraumatic stress disorder, and other co-occurring mental health diagnoses are at elevated risk of fatal drug overdose from opioid medications.

(9) Rural and suburban regions are disproportionately affected by opioid medication and heroin overdoses. From 2000 through 2013, the age-adjusted rate for drug poisoning deaths involving heroin has increased nearly 11-fold in the Midwest region and more than 3-fold in the South region.

(10) Urban centers also continue to struggle with overdose, which is the leading cause of death among homeless adults.

(11) In 2009 alone, estimated lost productivity and direct medical costs from opioid medication poisonings exceeded $20,000,000,000.

(12) Opioid medication poisonings cost health insurers an estimated $72,000,000,000 annually in medical costs.

(13) Both fatal and nonfatal overdoses place a heavy burden on public health and public safety resources, yet there is no coordinated cross-Federal agency response to prevent overdose fatalities.

(14) Naloxone is a medication that rapidly reverses overdose from heroin and opioid medications.

(15) Naloxone has no pharmacological effect if administered to a person who has not taken opioids and has no potential for abuse. Naloxone provides additional time to obtain necessary medical assistance during an overdose.

(16) Lawmakers in Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and the District of Columbia have removed legal impediments to increasing naloxone prescription and its use by bystanders who are in a position to respond to an overdose.

(17) The American Medical Association and the American Public Health Association support further implementation of community-based programs that offer naloxone and other opioid overdose prevention services.

(18) Community-based overdose prevention programs have successfully prevented deaths from opioid overdoses by making rescue training and naloxone available to first responders, parents, and other bystanders who may encounter an overdose. A study funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of community-based overdose prevention programs provided by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health found that communities with access to overdose prevention programs experienced lower mortality rates from opioid overdoses than communities that did not have access to overdose prevention programs during the study period.

(19) Over 150,000 potential bystanders have been trained by overdose prevention programs in the United States. A Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report credits overdose prevention programs with reversing more than 26,000 overdoses since 1996.

(20) At least 188 local overdose prevention programs are operating in the United States, including in major cities such as Baltimore, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York City, Boston, San Francisco, and Philadelphia, and statewide in New Mexico, Massachusetts, and New York. Between December 2007 and March 2014, overdose prevention programs facilitated by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health trained more than 22,500 people who reported more than 2,655 rescues. Since 2004, a program administered by the Baltimore City Health Department has trained more than 11,000 people who reported more than 220 rescues. Project Lazarus, an overdose prevention program in Wilkes County, North Carolina, reduced overdose deaths 69 percent between 2009 and 2011.

(21) In Illinois, the Department of Human Services, Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse has enrolled over 20 drug overdose prevention programs with over 100 designated sites across Illinois targeting multiple service populations. These enrollees include police departments, county health departments, medical facilities, licensed substance abuse treatment programs, and community organizations. Statewide, over 2,000 police officers and more than 600 others have been trained thus far. The DuPage County Illinois Health Department has trained over 1,200 police officers and has reported 34 overdose reversals in 2014 alone.

(22) The Office of National Drug Control Policy supports equipping first responders to help reverse overdoses. Police officers on patrol in Quincy, Massachusetts, have conducted 300 overdose rescues with naloxone since 2011. The police department has reported a 95-percent success rate with overdose rescue attempts by police officers. In Suffolk County, New York, police officers have saved more than 563 lives with naloxone in 2013 alone.

(23) Research shows that the cost per year of life gained by making naloxone available to reverse overdoses is within the range of what people in the United States usually pay for health treatments.

(24) Prompt administration of naloxone and provision of emergency care by a bystander can reduce health complications and health care costs that arise when a person is deprived of oxygen for an extended period of time.

(25) Overdose prevention programs are needed in correctional facilities, addiction treatment programs, and other places where people are at higher risk of overdosing after a period of abstinence.

(26) Timely, drug-specific fatal and nonfatal surveillance data at the local, State, and regional level is critically needed to target prevention efforts.

(27) People affected by drug overdose gather on August 31 of each year in communities nationwide for Overdose Awareness Day, to mourn and pay tribute to loved ones and

raise awareness about overdose risk and prevention.

SEC. __03. OVERDOSE PREVENTION PROGRAMS.

Title III of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 241 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"PART W—OVERDOSE PREVENTION PROGRAMS

"SEC. 399OO. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT PROGRAM TO REDUCE DRUG OVERDOSE DEATHS.

''(a) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary, acting through the Administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, shall enter into cooperative agreements with eligible entities to enable the eligible entities to reduce deaths occurring from overdoses of drugs.

''(b) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—To be eligible to receive a cooperative agreement under this section, an entity shall be a State, local, or tribal government, a correctional institution, a law enforcement agency, a community agency, a professional organization in the field of poison control and surveillance, or a private nonprofit organization.

''(c) APPLICATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity desiring a cooperative agreement under this section shall submit to the Secretary an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

''(2) CONTENTS.—An application under paragraph (1) shall include—

''(A) a description of the activities to be funded through the cooperative agreement; and

''(B) evidence that the eligible entity has the capacity to carry out such activities.

''(d) PRIORITY.—In entering into cooperative agreements under subsection (a), the Secretary shall give priority to eligible entities that—

''(1) are a public health agency or community-based organization; and

''(2) have expertise in preventing deaths occurring from overdoses of drugs in populations at high risk of such deaths.

''(e) ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—As a condition of receipt of a cooperative agreement under this section, an eligible entity shall agree to use the cooperative agreement to do each of the following:

''(1) Purchase and distribute the drug naloxone or a similarly effective medication.

''(2) Carry out one or more of the following activities:

''(A) Educating prescribers and pharmacists about overdose prevention and naloxone prescription, or prescriptions of a similarly effective medication.

''(B) Training first responders, other individuals in a position to respond to an overdose, and law enforcement and corrections officials on the effective response to individuals who have overdosed on drugs. Training pursuant to this subparagraph may include any activity that is educational, instructional, or consultative in nature, and may include volunteer training, awareness building exercises, outreach to individuals who are at risk of a drug overdose, and distribution of educational materials.

''(C) Implementing and enhancing programs to provide overdose prevention, recognition, treatment, and response to individuals in need of such services.

''(D) Educating the public and providing outreach to the public about overdose prevention and naloxone prescriptions, or prescriptions of other similarly effective medications.

''(f) COORDINATING CENTER.—

''(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish and provide for the operation of a coordinating center responsible for—

''(A) collecting, compiling, and disseminating data on the programs and activities under this section, including tracking and evaluating the distribution and use of naloxone and other similarly effective medication;

''(B) evaluating such data and, based on such evaluation, developing best practices for preventing deaths occurring from drug overdoses;

''(C) making such best practices specific to the type of community involved;

''(D) coordinating and harmonizing data collection measures;

''(E) evaluating the effects of the program on overdose rates; and

''(F) education and outreach to the public about overdose prevention and prescription of naloxone and other similarly effective medication.

''(2) REPORTS TO CENTER.—As a condition on receipt of a cooperative agreement under this section, an eligible entity shall agree to prepare and submit, not later than 90 days after the end of the cooperative agreement period, a report to such coordinating center and the Secretary describing the results of the activities supported through the cooperative agreement.

''(g) DURATION.—The period of a cooperative agreement under this section shall be 4 years.

''(h) DEFINITION.—In this part, the term 'drug'—

''(1) means a drug, as defined in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321); and

''(2) includes controlled substances, as defined in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802).

''(i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated $20,000,000 to carry out this section for each of the fiscal years 2016 through 2020.

"SEC. 399OO–1. SURVEILLANCE CAPACITY BUILDING.

''(a) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary, acting through the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, shall award cooperative agreements to eligible entities to improve fatal and nonfatal drug overdose surveillance and reporting capabilities, including—

''(1) providing training to improve identification of drug overdose as the cause of death by coroners and medical examiners;

''(2) establishing, in cooperation with the National Poison Data System, coroners, and medical examiners, a comprehensive national program for surveillance of, and reporting to an electronic database on, drug overdose deaths in the United States; and

''(3) establishing, in cooperation with the National Poison Data System, a comprehensive national program for surveillance of, and reporting to an electronic database on, fatal and nonfatal drug overdose occurrences, including epidemiological and toxicologic analysis and trends.

''(b) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—To be eligible to receive a cooperative agreement under this section, an entity shall be—

''(1) a State, local, or tribal government; or

''(2) the National Poison Data System working in conjunction with a State, local, or tribal government.

''(c) APPLICATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity desiring a cooperative agreement under this section shall submit to the Secretary an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

''(2) CONTENTS.—The application described in paragraph (1) shall include—

''(A) a description of the activities to be funded through the cooperative agreement; and

''(B) evidence that the eligible entity has the capacity to carry out such activities.

''(d) REPORT.—As a condition of receipt of a cooperative agreement under this section, an eligible entity shall agree to prepare and submit, not later than 90 days after the end of the cooperative agreement period, a report to the Secretary describing the results of the activities supported through the cooperative agreement.

''(e) NATIONAL POISON DATA SYSTEM.—In this section, the term 'National Poison Data System' means the system operated by the American Association of Poison Control Centers, in partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, for real-time local, State, and national electronic reporting, and the corresponding database network.

''(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section $5,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2016 through 2020.

"SEC. 399OO–2. REDUCING OVERDOSE DEATHS.

''(a) PREVENTION OF DRUG OVERDOSE.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary, in consultation with a task force comprised of stakeholders, shall develop a plan to reduce the number of deaths occurring from overdoses of drugs and shall submit the plan to Congress. The plan shall include—

''(1) a plan for implementation of a public health campaign to educate prescribers and the public about overdose prevention and prescription of naloxone and other similarly effective medication;

''(2) recommendations for improving and expanding overdose prevention programming; and

''(3) recommendations for such legislative or administrative action as the Secretary determines appropriate.

''(b) TASK FORCE REPRESENTATION.—

''(1) REQUIRED MEMBERS.—The task force under subsection (a) shall include at least one representative of each of the following:

''(A) Individuals directly impacted by drug overdose.

''(B) Direct service providers who engage individuals at risk of a drug overdose.

''(C) Drug overdose prevention advocates.

''(D) The National Institute on Drug Abuse.

''(E) The Center for Substance Abuse Treatment.

''(F) The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

''(G) The Health Resources and Services Administration.

''(H) The Food and Drug Administration.

''(I) The Office of National Drug Control Policy.

''(J) The American Medical Association.

''(K) The American Association of Poison Control Centers.

''(L) The Federal Bureau of Prisons.

''(M) The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

''(N) The Department of Justice.

''(O) The Department of Defense.

''(P) The Department of Veterans Affairs.

''(Q) First responders.

''(R) Law enforcement.

''(S) State agencies responsible for drug overdose prevention.

''(2) ADDITIONAL MEMBERS.—In addition to the representatives required by paragraph (1), the task force under subsection (a) may include other individuals with expertise relating to drug overdoses or representatives of entities with expertise relating to drug overdoses, as the Secretary determines appropriate.''.

SEC. __04. OVERDOSE PREVENTION RESEARCH.

Subpart 15 of part C of title IV of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 285o et seq.)

is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 464Q. OVERDOSE PREVENTION RESEARCH.

''(a) OVERDOSE RESEARCH.—The Director of the Institute shall prioritize and conduct or support research on drug overdose and overdose prevention. The primary aims of this research shall include—

''(1) an examination of circumstances that contribute to drug overdose and identification of drugs associated with fatal overdose;

''(2) an evaluation of existing overdose prevention methods;

''(3) pilot programs or research trials on new overdose prevention strategies or programs that have not been studied in the United States;

''(4) scientific research concerning the effectiveness of overdose prevention programs, including how to effectively implement and sustain such programs;

''(5) comparative effectiveness research of model programs; and

''(6) implementation of science research concerning effective overdose prevention programming examining how to implement and sustain overdose prevention programming.

''(b) FORMULATIONS OF NALOXONE.—The Director of the Institute shall support research on the development of formulations of naloxone, and other similarly effective medications, and dosage delivery devices specifically intended to be used by lay persons or first responders for the prehospital treatment of unintentional drug overdose.

''(c) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term 'drug' has the meaning given such term in section 399OO.

''(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section $5,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2016 through 2020.''.

SA 3329. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I, add the following:

SEC. 104. OPIOID ACTION PLAN.

(a) ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—

(1) NEW DRUG APPLICATION.—Except as provided in paragraph (4), prior to the approval of a new drug that is an opioid under section 505 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355), the Commissioner of Food and Drugs shall refer such drug to an advisory committee of the Food and Drug Administration to seek recommendations from such Committee.

(2) PEDIATRIC OPIOID LABELING.—The Commissioner of Food and Drugs shall convene the Pediatric Advisory Committee of the Food and Drug Administration to seek recommendations from such Committee regarding a framework for the inclusion of information in the labeling of drugs that are opioids relating to the use of such drugs in pediatric populations before such Commissioner approves any labeling changes for drugs that are opioids intended for use in pediatric populations.

(3) PUBLIC HEALTH EXEMPTION.—If the Commissioner of Food and Drugs finds that referring a new opioid drug or drugs to an advisory committee of the Food and Drug Administration as required under paragraph (1) is not in the interest of protecting and promoting public health, and has submitted a notice containing the rationale for such a finding to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives, or if the matter that would be considered by such advisory committee with respect to any such drug or drugs concerns bioequivalence or sameness of active ingredients, the Commissioner shall not be required to refer such drug or drugs to an advisory committee as required under paragraph (1).

(4) SUNSET.—Unless Congress reauthorizes paragraphs (1) and (2), the requirements of such paragraphs shall cease to be effective on October 1, 2022.

(b) CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION FOR PRESCRIBERS OF OPIOIDS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Commissioner of Food and Drugs, in consultation with the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Director of the National Institutes of Health, the Administrator of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, and relevant stakeholders, shall develop recommendations regarding continuing medical education programs for prescribers of opioids required to be disseminated under section 505–1 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355–1), including recommendations for which prescribers should participate in such programs and how often participation in such programs is necessary.

(c) GUIDANCE.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commissioner of Food and Drugs shall issue guidance on if and how the approved labeling of a drug that is an opioid and is the subject of an application under section 505(j) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355(j)) may include statements that such drug deters abuse.

SA 3330. Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. KING) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title VII, add the following:

SEC. _____. EXPANDING OPTIONS FOR ADDICTION TREATMENT UNDER MEDICAID AND CHIP.

(a) STATE OPTION TO PROVIDE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE FOR RESIDENTIAL ADDICTION TREATMENT FACILITY SERVICES; MODIFICATION OF THE IMD EXCLUSION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1905 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)(16)—

(i) by striking ''effective'' and inserting ''(A) effective''; and

(ii) by inserting '', and (B) effective January 1, 2018, residential addiction treatment facility services (as defined in subsection (h)(3)) for individuals over 21 years of age and under 65 years of age'' before the semicolon; and

(B) in subsection (h)—

(i) in paragraph (1), by striking ''paragraph (16) of subsection (a)'' and inserting ''subsection (a)(16)(A)''; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(3)(A) For purposes of subsection (a)(16)(B), the term 'residential addiction treatment facility services' means inpatient services provided—

''(i) to an individual for the purpose of treating a substance use disorder that are furnished to an individual for not more than 2 consecutive periods of 30 consecutive days, provided that upon completion of the first 30-day period, the individual is assessed by the facility and determined to have progressed through the clinical continuum of care, in accordance with criteria established by the Secretary, in consultation with the American Society of Addiction Medicine, and requires continued medically necessary treatment and social support services to promote recovery, stable transition, and discharge; and

''(ii) in a facility that—

''(I) does not have more than 40 beds; and

''(II) is accredited for the treatment of substance use disorders by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, the Council on Accreditation, or any other nationwide accrediting agency that the Secretary deems appropriate.

''(B) The provision of medical assistance for residential addiction treatment facility services to an individual shall not prohibit Federal financial participation for medical assistance for items or services that are provided to the individual in or away from the residential addiction treatment facility during any 30-day period in which the individual is receiving residential addiction treatment facility services.

''(C) A woman who is eligible for medical assistance on the basis of being pregnant and who is furnished residential addiction treatment facility services during any 30-day period may remain eligible for, and continue to be furnished with, such services for additional 30-day periods without regard to any eligibility limit that would otherwise apply to the woman as a result of her pregnancy ending, subject to assessment by the facility and a determination based on medical necessity related to substance use disorder and the impact of substance use disorder on birth outcomes.''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this subsection shall apply to items and services furnished on or after January 1, 2018.

(b) GRANT PROGRAM TO EXPAND YOUTH ADDICTION TREATMENT FACILITIES UNDER MEDICAID AND CHIP.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a program under which the Secretary shall award grants to States for the purpose of expanding the infrastructure and treatment capabilities, including augmenting equipment and bed capacity, of eligible youth addiction treatment facilities that provide addiction treatment services to Medicaid or CHIP beneficiaries who have not attained the age of 21 and are in communities with high numbers of medically underserved populations of at-risk youth.

(B) USE OF FUNDS.—Grant funds awarded under this subsection may be used to expand the infrastructure and treatment capabilities of an existing facility (including through construction) but shall not be used for the construction of any new facility or for the provision of medical assistance or child health assistance under Medicaid or CHIP.

(C) TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION; DURATION.—

(i) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall award grants under the grant program.

(ii) DURATION.—The Secretary shall award grants under the grant program for a period not to exceed 5 years.

(2) APPLICATION.—A State seeking to participate in the grant program shall submit to the Secretary, at such time and in such manner as the Secretary shall require, an application that includes—

(A) detailed information on the types of additional infrastructure and treatment capacity of eligible youth addiction treatment facilities that the State proposes to fund under the grant program;

(B) a description of the communities in which the eligible youth addiction treatment facilities funded under the grant program operate;

(C) an assurance that the eligible youth addiction treatment facilities that the State proposes to fund under the grant program shall give priority to providing addiction treatment services to Medicaid or CHIP beneficiaries who have not attained the age of 21 and are in communities with high numbers of medically underserved populations of at-risk youth; and

(D) such additional information and assurances as the Secretary shall require.

(3) RURAL AREAS.—Not less than 15 percent of the amount of a grant awarded to a State under this subsection shall be used for making payments to eligible youth addiction treatment facilities that are located in rural areas or that target the provision of addiction treatment services to Medicaid or CHIP beneficiaries who have not attained the age of 21 and reside in rural areas.

(4) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this subsection:

(A) ADDICTION TREATMENT SERVICES.—The term ''addiction treatment services'' means services provided to an individual for the purpose of treating a substance use disorder.

(B) CHIP.—The term ''CHIP'' means the State children's health insurance program established under title XXI of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397aa et seq.).

(C) ELIGIBLE YOUTH ADDICTION TREATMENT FACILITY.—The term ''eligible youth addiction treatment facility'' means a facility that is a participating provider under the State Medicaid or CHIP programs for purposes of providing medical assistance or child health assistance to Medicaid or CHIP beneficiaries for youth addiction treatment services on an inpatient or outpatient basis (or both).

(D) MEDICAID.—The term ''Medicaid'' means the medical assistance program established under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.).

(E) MEDICAID OR CHIP BENEFICIARY.—The term ''Medicaid or CHIP beneficiary'' means an individual who is enrolled in the State Medicaid plan , the State child health plan under CHIP, or under a waiver of either such plan.

(F) MEDICALLY UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS.—The term ''medically underserved populations'' has the meaning given that term in section 330(b)(3) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b(b)(3)).

(G) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(5) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated $50,000,000 to carry out the provisions of this subsection. Funds appropriated under this paragraph shall remain available until expended.

SA 3331. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title VI, insert the following:

SEC. 602. PRIORITY CONSIDERATION.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—The definitions in section 601(a) shall apply to this section.

(b) PRIORITY CONSIDERATION.—In awarding Federal funds under a program of the Department of Justice or the Department of Health and Human Services to be used for prescription drug monitoring programs of the States, the Attorney General or the Secretary of Health and Human Services, as the case may be, shall give priority consideration to an application from a State that—

(1) requires a prescriber of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance to, prior to the issuance of a prescription for a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance, consult the prescription drug monitoring database of the State;

(2) requires a dispenser of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance to, for the dispensing of each prescription of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance, input data to the prescription drug monitoring database of the State, within 24 hours of the dispensing, which shall include—

(A) a patient identifier;

(B) the national drug code of the dispensed drug;

(C) the date of dispensing;

(D) the quantity of the drug dispensed;

(E) the Drug Enforcement Administration registration number of the prescriber; and

(F) the Drug Enforcement Administration registration number of the dispenser;

(3) authorizes access to a State board responsible for the licensure, regulation, or discipline of practitioners, pharmacists, or other person who is authorized to prescribe, administer, or dispense controlled substances; and

(4) requires that, not fewer than 4 times a year, the State agency that administers the prescription drug monitoring program of the State prepare and provide to—

(A) the State board described in paragraph (3), an informational report concerning the prescribing patterns of prescribers within the State, which shall include data on aggregate trends and individual outliers that indicate a substantial likelihood that inappropriate prescribing may be occurring; and

(B) each prescriber of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance, an information report that shows how the prescribing patterns of the prescriber compare to the prescribing practices of the peers of the prescriber and expected norms.

SA 3332. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF OPIOID MANUFACTURING QUOTAS.

Section 306 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 826) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(i) DISCLOSURE TO PUBLIC.—The Attorney General shall make available to the public, and accessible through the website of the Drug Enforcement Administration, each manufacturing quota fixed or adjusted by the Attorney General under this section for each registered manufacturer for each of the following controlled substances:

''(1) Fentanyl.

''(2) Hydrocodone.

''(3) Hydromorphone.

''(4) Oxycodone.

''(5) Oxymorphone.''.

SA 3333. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. 705. REMS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE OPIOID ANALGESICS.

Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall require a risk evaluation and mitigation strategy under section 505–1 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355–1) to be submitted for drugs that are immediate release opioid analgesics, including for such drugs for which there is an approved covered application (as defined in such section) and for such drugs for which a covered application has been submitted but not yet approved.

SA 3334. Mr. KIRK submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 65, after line 23, insert the following:

SEC. 504. MANDATORY DISCLOSURE OF CERTAIN VETERAN INFORMATION TO STATE CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE MONITORING PROGRAMS.

Section 5701(l) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking ''may'' and inserting ''shall''.

SA 3335. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. REMOVING CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN PAIN-RELATED ISSUES FROM CALCULATIONS UNDER THE MEDICARE HOSPITAL VALUE-BASED PURCHASING PROGRAM.

Section 1886(o)(2)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395ww(o)(2)(B)) is amended—

(1) in clause (i)(II), by inserting '', subject to clause (iii),'' after ''shall''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new clause:

''(iii) EXCLUSION OF CERTAIN PAIN-RELATED MEASURES.—For value-based incentive payments made with respect to discharges occurring during fiscal year 2017 or a subsequent fiscal year, the Secretary shall ensure that measures selected under subparagraph (A) do not include measures based on any assessments by patients, with respect to hospital stays of such patients, of—

''(I) the need of such patients, during such stay, for medicine for pain;

''(II) how often, during such stay, the pain of such patients was well controlled; or

''(III) how often, during such stay, the staff of the hospital in which such stay occurred did everything they could to help the patient with the pain experienced by the patient.''.

SA 3336. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use;

which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 10, beginning on line 18, strike ''and'' and all that follows through ''(I)'' on line 19 and insert the following:

(I) the Indian Health Service; and

(J)

SA 3337. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 12, beginning on line 11, strike ''and'' and all that follows through ''(E)'' on line 12 and insert the following:

(E) the management of populations who have both a pain and a mental health diagnosis, including post-traumatic stress disorder and acute stress disorder; and

(F)

SA 3338. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

SEC. _____. FDA STATUS REPORT.

Not later than 45 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commissioner of Food and Drugs shall submit to Congress a report on the status of draft guidance for industry entitled ''Individual Patient Expanded Access Applications: Form FDA 3926'' that was published in February of 2015.

SA 3339. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of the amendment, add the following:

TITLE VIII—BORDER SECURITY METRICS

SEC. 801. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Department of Homeland Security Border Security Metrics Act of 2016''.

SEC. 802. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives;

(C) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate; and

(D) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives.

(2) CONSEQUENCE DELIVERY SYSTEM.—The term ''Consequence Delivery System'' means the series of consequences applied by the Border Patrol to persons unlawfully entering the United States to prevent unlawful border crossing recidivism.

(3) GOT AWAY.—The term ''got away'' means an unlawful border crosser who—

(A) is directly or indirectly observed making an unlawful entry into the United States;

(B) is not a turn back; and

(C) is not apprehended.

(4) KNOWN MIGRANT FLOW.—The term ''known migrant flow'' means the sum of the number of undocumented migrants—

(A) interdicted at sea;

(B) identified at sea, but not interdicted;

(C) that successfully entered the United States through the maritime border; or

(D) not described in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C), which were otherwise reported, with a significant degree of certainty, as having entered, or attempted to enter, the United States through the maritime border.

(5) MAJOR VIOLATOR.—The term ''major violator'' means a person or entity that has engaged in serious criminal activities at any land, air, or sea port of entry, including—

(A) possession of illicit drugs;

(B) smuggling of prohibited products;

(C) human smuggling;

(D) weapons possession;

(E) use of fraudulent United States documents; or

(F) other offenses that are serious enough to result in arrest.

(6) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Homeland Security.

(7) SITUATIONAL AWARENESS.—The term ''situational awareness'' means knowledge and unified understanding of current unlawful cross-border activity, including—

(A) threats and trends concerning illicit trafficking and unlawful crossings;

(B) the ability to forecast future shifts in such threats and trends;

(C) the ability to evaluate such threats and trends at a level sufficient to create actionable plans; and

(D) the operational capability to conduct persistent and integrated surveillance of the international borders of the United States.

(8) TRANSIT ZONE.—The term ''transit zone'' means the sea corridors of the western Atlantic Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean Sea, and the eastern Pacific Ocean through which undocumented migrants and illicit drugs transit, either directly or indirectly, to the United States.

(9) TURN BACK.—The term ''turn back'' means an unlawful border crosser who, after making an unlawful entry into the United States, promptly returns to the country from which such crosser entered.

(10) UNLAWFUL BORDER CROSSING EFFECTIVENESS RATE.—The term ''unlawful border crossing effectiveness rate'' means the percentage that results from dividing—

(A) the number of apprehensions and turn backs; and

(B) the number of apprehensions, estimated unlawful entries, turn backs, and got aways.

(11) UNLAWFUL ENTRY.—The term ''unlawful entry'' means an unlawful border crosser who enters the United States and is not apprehended by a border security component of the Department of Homeland Security.

SEC. 803. METRICS FOR SECURING THE BORDER BETWEEN PORTS OF ENTRY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall develop metrics, informed by situational awareness, to measure the effectiveness of security between ports of entry. The Secretary shall annually implement the metrics developed under this subsection, which shall include—

(1) estimates, using alternative methodologies, including recidivism data, survey data, known-flow data, and technologically measured data, of—

(A) total attempted unlawful border crossings;

(B) the rate of apprehension of attempted unlawful border crossers; and

(C) the number of unlawful entries;

(2) a situational awareness achievement metric, which measures situational awareness achieved in each Border Patrol sector;

(3) an unlawful border crossing effectiveness rate;

(4) a probability of detection, which compares the estimated total unlawful border crossing attempts not detected by the Border Patrol to the unlawful border crossing effectiveness rate, as informed by paragraph (1);

(5) an illicit drugs seizure rate for drugs seized by the Border Patrol, which compares the ratio of the amount and type of illicit drugs seized by the Border Patrol in any fiscal year to the average of the amount and type of illicit drugs seized by the Border Patrol in the immediately preceding 5 fiscal years;

(6) a weight-to-frequency rate, which compares the average weight of marijuana seized per seizure by the Border Patrol in any fiscal year to such weight-to-frequency rate for the immediately preceding 5 fiscal years;

(7) estimates of the impact of the Consequence Delivery System on the rate of recidivism of unlawful border crossers over multiple fiscal years; and

(8) an examination of each consequence referred to in paragraph (7), including—

(A) voluntary return;

(B) warrant of arrest or notice to appear;

(C) expedited removal;

(D) reinstatement of removal;

(E) alien transfer exit program;

(F) Operation Streamline;

(G) standard prosecution; and

(H) Operation Against Smugglers Initiative on Safety and Security.

(b) METRICS CONSULTATION.—In developing the metrics required under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(1) consult with the appropriate components of the Department of Homeland Security; and

(2) work with other agencies, as appropriate, including the Office of Refugee Resettlement of the Department of Health and Human Services and the Executive Office for Immigration Review of the Department of Justice, to ensure that authoritative data sources are utilized.

(c) MANNER OF COLLECTION.—The data used by the Secretary shall be collected and reported in a consistent and standardized manner across all Border Patrol sectors, informed by situational awareness.

SEC. 804. METRICS FOR SECURING THE BORDER AT PORTS OF ENTRY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall develop metrics, informed by situational awareness, to measure the effectiveness of security at ports of entry. The Secretary shall annually implement the metrics developed under this subsection, which shall include—

(1) estimates, using alternative methodologies, including survey data and randomized secondary screening data, of—

(A) total attempted inadmissible border crossings;

(B) the rate of apprehension of attempted inadmissible border crossings; and

(C) the number of unlawful entries;

(2) the amount and type of illicit drugs seized by the Office of Field Operations of U.S. Customs and Border Protection at United States land, air, and sea ports during the previous fiscal year;

(3) an illicit drugs seizure rate for drugs seized by the Office of Field Operations, which compares the ratio of the amount and type of illicit drugs seized by the Office of Field Operations in any fiscal year to the average of the amount and type of illicit drugs seized by the Office of Field Operations in the immediately preceding 5 fiscal years;

(4) in consultation with the Office of National Drug Control Policy and the United States Southern Command, a cocaine seizure effectiveness rate, which is the percentage resulting from dividing—

(A) the amount of cocaine seized by the Office of Field Operations; and

(B) the total estimated cocaine flow rate at ports of entry along the land border;

(5) the number of infractions related to travelers and cargo committed by major violators who are apprehended by the Office of Field Operations at ports of entry, and the estimated number of such infractions committed by major violators who are not apprehended;

(6) a measurement of how border security operations affect crossing times, including—

(A) a wait time ratio that compares the average wait times to total commercial and private vehicular traffic volumes at each port of entry;

(B) an infrastructure capacity utilization rate that measures traffic volume against the physical and staffing capacity at each port of entry;

(C) a secondary examination rate that measures the frequency of secondary examinations at each port of entry; and

(D) an enforcement rate that measures the effectiveness of secondary examinations at detecting major violators; and

(7) a cargo scanning rate that includes—

(A) a comparison of the number of high-risk cargo containers scanned by the Office of Field Operations at each United States seaport during the fiscal year to the total number of high-risk cargo containers entering the United States at each seaport during the previous fiscal year;

(B) the percentage of all cargo that is considered ''high-risk'' cargo; and

(C) the percentage of high-risk cargo scanned—

(i) upon arrival at a United States seaport before entering United States commerce; and

(ii) before being laden on a vessel destined for the United States.

(b) METRICS CONSULTATION.—In developing the metrics required under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(1) consult with the appropriate components of the Department of Homeland Security; and

(2) as appropriate, work with other agencies, including the Office of Refugee Resettlement of the Department of Health and Human Services and the Executive Office for Immigration Review of the Department of Justice, to ensure that authoritative data sources are utilized.

(c) MANNER OF COLLECTION.—The data used by the Secretary shall be collected and reported in a consistent and standardized manner across all field offices, informed by situational awareness.

SEC. 805. METRICS FOR SECURING THE MARITIME BORDER.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall develop metrics, informed by situational awareness, to measure the effectiveness of security in the maritime environment. The Secretary shall annually implement the metrics developed under this subsection, which shall include—

(1) situational awareness achieved in the maritime environment;

(2) an undocumented migrant interdiction rate, which compares the migrants interdicted at sea to the total known migrant flow;

(3) an illicit drugs removal rate, for drugs removed inside and outside of a transit zone, which compares the amount and type of illicit drugs removed, including drugs abandoned at sea, by the Department of Homeland Security's maritime security components in any fiscal year to the average of the amount and type of illicit drugs removed by the Department of Homeland Security's maritime components for the immediately preceding 5 fiscal years;

(4) in consultation with the Office of National Drug Control Policy and the United States Southern Command, a cocaine removal effectiveness rate, for cocaine removed inside a transit zone and outside a transit zone; which compares the amount of cocaine removed by the Department of Homeland Security's maritime security components by the total documented cocaine flow rate, as contained in Federal drug databases;

(5) a response rate, which compares the ability of the maritime security components of the Department of Homeland Security to respond to and resolve known maritime threats, whether inside and outside a transit zone, by placing assets on-scene, to the total number of events with respect to which the Department has known threat information; and

(6) an intergovernmental response rate, which compares the ability of the maritime security components of the Department of Homeland Security or other United States Government entities to respond to and resolve actionable maritime threats, whether inside or outside the Western Hemisphere transit zone, by targeting maritime threats in order to detect them, and of those threats detected, the total number of maritime threats interdicted or disrupted.

(b) METRICS CONSULTATION.—In developing the metrics required under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(1) consult with the appropriate components of the Department of Homeland Security; and

(2) as appropriate, work with other agencies, including the Drug Enforcement Agency, the Department of Defense, and the Department of Justice, to ensure that authoritative data sources are utilized.

(c) MANNER OF COLLECTION.—The data used by the Secretary shall be collected and reported in a consistent and standardized manner, informed by situational awareness.

SEC. 806. AIR AND MARINE SECURITY METRICS IN THE LAND DOMAIN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall develop metrics, informed by situational awareness, to measure the effectiveness of the aviation assets and operations of the Office of Air and Marine of U.S. Customs and Border Enforcement. The Secretary shall annually implement the metrics developed under this subsection, which shall include—

(1) an effectiveness rate, which compares Office of Air and Marine flight hours requirements to the number of flight hours flown by such Office;

(2) a funded flight hour effectiveness rate, which compares the number of funded flight hours appropriated to the Office of Air and Marine to the number of actual flight hours flown by such Office;

(3) a readiness rate, which compares the number of aviation missions flown by the Office of Air and Marine to the number of aviation missions cancelled by such Office due to maintenance, operations, or other causes;

(4) the number of missions cancelled by such Office due to weather compared to the total planned missions;

(5) the number of subjects detected by the Office of Air and Marine through the use of unmanned aerial systems and manned aircrafts;

(6) the number of apprehensions assisted by the Office of Air and Marine through the use of unmanned aerial systems and manned aircrafts;

(7) the number and quantity of illicit drug seizures assisted by the Office of Air and Marine through the use of unmanned aerial systems and manned aircrafts; and

(8) the number of times that usable intelligence related to border security was obtained through the use of unmanned aerial systems and manned aircraft.

(b) METRICS CONSULTATION.—In developing the metrics required under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(1) consult with the appropriate components of the Department of Homeland Security; and

(2) as appropriate, work with other agencies, including the Department of Justice, to ensure that authoritative data sources are utilized.

(c) MANNER OF COLLECTION.—The data used by the Secretary shall be collected and reported in a consistent and standardized manner, informed by situational awareness.

SEC. 807. DATA TRANSPARENCY.

The Secretary shall—

(1) in accordance with applicable privacy laws, make data related to apprehensions, inadmissible aliens, drug seizures, and other enforcement actions available to the public, academic research, and law enforcement communities; and

(2) provide the Office of Immigration Statistics of the Department of Homeland Security with unfettered access to the data described in paragraph (1).

SEC. 808. EVALUATION BY THE GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE AND THE SECRETARY OF HOMELAND SECURITY.

(a) METRICS REPORT.—

(1) MANDATORY DISCLOSURES.—The Secretary shall submit an annual report containing the metrics required under sections 803 through 806 and the data and methodology used to develop such metrics to—

(A) the appropriate congressional committees; and

(B) the Comptroller General of the United States.

(2) PERMISSIBLE DISCLOSURES.—The Secretary, for the purpose of validation and verification, may submit the annual report described in paragraph (1) to—

(A) the National Center for Border Security and Immigration;

(B) the head of a national laboratory within the Department of Homeland Security laboratory network with prior expertise in border security; and

(C) a Federally Funded Research and Development Center sponsored by the Department of Homeland Security.

(b) GAO REPORT.—Not later than 270 days after receiving the first report under subsection (a)(1), and biennially thereafter for the following 10 years, the Comptroller General of the United States, shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that—

(1) analyzes the suitability and statistical validity of the data and methodology contained in such report; and

(2) includes recommendations to Congress on—

(A) the feasibility of other suitable metrics that may be used to measure the effectiveness of border security; and

(B) improvements that need to be made to the metrics being used to measure the effectiveness of border security.

(c) STATE OF THE BORDER REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the end of each fiscal year through fiscal year 2025, the Secretary shall submit a ''State of the Border'' report to the appropriate congressional committees that—

(1) provides trends for each metric under sections 803 through 806 for the last 10 years, to the extent possible;

(2) provides selected analysis into related aspects of illegal flow rates, including legal flows and stock estimation techniques; and

(3) includes any other information that the Secretary determines appropriate.

(d) METRICS UPDATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—After submitting the final report to the Comptroller General under subsection (a), the Secretary may reevaluate and update any of the metrics required under sections 803 through 806 to ensure that such metrics—

(A) meet the Department of Homeland Security's performance management needs; and

(B) are suitable to measure the effectiveness of border security.

(2) CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION.—Not later than 30 days before updating the metrics under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall notify the appropriate congressional committees of such updates.

SA 3340. Mr. JOHNSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 17, line 14, insert ''and to describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used by the eligible entity to evaluate an activity funded with a grant under this section, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the activity'' before the period.

On page 23, line 21, strike ''and''.

On page 23, line 25, strike the period and insert ''; and''.

On page 23, after line 25, add the following:

(F) describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used by the eligible entity to evaluate an activity funded with a grant under this section, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the activity.

On page 39, between lines 3 and 4, insert the following:

''(3) APPLICATION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—A State substance abuse agency, unit of local government, nonprofit organization, or Indian tribe or tribal organization desiring a grant under this section shall submit an application at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary may require.

''(B) CONTENTS.—As part of an application for a grant under this section, a State substance abuse agency, unit of local government, nonprofit organization, or Indian tribe or tribal organization shall describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used to evaluate an activity funded with a grant under this section, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the activity.

On page 41, line 14, strike ''and''.

On page 41, line 17, strike the period and insert ''; and''.

On page 41, between lines 17 and 18, insert the following:

(C) describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used by the eligible entity to evaluate a program funded with a grant under this section, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the program.

On page 46, between lines 17 and 18, insert the following:

''(c) APPLICATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity desiring a grant under this section shall submit an application at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary of Health and Human Services may require.

''(2) CONTENTS.—As part of an application for a grant under this section, an eligible entity shall describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used by the eligible entity to evaluate an activity funded with a grant under this section, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the activity.

On page 46, line 18, strike ''(c)'' and insert ''(d)''.

On page 48, between lines 23 and 24, insert the following:

''(d) APPLICATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—A recovery community organization desiring a grant under this section shall submit an application at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary of Health and Human Services may require.

''(2) CONTENTS.—As part of an application for a grant under this section, a recovery community organization shall describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used by the recovery community organization to evaluate an activity funded with a grant under this section, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the activity.

On page 48, line 24, strike ''(d)'' and insert ''(e)''.

On page 53, line 7, insert ''The application shall describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used by the eligible entity to evaluate each program funded with a grant under this section, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the program.'' after the period.

On page 55, line 2, strike ''shall—'' and all that follows through ''paragraph (1)'' on line 10 and insert ''shall describe how each program funded with a grant under this section''.

On page 70, strike lines 17 through 20 and insert the following:

(III) a description of the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used by the State to evaluate an activity funded with a planning grant under this section, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the activity; and

On page 71, line 15 insert ''The application shall describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used by the State to evaluate an activity funded with an implementation grant under this section, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the activity.'' after the period.

SA 3341. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, insert the following:

SEC. 705. EXCISE TAX ON OPIOID PAIN RELIEVERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter E of chapter 32 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''SEC. 4192. OPIOID PAIN RELIEVERS.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—There is hereby imposed on the sale of any taxable active opioid by the manufacturer, producer, or importer a tax equal to 1 cent per milligram so sold.

''(b) TAXABLE ACTIVE OPIOID.—For purposes of this section—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The term 'taxable active opioid' means any controlled substance (as defined in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act, as in effect on the date of the enactment of this section) which is opium, an opiate, or any derivative thereof.

''(2) EXCLUSION FOR CERTAIN PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS.—Such term shall not include any prescribed drug which is used exclusively for the treatment of opioid addiction as part of a medically assisted treatment effort.

''(3) EXCLUSION OF OTHER INGREDIENTS.—In the case of a product that includes a taxable active opioid and another ingredient, subsection (a) shall apply only to the portion of such product that is a taxable active opioid.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(1) The heading of subchapter E of chapter 32 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''**Medical Devices**'' and inserting ''**Other Medical Products**''.

(2) The table of subchapters for chapter 32 of such Code is amended by striking the item relating to subchapter E and inserting the following new item:

''SUBCHAPTER E. OTHER MEDICAL PRODUCTS''.

(3) The table of sections for subchapter E of chapter 32 of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''Sec. 4192. Opioid pain relievers.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to sales on or after the date that is 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) REBATE PROGRAM FOR CERTAIN CANCER AND HOSPICE PATIENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with patient advocacy groups and other relevant stakeholders as determined by such Secretary, shall establish a mechanism by which any amount paid by an eligible patient in connection with the tax under section 4192 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (as added by this section) shall be rebated to such patient in as timely a manner as possible with as little burden on the patient as possible.

(2) ELIGIBLE PATIENT.—For purposes of this section, the term ''eligible patient'' means—

(A) a patient for whom any taxable active opioid (as defined in section 4192(b) of such Code) is prescribed to treat pain relating to cancer or cancer treatment;

(B) a patient participating in hospice care; and

(C) in the case of the death or incapacity of a patient described in subparagraph (A) or (B) or any similar situation as determined by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the appropriate family member, medical proxy, or similar representative or the estate of such patient.

SEC. 706. BLOCK GRANTS FOR PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE.

(a) GRANTS TO STATES.—Section 1921(b) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300x–21(b)) is amended by inserting '', and, as applicable, for carrying out section 1923A'' before the period.

(b) NONAPPLICABILITY OF PREVENTION PROGRAM PROVISION.—Section 1922(a)(1) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300x–22(a)(1)) is amended by inserting ''except with respect to amounts made available as described in section 1923A,'' before ''will expend''.

(c) OPIOID TREATMENT PROGRAMS.—Subpart II of part B of title XIX of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300x–21 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 1923 the following:

"SEC. 1923A. ADDITIONAL SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAMS.

''A funding agreement for a grant under section 1921 is that the State involved shall provide that any amounts made available by any increase in revenues to the Treasury in the previous fiscal year resulting from the enactment of section 4192 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, reduced by any amounts rebated under section 705(e) of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016 (as described in section 1933(a)(1)(B)(i)) be used exclusively for substance abuse (including opioid abuse) treatment efforts in the State, including treatment programs—

''(1) establishing new addiction treatment facilities, residential and outpatient, including covering capital costs;

''(2) establishing sober living facilities;

''(3) recruiting and increasing reimbursement for certified mental health providers providing substance abuse treatment in medically underserved communities or communities with high rates of prescription drug abuse;

''(4) expanding access to long-term, residential treatment programs for opioid addicts (including 30-, 60-, and 90-day programs);

''(5) establishing or operating support programs that offer employment services, housing, and other support services to help recovering addicts transition back into society;

''(6) establishing or operating housing for children whose parents are participating in substance abuse treatment programs, including capital costs;

''(7) establishing or operating facilities to provide care for babies born with neonatal abstinence syndrome, including capital costs;

''(8) establishing or operating substance abuse treatment programs in conjunction with Adult and Family Treatment Drug Courts; and

''(9) other treatment programs, as the Secretary determines appropriate.''.

(d) ADDITIONAL FUNDING.—Section 1933(a)(1)(B)(i) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300x–33(a)(1)(B)(i)) is amended by inserting '', plus any increase in revenues to the Treasury in the previous fiscal year resulting from the enactment of section 4192 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, reduced by any amounts rebated under section 705(e) of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016'' before the period.

SA 3342. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. 705. MISSION STATEMENT OF THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION.

The Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Commissioner of Food and Drugs, is directed to amend the mission statement of the Food and Drug Administration to include the following statement: ''The FDA is also responsible for protecting the public health by strongly considering the danger of addiction and overdose death associated with prescription opioid medications when approving these medications and when regulating the manufacturing, marketing, and distribution of opioid medications.''

SA 3343. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. 705. APPROVAL OF OPIOID DRUGS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Commissioner of Food and Drugs (referred to in this section as ''the Commissioner'') shall ensure that, with respect to each application for an opioid drug submitted under section 505 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355)—

(1) an advisory committee of the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research of the Food and Drug Administration evaluates the application and issues a recommendation regarding approval of such drug prior to a final decision to approve such drug; and

(2) if a final decision to approve such drug is inconsistent with the recommendation under paragraph (1), such final decision shall be made by the Commissioner and shall not be delegated.

(b) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—If the advisory committee recommends under subsection (a)(1) that the Commissioner not approve an opioid drug under section 505 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355), and the Commissioner approves that drug under subsection (a)(2), the Commissioner shall—

(1) submit a report to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives, and to any member of Congress that requests the report, that includes—

(A) medical and scientific evidence regarding patient safety that clearly supports the Commissioner's decision to approve the opioid drug against the recommendation of the advisory committee; and

(B) a disclosure of any potential conflicts of interest that may exist regarding any official of the Food and Drug Administration who was involved in the decision to approve the drug prior to the Commissioner's final decision under subsection (a)(2); and

(2) at the request of the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate or the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives, testify before that committee regarding the Commissioner's decision to approve the opioid drug against the recommendation of the advisory committee.

(c) PROHIBITION ON MARKETING.—A drug described in subsection (b) shall not be introduced or delivered for introduction into interstate commerce until the report described in subsection (b)(1) has been submitted to Congress.

SA 3344. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. _____. CONSUMER EDUCATION CAMPAIGN.

Part A of title V of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290aa et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 506C. CONSUMER EDUCATION CAMPAIGN.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall award grants to States and nonprofit entities for the purpose of conducting culturally sensitive consumer education about opioid abuse, including methadone abuse. Such education shall include information on the dangers of opioid abuse, how to prevent opioid abuse including through safe disposal of prescription medications and other safety precautions, and detection of early warning signs of addiction.

''(b) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive a grant under subsection (a), an entity shall—

''(1) be a State or nonprofit entity; and

''(2) submit to the Administrator an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Administrator may require.

''(c) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this section, the Administrator shall give priority to applicants that are States or communities with a high incidence of abuse of methadone and other opioids, and opioid-related deaths.

''(d) EVALUATIONS.—The Administrator shall develop a process to evaluate the effectiveness of activities carried out by grantees under this section at reducing abuse of methadone and other opioids.

''(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section $15,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2017 through 2021.''.

SA 3345. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

TITLE VIII—ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016

SEC. 801. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.

(a) STATE AND LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to any amounts otherwise made available, there is appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for fiscal year 2016, $230,000,000, to remain available until expended, to the Department of Justice for State law enforcement initiatives (which shall include a 30 percent pass-through to localities) under the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant program, as authorized by subpart 1 of part E of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3750 et seq.) (except that section 1001(c) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 3793(c)) shall not apply for purposes of this Act), to be used, notwithstanding such subpart 1, for a comprehensive program to combat the heroin and opioid crisis, and for associated criminal justice activities, including approved treatment alternatives to incarceration.

(2) EMERGENCY REQUIREMENT.—The amount appropriated under paragraph (1) shall be designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(A)(i)).

(b) HEROIN AND METHAMPHETAMINE TASK FORCES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to any amounts otherwise made available, there is appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for fiscal year 2016, $10,000,000, to remain available until expended, to the Department of Justice to carry out section 2999 of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as added by section 204 of this Act, to be used to assist State and local law enforcement agencies in areas with high per capita

levels of opioid and heroin use, targeting resources to support law enforcement operations on the ground.

(2) EMERGENCY REQUIREMENT.—The amount appropriated under paragraph (1) shall be designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(A)(i)).

SEC. 802. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.

(a) SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to any amounts otherwise made available, there is appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for fiscal year 2016—

(A) $300,000,000, to remain available until expended, to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the Department of Health and Human Services, for ''Substance Abuse Treatment'', to address the heroin and opioid crisis and its associated health effects, of which not less than $15,000,000 shall be to improve treatment for pregnant or postpartum women under the pilot program authorized under section 508(r) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb–1), as amended by section 501 of this Act; and

(B) $10,000,000, to remain available until expended, to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the Department of Health and Human Services, for grants for medication assisted treatment for prescription drug and opioid addiction under section 2999A of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as added by section 301 of this Act.

(2) EMERGENCY REQUIREMENT.—The amount appropriated under paragraph (1) shall be designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(A)(i)).

(b) CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to any amounts otherwise made available, there is appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for fiscal year 2016, $50,000,000, to remain available until expended, to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the Department of Health and Human Services, for prescription drug monitoring programs, community health system interventions, and rapid response projects.

(2) EMERGENCY REQUIREMENT.—The amount appropriated under paragraph (1) shall be designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(A)(i)).

SA 3346. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 11, beginning on line 7, strike ''and'' and all that follows through ''(E)'' on line 8 and insert the following:

(E) organizations recognized by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code (commonly referred to as ''veterans service organizations''); and

(F)

SA 3347. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 11, beginning on line 7, strike ''and'' and all that follows through ''(E)'' on line 8 and insert the following:

(E) veterans nonprofit organizations; and

(F)

SA 3348. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. PRACTITIONER EDUCATION.

Section 303 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(j)(1) The Attorney General shall not register, or renew the registration of, a practitioner under subsection (f), unless the practitioner submits to the Attorney General, for each such registration or renewal request, a written certification that the practitioner has completed a training program described in paragraph (2).

''(2) A training program described in this paragraph is a training program that—

''(A) includes information on—

''(i) safe opioid prescribing guidelines;

''(ii) the risks of over-prescribing opioid medications;

''(iii) pain management;

''(iv) early detection of opioid addiction; and

''(v) the treatment of opioid-dependent patients; and

''(B) is approved by the Secretary of Health and Human Services.''.

SA 3349. Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mr. JOHNSON, Mrs. ERNST, and Mr. BROWN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

TITLE VIII—FAIR CHANCE ACT

SEC. 801. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Fair Chance to Compete for Jobs Act of 2016'' or the ''Fair Chance Act''.

SEC. 802. PROHIBITION ON CRIMINAL HISTORY INQUIRIES PRIOR TO CONDITIONAL OFFER FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subpart H of part III of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''CHAPTER 92—PROHIBITION ON CRIMINAL HISTORY INQUIRIES PRIOR TO CONDITIONAL OFFER

''Sec.

''9201. Definitions.

''9202. Limitations on requests for criminal history record information.

''9203. Agency policies; whistleblower complaint procedures.

''9204. Adverse action.

''9205. Procedures.

''9206. Rules of construction.

''§ 9201. Definitions

''In this chapter—

''(1) the term 'agency' means 'Executive agency' as such term is defined in section 105 and includes—

''(A) the United States Postal Service and the Postal Regulatory Commission; and

''(B) the Executive Office of the President;

''(2) the term 'appointing authority' means an employee in the executive branch of the Government of the United States that has authority to make appointments to positions in the civil service;

''(3) the term 'conditional offer' means an offer of employment in a position in the civil service that is conditioned upon the results of a criminal history inquiry;

''(4) the term 'criminal history record information'—

''(A) except as provided in subparagraph (B), has the meaning given the term in section 9101(a);

''(B) includes any information described in the first sentence of section 9101(a)(2) that has been sealed or expunged pursuant to law, regardless of whether the information is accessible by State and local criminal justice agencies for the purpose of conducting background checks; and

''(C) includes information collected by a criminal justice agency, relating to an act or alleged act of juvenile delinquency, that is analogous to criminal history record information (including such information that has been sealed or expunged pursuant to law); and

''(5) the term 'suspension' has the meaning given the term in section 7501.

''§ 9202. Limitations on requests for criminal history record information

''(a) INQUIRIES PRIOR TO CONDITIONAL OFFER.—Except as provided in subsections (b) and (c), an employee of an agency may not request, in oral or written form (including through the Declaration for Federal Employment (Office of Personnel Management Optional Form 306), or any similar successor form), including through the USAJOBS Internet Web site or any other electronic means, that an applicant for an appointment to a position in the civil service disclose criminal history record information regarding the applicant before the appointing authority extends a conditional offer to the applicant.

''(b) OTHERWISE REQUIRED BY LAW.—The prohibition under subsection (a) shall not apply with respect to an applicant for a position in the civil service if consideration of criminal history record information prior to a conditional offer with respect to the position is otherwise required by law.

''(c) EXCEPTION FOR CERTAIN POSITIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The prohibition under subsection (a) shall not apply with respect to an applicant for an appointment to a position—

''(A) that requires a determination of eligibility described in clause (i), (ii), or (iii) of section 9101(b)(1)(A);

''(B) as a Federal law enforcement officer (as defined in section 115(c) of title 18); or

''(C) identified by the Director of the Office of Personnel Management in the regulations issued under paragraph (2).

''(2) REGULATIONS.—

''(A) ISSUANCE.—The Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall issue regulations identifying additional positions with respect to which the prohibition under subsection (a) shall not apply, giving due consideration to positions that involve interaction with minors, access to sensitive information, or managing financial transactions.

''(B) COMPLIANCE WITH CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS.—The regulations issued under subparagraph (A) shall—

''(i) be consistent with, and in no way supersede, restrict, or limit the application of title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000e et seq.) or other relevant Federal civil rights laws; and

''(ii) ensure that all hiring activities conducted pursuant to the regulations are conducted in a manner consistent with relevant Federal civil rights laws.

''§ 9203. Agency policies; complaint procedures

''The Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall—

''(1) develop, implement, and publish a policy to assist employees of agencies in complying with section 9202 and the regulations issued pursuant to such section; and

''(2) establish and publish procedures under which an applicant for an appointment to a position in the civil service may submit a complaint, or any other information, relating to compliance by an employee of an agency with section 9202.

''§ 9204. Adverse action

''(a) FIRST VIOLATION.—If the Director of the Office of Personnel Management determines, after notice and an opportunity for a hearing on the record, that an employee of an agency has violated section 9202, the Director shall—

''(1) issue to the employee a written warning that includes a description of the violation and the additional penalties that may apply for subsequent violations; and

''(2) file such warning in the employee's official personnel record file.

''(b) SUBSEQUENT VIOLATIONS.—If the Director of the Office of Personnel Management determines, after notice and an opportunity for a hearing on the record, that an employee that was subject to subsection (a) has committed a subsequent violation of section 9202, the Director may take the following action:

''(1) For a second violation, suspension of the employee for a period of not more than 7 days.

''(2) For a third violation, suspension of the employee for a period of more than 7 days.

''(3) For a fourth violation—

''(A) suspension of the employee for a period of more than 7 days; and

''(B) a civil penalty against the employee in an amount that is not more than $250.

''(4) For a fifth violation—

''(A) suspension of the employee for a period of more than 7 days; and

''(B) a civil penalty against the employee in an amount that is not more than $500.

''(5) For any subsequent violation—

''(A) suspension of the employee for a period of more than 7 days; and

''(B) a civil penalty against the employee in an amount that is not more than $1,000.

''§ 9205. Procedures

''(a) APPEALS.—The Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall by rule establish procedures providing for an appeal from any adverse action taken under section 9204 by not later than 30 days after the date of the action.

''(b) APPLICABILITY OF OTHER LAWS.—An adverse action taken under section 9204 (including a determination in an appeal from such an action under subsection (a) of this section) shall not be subject to—

''(1) the procedures under chapter 75; or

''(2) except as provided in subsection (a) of this section, appeal or judicial review.

''§ 9206. Rules of construction

''Nothing in this chapter may be construed to—

''(1) authorize any officer or employee of an agency to request the disclosure of information described under subparagraphs (B) and (C) of section 9201(4); or

''(2) create a private right of action for any person.''.

(b) REGULATIONS; EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall issue such regulations as are necessary to carry out chapter 92 of title 5, United States Code (as added by this title).

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Section 9202 of title 5, United States Code (as added by this title), shall take effect on the date that is 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

(c) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of chapters for part III of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to chapter 91 the following:

''92. Prohibition on criminal history inquiries prior to conditional offer ..... 9201''.

(d) APPLICATION TO LEGISLATIVE BRANCH.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1301 et seq.) is amended—

(A) in section 102(a) (2 U.S.C. 1302(a)), by adding at the end the following:

''(12) Section 9202 of title 5, United States Code.'';

(B) by redesignating section 207 (2 U.S.C. 1317) as section 208; and

(C) by inserting after section 206 (2 U.S.C. 1316) the following new section:

''SEC. 207. RIGHTS AND PROTECTIONS RELATING TO CRIMINAL HISTORY INQUIRIES.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the terms 'agency', 'criminal history record information', and 'suspension' have the meanings given the terms in section 9201 of title 5, United States Code, except as otherwise modified by this section.

''(b) RESTRICTIONS ON CRIMINAL HISTORY INQUIRIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), an employee of an employing office may not request that an applicant for employment as a covered employee disclose criminal history record information if the request would be prohibited under section 9202 of title 5, United States Code, if made by an employee of an agency.

''(B) CONDITIONAL OFFER.—For purposes of applying that section 9202 under subparagraph (A), a reference in that section 9202 to a conditional offer shall be considered to be an offer of employment as a covered employee that is conditioned upon the results of a criminal history inquiry.

''(2) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—The provisions of section 9206 of title 5, United States Code, shall apply to employing offices, consistent with regulations issued under subsection (d).

''(c) REMEDY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The remedy for a violation of subsection (b)(1) shall be such remedy as would be appropriate if awarded under section 9204 of title 5, United States Code, if the violation had been committed by an employee of an agency, consistent with regulations issued under subsection (d), except that the reference in that section to a suspension shall be considered to be a suspension with the level of compensation provided for a covered employee who is taking unpaid leave under section 202.

''(2) PROCESS FOR OBTAINING RELIEF.—An applicant for employment as a covered employee who alleges a violation of subsection (b)(1) may rely on the provisions of title IV (other than sections 404(2), 407, and 408), consistent with regulations issued under subsection (d).

''(d) REGULATIONS TO IMPLEMENT SECTION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of the Fair Chance to Compete for Jobs Act of 2016, the Board shall, pursuant to section 304, issue regulations to implement this section.

''(2) PARALLEL WITH AGENCY REGULATIONS.—The regulations issued under paragraph (1) shall be the same as substantive regulations issued by the Director of the Office of Personnel Management under section 802(b)(1) of the Fair Chance to Compete for Jobs Act of 2016 to implement the statutory provisions referred to in subsections (a) through (c) except to the extent that the Board may determine, for good cause shown and stated together with the regulation, that a modification of such regulations would be more effective for the implementation of the rights and protections under this section.

''(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Section 102(a)(12) and subsections (a) through (c) shall take effect on the date on which section 9202 of title 5, United States Code, applies with respect to agencies.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents of such Act is amended—

(A) by redesignating the item relating to section 207 as the item relating to section 208; and

(B) by inserting after the item relating to section 206 the following new item:

''Sec. 207. Rights and protections relating to criminal history inquiries.''.

(e) APPLICATION TO JUDICIAL BRANCH.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 604 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(i) RESTRICTIONS ON CRIMINAL HISTORY INQUIRIES.—

''(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection—

''(A) the terms 'agency' and 'criminal history record information' have the meanings given those terms in section 9201 of title 5;

''(B) the term 'covered employee' means an employee of the judicial branch of the United States Government, other than—

''(i) any judge or justice who is entitled to hold office during good behavior;

''(ii) a United States magistrate judge; or

''(iii) a bankruptcy judge; and

''(C) the term 'employing office' means any office or entity of the judicial branch of the United States Government that employs covered employees.

''(2) RESTRICTION.—A covered employee may not request that an applicant for employment as a covered employee disclose criminal history record information if the request would be prohibited under section 9202 of title 5 if made by an employee of an agency.

''(3) EMPLOYING OFFICE POLICIES; COMPLAINT PROCEDURE.—The provisions of sections 9203 and 9206 of title 5 shall apply to employing offices and to applicants for employment as covered employees, consistent with regulations issued by the Director to implement this subsection.

''(4) ADVERSE ACTION.—

''(A) ADVERSE ACTION.—The Director may take such adverse action with respect to a covered employee who violates paragraph (2) as would be appropriate under section 9204 of title 5 if the violation had been committed by an employee of an agency.

''(B) APPEALS.—The Director shall by rule establish procedures providing for an appeal from any adverse action taken under subparagraph (A) by not later than 30 days after the date of the action.

''(C) APPLICABILITY OF OTHER LAWS.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), an adverse action taken under subparagraph (A) (including a determination in an appeal from such an action under subparagraph (B)) shall not be subject to appeal or judicial review.

''(5) REGULATIONS TO BE ISSUED.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of the

Fair Chance to Compete for Jobs Act of 2016, the Director shall issue regulations to implement this subsection.

''(B) PARALLEL WITH AGENCY REGULATIONS.—The regulations issued under subparagraph (A) shall be the same as substantive regulations promulgated by the Director of the Office of Personnel Management under section 802(b)(1) of the Fair Chance to Compete for Jobs Act of 2016 except to the extent that the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts may determine, for good cause shown and stated together with the regulation, that a modification of such regulations would be more effective for the implementation of the rights and protections under this subsection.

''(6) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Paragraphs (1) through (4) shall take effect on the date on which section 9202 of title 5 applies with respect to agencies.''.

SEC. 803. PROHIBITION ON CRIMINAL HISTORY INQUIRIES BY CONTRACTORS PRIOR TO CONDITIONAL OFFER.

(a) CIVILIAN AGENCY CONTRACTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Division C of subtitle I of title 41, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''§ 4713. Prohibition on criminal history inquiries by contractors prior to conditional offer

''(a) LIMITATION ON CRIMINAL HISTORY INQUIRIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraphs (2) and (3), an executive agency—

''(A) may not require that an individual or sole proprietor who submits a bid for a contract to disclose criminal history record information regarding that individual or sole proprietor before determining the apparent awardee; and

''(B) shall require, as a condition of receiving a Federal contract and receiving payments under such contract that the contractor may not verbally, or through written form, request the disclosure of criminal history record information regarding an applicant for a position related to work under such contract before the contractor extends a conditional offer to the applicant.

''(2) OTHERWISE REQUIRED BY LAW.—The prohibition under paragraph (1) does not apply with respect to a contract if consideration of criminal history record information prior to a conditional offer with respect to the position is otherwise required by law.

''(3) EXCEPTION FOR CERTAIN POSITIONS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The prohibition under paragraph (1) does not apply with respect to—

''(i) a contract that requires an individual hired under the contract to access classified information or to have sensitive law enforcement or national security duties; or

''(ii) a position that the Administrator of General Services identifies under the regulations issued under subparagraph (B).

''(B) REGULATIONS.—

''(i) ISSUANCE.—Not later than 16 months after the date of enactment of the Fair Chance to Compete for Jobs Act of 2016, the Administrator of General Services, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, shall issue regulations identifying additional positions with respect to which the prohibition under paragraph (1) shall not apply, giving due consideration to positions that involve interaction with minors, access to sensitive information, or managing financial transactions.

''(ii) COMPLIANCE WITH CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS.—The regulations issued under clause (i) shall—

''(I) be consistent with, and in no way supersede, restrict, or limit the application of title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000e et seq.) or other relevant Federal civil rights laws; and

''(II) ensure that all hiring activities conducted pursuant to the regulations are conducted in a manner consistent with relevant Federal civil rights laws.

''(b) COMPLAINT PROCEDURES.—The Administrator of General Services shall establish and publish procedures under which an applicant for a position with a Federal contractor may submit to the Administrator a complaint, or any other information, relating to compliance by the contractor with subsection (a)(1)(B).

''(c) ACTION FOR VIOLATIONS OF PROHIBITION ON CRIMINAL HISTORY INQUIRIES.—

''(1) FIRST VIOLATION.—If the head of an executive agency determines that a contractor has violated subsection (a)(1)(B), such head shall—

''(A) notify the contractor;

''(B) provide 30 days after such notification for the contractor to appeal the determination; and

''(C) issue a written warning to the contractor that includes a description of the violation and the additional remedies that may apply for subsequent violations.

''(2) SUBSEQUENT VIOLATION.—If the head of an executive agency determines that a contractor that was subject to paragraph (1) has committed a subsequent violation of subsection (a)(1)(B), such head shall notify the contractor, shall provide 30 days after such notification for the contractor to appeal the determination, and, in consultation with the relevant Federal agencies, may take actions, depending on the severity of the infraction and the contractor's history of violations, including—

''(A) providing written guidance to the contractor that the contractor's eligibility for contracts requires compliance with this section;

''(B) requiring that the contractor respond within 30 days affirming that the contractor is taking steps to comply with this section; and

''(C) suspending payment under the contract for which the applicant was being considered until the contractor demonstrates compliance with this section.

''(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) CONDITIONAL OFFER.—The term 'conditional offer' means an offer of employment for a position related to work under a contract that is conditioned upon the results of a criminal history inquiry.

''(2) CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD INFORMATION.—The term 'criminal history record information' has the meaning given that term in section 9201 of title 5.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for division C of subtitle I of title 41, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 4712 the following new item:

''4713. Prohibition on criminal history inquiries by contractors prior to conditional offer.''.

(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Section 4713(a) of title 41, United States Code, as added by paragraph (1), shall apply with respect to contracts awarded pursuant to solicitations issued after the effective date described in section 802(b)(2) of this title.

(b) DEFENSE CONTRACTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 137 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''§ 2338. Prohibition on criminal history inquiries by contractors prior to conditional offer

''(a) LIMITATION ON CRIMINAL HISTORY INQUIRIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraphs (2) and (3), the head of an agency—

''(A) may not require that an individual or sole proprietor who submits a bid for a contract to disclose criminal history record information regarding that individual or sole proprietor before determining the apparent awardee; and

''(B) shall require as a condition of receiving a Federal contract and receiving payments under such contract that the contractor may not verbally or through written form request the disclosure of criminal history record information regarding an applicant for a position related to work under such contract before such contractor extends a conditional offer to the applicant.

''(2) OTHERWISE REQUIRED BY LAW.—The prohibition under paragraph (1) does not apply with respect to a contract if consideration of criminal history record information prior to a conditional offer with respect to the position is otherwise required by law.

''(3) EXCEPTION FOR CERTAIN POSITIONS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The prohibition under paragraph (1) does not apply with respect to—

''(i) a contract that requires an individual hired under the contract to access classified information or to have sensitive law enforcement or national security duties; or

''(ii) a position that the Secretary of Defense identifies under the regulations issued under subparagraph (B).

''(B) REGULATIONS.—

''(i) ISSUANCE.—Not later than 16 months after the date of enactment of the Fair Chance to Compete for Jobs Act of 2016, the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Administrator of General Services, shall issue regulations identifying additional positions with respect to which the prohibition under paragraph (1) shall not apply, giving due consideration to positions that involve interaction with minors, access to sensitive information, or managing financial transactions.

''(ii) COMPLIANCE WITH CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS.—The regulations issued under clause (i) shall—

''(I) be consistent with, and in no way supersede, restrict, or limit the application of title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000e et seq.) or other relevant Federal civil rights laws; and

''(II) ensure that all hiring activities conducted pursuant to the regulations are conducted in a manner consistent with relevant Federal civil rights laws.

''(b) COMPLAINT PROCEDURES.—The Secretary of Defense shall establish and publish procedures under which an applicant for a position with a Department of Defense contractor may submit a complaint, or any other information, relating to compliance by the contractor with subsection (a)(1)(B).

''(c) ACTION FOR VIOLATIONS OF PROHIBITION ON CRIMINAL HISTORY INQUIRIES.—

''(1) FIRST VIOLATION.—If the Secretary of Defense determines that a contractor has violated subsection (a)(1)(B), the Secretary shall—

''(A) notify the contractor;

''(B) provide 30 days after such notification for the contractor to appeal the determination; and

''(C) issue a written warning to the contractor that includes a description of the violation and the additional remedies that may apply for subsequent violations.

''(2) SUBSEQUENT VIOLATIONS.—If the Secretary of Defense determines that a contractor that was subject to paragraph (1) has committed a subsequent violation of subsection (a)(1)(B), the Secretary shall notify the contractor, shall provide 30 days after such notification for the contractor to appeal the determination, and, in consultation with the relevant Federal agencies, may take actions, depending on the severity of the infraction and the contractor's history of violations, including—

''(A) providing written guidance to the contractor that the contractor's eligibility for contracts requires compliance with this section;

''(B) requiring that the contractor respond within 30 days affirming that the contractor is taking steps to comply with this section; and

''(C) suspending payment under the contract for which the applicant was being considered until the contractor demonstrates compliance with this section.

''(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) CONDITIONAL OFFER.—The term 'conditional offer' means an offer of employment for a position related to work under a contract that is conditioned upon the results of a criminal history inquiry.

''(2) CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD INFORMATION.—The term 'criminal history record information' has the meaning given that term in section 9201 of title 5.''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Section 2338(a) of title 10, United States Code, as added by paragraph (1), shall apply with respect to contracts awarded pursuant to solicitations issued after the effective date described in section 802(b)(2) of this title.

(3) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 137 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 2337 the following new item:

''2338. Prohibition on criminal history inquiries by contractors prior to conditional offer.''.

(c) REVISIONS TO FEDERAL ACQUISITION REGULATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council shall revise the Federal Acquisition Regulation to implement section 4713 of title 41, United States Code, and section 2338 of title 10, United States Code, as added by this section.

(2) CONSISTENCY WITH OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS.—The Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council shall revise the Federal Acquisition Regulation under paragraph (1) to be consistent with the regulations issued by the Director of the Office of Personnel Management under section 2(b)(1) to the maximum extent practicable. The Council shall include together with such revision an explanation of any substantive modification of the Office of Personnel Management regulations, including an explanation of how such modification will more effectively implement the rights and protections under this section.

SEC. 804. REPORT ON EMPLOYMENT OF INDIVIDUALS FORMERLY INCARCERATED IN FEDERAL PRISONS.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''covered individual''—

(1) means an individual who has completed a term of imprisonment in a Federal prison for a Federal criminal offense; and

(2) does not include an alien who is or will be removed from the United States for a violation of the immigration laws (as such term is defined in section 101 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101)).

(b) STUDY AND REPORT REQUIRED.—The Director of the Bureau of Justice Statistics, in coordination with the Director of the Bureau of the Census, shall—

(1) not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this Act, design and initiate a study on the employment of covered individuals after their release from Federal prison, including by collecting—

(A) demographic data on covered individuals, including race, age, and sex; and

(B) data on employment and earnings of covered individuals who are denied employment, including the reasons for the denials; and

(2) not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, and every 5 years thereafter, submit a report that does not include any personally identifiable information on the study conducted under paragraph (1) to—

(A) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate;

(C) the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives; and

(D) the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives.

SA 3350. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself and Mr. HATCH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I of the bill, add the following:

SEC. 104. ENHANCING BASIC AND APPLIED RESEARCH ON PAIN TO DISCOVER THERAPIES TO REDUCE THE CURRENT OVER-PRESCRIBING OF OPIOIDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the National Institutes of Health may intensify and coordinate fundamental, translational, and clinical research of the National Institutes of Health (referred to in this section as the ''NIH'') with respect to the understanding of pain and the discovery and development of therapies for chronic pain.

(b) PRIORITY AND DIRECTION.—The prioritization and direction of the Federally funded portfolio of pain research studies shall consider recommendations made by the Interagency Pain Research Coordinating Committee in concert with the Pain Management Best Practices Inter-Agency Task Force, and in accordance with the National Pain Strategy, the Federal Pain Research Strategy, and the NIH-Wide Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2016–2020, the latter which calls for the relative burdens of individual diseases and medical disorders to be regarded as crucial considerations in balancing the priorities of the Federal research portfolio.

(c) FUNDING.—Funds shall be available to carry out this section from funds otherwise available to the NIH.

AMERICAN HEART MONTH AND NATIONAL WEAR RED DAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 365 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. 365) designating February 2016 as ''American Heart Month'' and February 5, 2016, as ''National Wear Red Day.''

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 365) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of February 8, 2016, under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 379, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 379) celebrating Black History Month.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 379) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the en bloc consideration of Calendar Nos. 468 through 471 and all nominations on the Secretary's desk; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc and 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 en bloc are as follows:

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following named Air National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Robert S. Williams

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be brigadier general

Col. Brook J. Leonard

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be brigadier general

Col. Michael A. Guetlein

The following named officers for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Steven L. Basham
Brig. Gen. Carl A. Buhler
Brig. Gen. James C. Dawkins, Jr.
Brig. Gen. Dawn M. Dunlop
Brig. Gen. Albert M. Elton, II
Brig. Gen. Michael A. Fantini
Brig. Gen. Cedric D. George
Brig. Gen. Patrick C. Higby
Brig. Gen. Mark K. Johnson
Brig. Gen. Brian T. Kelly
Brig. Gen. Brian M. Killough
Brig. Gen. Scott A. Kindsvater
Brig. Gen. Donald E. Kirkland
Brig. Gen. Robert D. LaBrutta
Brig. Gen. Russell A. Mack
Brig. Gen. Charles L. Moore, Jr.
Brig. Gen. Mary F. O'Brien
Brig. Gen. John T. Quintas
Brig. Gen. Duke Z. Richardson
Brig. Gen. Robert J. Skinner
Brig. Gen. Bradley D. Spacy
Brig. Gen. Ferdinand B. Stoss
Brig. Gen. Jeffrey B. Taliaferro
Brig. Gen. Christopher P. Weggeman
Brig. Gen. Stephen N. Whiting
Brig. Gen. John M. Wood

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

IN THE AIR FORCE

PN1065 AIR FORCE nominations (19) beginning ERIC R. BAUGH, JR., and ending JEANLUC G. C. NIEL, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 11, 2016.

PN1066 AIR FORCE nominations (25) beginning BRIAN J. ALENT, and ending BRYAN A. WILLIAMS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 11, 2016.

PN1096 AIR FORCE nomination of Khurram A. Khan, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1097 AIR FORCE nominations (2) beginning BRUCE E. STERNKE, and ending JEFFREY S. WOOLFORD, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1098 AIR FORCE nominations (7) beginning MARY E. CLARK, and ending JAMES A. JERNIGAN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1099 AIR FORCE nomination of Margaret C. Martin, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1100 AIR FORCE nominations (2) beginning GREGORY J. MALONE, and ending GREGORY K. RICHERT, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

IN THE ARMY

PN1073 ARMY nomination of Ricardo O. Morales, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 11, 2016.

PN1101 ARMY nomination of Christopher W. Wendland, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1103 ARMY nomination of Michael J. Mulcahy, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1104 ARMY nomination of Kelly K. Greenhaw, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1106 ARMY nominations (4) beginning GEORGE L. BARTON, and ending RICHARD A. WHOLEY, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1108 ARMY nomination of Nicholas H. Gist, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1110 ARMY nominations (86) beginning MATTHEW J. AIESI, and ending JASON D. YOUNG, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1140 ARMY nomination of D012199, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 1, 2016.

PN1142 ARMY nomination of James C. Sullivan, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 1, 2016.

PN1143 ARMY nomination of Mark R. Biehl, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 1, 2016.

PN1144 ARMY nominations (5) beginning RYAN P. BRENNAN, and ending PAUL E. PATTERSON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 1, 2016.

PN1145 ARMY nominations (26) beginning SCOTT F. BARTLETT, and ending KENNETH G. VERBONCOEUR, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 1, 2016.

IN THE MARINE CORPS

PN1115 MARINE CORPS nomination of Lucas M. Chesla, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1116 MARINE CORPS nomination of Jaime A Ibarra, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1118 MARINE CORPS nominations (2) beginning CURTIS J. SMITH, and ending BRYAN E. STOTTS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1119 MARINE CORPS nominations (2) beginning ALLEN L. LEWIS, and ending DAVID STEVENS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1120 MARINE CORPS nominations (2) beginning MICHAEL J. MALONE, and ending MICHAEL C. ROGERS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1121 MARINE CORPS nomination of Conrad G. Alston, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1122 MARINE CORPS nomination of James C. Rose, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1124 MARINE CORPS nomination of Shawn A. Harris, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1125 MARINE CORPS nominations (2) beginning DAVID F. HUNLEY, and ending ARLIE L. MILLER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1127 MARINE CORPS nominations (5) beginning MICHAEL J. BARRIBALL, and ending JOHN V. RUSSELL, IV, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1128 MARINE CORPS nominations (3) beginning JAMEEL A. ALI, and ending AMBROSIO V. PANTOJA, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1131 MARINE CORPS nominations (3) beginning ISAAC RODRIGUEZ, and ending BRIAN G. WISNESKI, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1132 MARINE CORPS nominations (2) beginning KEITH D. BURGESS, and ending KEITH J. LUZBETAK, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1133 MARINE CORPS nominations (2) beginning CHRISTOPHER W. BENSON, and ending SHELTON WILLIAMS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1134 MARINE CORPS nominations (3) beginning KEVIN L. FREIBURGER, and ending JASON H. PERRY, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1135 MARINE CORPS nominations (5) beginning CHARLES W. DEMLING, III, and ending GLEN F. TEDTAOTAO, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

IN THE NAVY

PN1112 NAVY nomination of Kielly A. Andrews, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1113 NAVY nominations (2) beginning JEFFREY C. CHAO, and ending JOSEPH A. MOORE, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

PN1114 NAVY nomination of Erik J. Kjellgren, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2016.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 2016

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10:30 a.m., Tuesday, March 1; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 524, postcloture; further, that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. to 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly conference meetings; finally, that all time during recess or adjournment of the Senate

count postcloture on the motion to proceed to S. 524.

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

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator WYDEN.

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

The Senator from Oregon.

OPIOID ADDICTION

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, tonight the Senate voted to turn its attention to the issue of opioid addiction. Clearly, what we know now is that opioid addiction has carved a path of destruction across America—a path of destruction from Medford, OR, to Manchester, NH.

During a number of community forums I held across my State just a few days ago, we talked about how we are going to grapple with this great challenge and what it is going to take to really turn the problem around.

My home State has the dubious distinction of ranking fourth worst for abuse and misuse of opioids in America. In my State, citizens made it very clear: They are not going to accept being fourth worst.

I know from talking with many of my colleagues that a whole host of States are dealing with this challenge, and what I have been struck by is how opioid addiction keeps manifesting itself in ways we certainly wouldn't have known about even 10 or 15 years ago.

At home in Oregon, I was particularly struck with parents who told me about high school athletes struggling with addiction to opioids. When I played basketball, dreaming of playing in the NBA, there was never any talk in the locker room about opioids. Now the next generation of young athletes seems to be getting caught up in this. If they have an injury, young people get down when they are not able to play sports. They get depressed. Maybe they go to a party. Maybe it starts with some alcohol. Maybe it starts with a prescription. But all of a sudden, it mushrooms and grows. This is what parents were telling me at home, and it is clear that Congress cannot sit on the side lines while the opioid addiction problem continues to mushroom.

In the coming years, Medicare and Medicaid are expected to account for over a third of substance abuse-related spending. We are talking about billions of dollars each year. As the ranking member of the Senate Finance Committee, which is required to pay for these bedrock health programs, I want to talk just for a little bit tonight about the critical role these programs are going to play in stemming the tide of opioid abuse.

I would like to begin by saying that it is my view that the American people are paying for a distorted set of priorities. Our people are getting hooked on opioids, there is not enough treatment, and vigorous enforcement is falling short. That, in my view, is a trifecta of misplaced priorities. And while it is not all going to be done this week, beginning this week the Congress has the opportunity to develop fresh policies that will begin to right the ship.

Last week the Senate Finance Committee held a hearing to discuss the opioid crisis. As I listened to the debate, there was a sense that policymakers are sort of lined up to choose between two sides. One is tough enforcement, which means cracking down on pill mills, fraudsters bilking Medicare and Medicaid with unneeded prescriptions, and unscrupulous abusers who doctor shop for their next bottle of pills. Then there is another side that believes there should be more focus on social services. My own view is that what is needed is a better approach that includes three priorities: more prevention, better treatment, and, yes, tougher enforcement. True success is going to require that all three work in tandem.

When it comes to preventing addiction, any discussion has to include how these drugs are prescribed in the first place. I have come to feel, as I got around Oregon and I listened to the testimony in the Finance Committee here recently, what has happened is America, for the last 15 or so years, has been on a prescription pendulum, where doctors were once criticized for not treating pain aggressively enough, today they seem to be criticized for prescribing too many opioids to manage pain.

In my view, our challenge is to work on a bipartisan basis to get this balance right. Of course we want our people to have an opportunity for science-based pain management, and we also don't want indiscriminate prescribing of opioids. It is about getting the balance right with respect to this prescription pendulum that our country has been on for the last 15 or 20 years.

I am pleased the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is breaking new ground with their guidelines for prescribing opioids. If successful, I believe they could provide a meaningful reduction in overprescribing. I have also been concerned about the influence opioid manufacturers have on prescribing practices. So I have sent to the ranking Democrat on the Finance Committee an inquiry to Secretary Burwell to ensure that any potential conflicts of interest have been properly disclosed for members of government panels who are evaluating the Centers for Disease Control guidelines as a result of funding they receive from drug manufacturers.

Our physicians ought to have the best information on prescribing these powerful drugs without undue influence from the companies that are manufacturing. In my view, a key piece of solving the opioid addiction puzzle has to be prompt and effective treatment of those who are dealing with an addiction to opioids.

The Finance Committee had three witnesses last week: a witness who was chosen by our distinguished chairman, Senator HATCH, a witness I chose, and an expert who was well thought of by all sides. The question was, How do you solve this opioid addiction challenge if you just restrict access to opioids?

I personally believe that kind of enforcement regime should be part of a solution, and I support that, but if all you do is restrict access to opioids, each of these experts—the one chosen by Chairman HATCH, the one I chose, independent expert, all of them said if all you do is restrict access to opioids, the addiction does not go away. The addiction doesn't just magically disappear.

I hope we can emphasize this as the Senate begins our debate. Any lasting solution is going to have to have enforcement, which this bill focuses on, but it is also going to have to have treatment and prevention. We are going to have to improve access to addiction treatment and mental health services.

I know the distinguished President of the Senate, like my State, has a lot of rural communities, and it is going to be particularly important to ensure that they are served. I think the distinguished President of the Senate knows it is not a surprise that some of the rural communities have some of the highest rates of abuse and opiate overdose in the country.

Mental health treatment for addiction certainly has gotten short shrift for too long. It is too important to have that kind of policy, and it is high time for a change. For example, Congress ought to also be taking a look at what is called the IMD exclusion, an out-of-date policy from the 1960s that says services like rehab or some emergency mental health stay in an inpatient setting can't be covered by Medicaid. That is a big policy change. I think it is important that we debate it, and I think we all understand finding the vast sums needed for those services would be a unique challenge.

Like so many other important issues, at the end of the day, this requires that our Congress make some tough choices. Yet if prevention and treatment are not locked in upfront, we ought to realize that if those are our choices, to not give adequate emphasis to prevention and treatment, the overall bill is going to come in even higher—pregnant mothers giving birth to opioid-dependent babies, EMTs and emergency rooms dealing with overdose calls every night, county jails taking the place of needed substance abuse treatment, able-bodied adults in the streets instead of working in the private sector at a family wage job. America's tax dollars ought to be spent more wisely. So as we begin this debate, we begin

the debate by tackling the opioid scourge that has carved the path of destruction, a path of destruction from one end of the country to another.

The Senate has to find the right mix between prevention, treatment, and enforcement. It is going to be that kind of strategy, a fresh strategy where prevention, treatment, and enforcement work in tandem. That is going make a real difference for our families and our communities struggling to heal.

I hope those who may have followed this speech will recognize that I haven't talked about Democrats and Republicans. I have been talking about a set of approaches we can all work on together. In fact, all three of the witnesses who were before the Finance Committee made it clear that you had to have those three approaches—prevention, treatment, and enforcement—work in tandem if you want to solve the problem.

I think it is important Democrats and Republicans recognize what those experts and others have said is going to be necessary to help our families and communities across this country heal. We can do it in a bipartisan fashion. I am committed to working in just that manner.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will the Senator withhold his request?

Mr. WYDEN. Yes.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10:30 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10:30 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:59 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, March 1, 2016, at 10:30 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate February 29, 2016:

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. ROBERT S. WILLIAMS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. BROOK J. LEONARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. MICHAEL A. GUETLEIN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. STEVEN L. BASHAM
BRIG. GEN. CARL A. BUHLER
BRIG. GEN. JAMES C. DAWKINS, JR.
BRIG. GEN. DAWN M. DUNLOP
BRIG. GEN. ALBERT M. ELTON II
BRIG. GEN. MICHAEL A. FANTINI
BRIG. GEN. CEDRIC D. GEORGE
BRIG. GEN. PATRICK C. HIGBY
BRIG. GEN. MARK K. JOHNSON
BRIG. GEN. BRIAN T. KELLY
BRIG. GEN. BRIAN M. KILLOUGH
BRIG. GEN. SCOTT A. KINDSVATER
BRIG. GEN. DONALD E. KIRKLAND
BRIG. GEN. ROBERT D. LABRUTTA
BRIG. GEN. RUSSELL A. MACK
BRIG. GEN. CHARLES L. MOORE, JR.
BRIG. GEN. MARY F. O'BRIEN
BRIG. GEN. JOHN T. QUINTAS
BRIG. GEN. DUKE Z. RICHARDSON
BRIG. GEN. ROBERT J. SKINNER
BRIG. GEN. BRADLEY D. SPACY
BRIG. GEN. FERDINAND B. STOSS
BRIG. GEN. JEFFREY B. TALIAFERRO
BRIG. GEN. CHRISTOPHER P. WEGGEMAN
BRIG. GEN. STEPHEN N. WHITING
BRIG. GEN. JOHN M. WOOD

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ERIC R. BAUGH, JR. AND ENDING WITH JEANLUC G. C. NIEL, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 11, 2016.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH BRIAN J. ALENT AND ENDING WITH BRYAN A. WILLIAMS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 11, 2016.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF KHURRAM A. KHAN, TO BE MAJOR.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH BRUCE E. STERNKE AND ENDING WITH JEFFREY S. WOOLFORD, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MARY E. CLARK AND ENDING WITH JAMES A. JERNIGAN, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF MARGARET C. MARTIN, TO BE COLONEL.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH GREGORY J. MALONE AND ENDING WITH GREGORY K. RICHERT, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

IN THE ARMY

ARMY NOMINATION OF RICARDO O. MORALES, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF CHRISTOPHER W. WENDLAND, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF MICHAEL J. MULCAHY, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF KELLY K. GREENHAW, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH GEORGE L. BARTON AND ENDING WITH RICHARD A. WHOLEY, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATION OF NICHOLAS H. GIST, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MATTHEW J. AIESI AND ENDING WITH JASON D. YOUNG, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATION OF D012199, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATION OF JAMES C. SULLIVAN, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF MARK R. BIEHL, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH RYAN P. BRENNAN AND ENDING WITH PAUL E. PATTERSON, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 1, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH SCOTT F. BARTLETT AND ENDING WITH KENNETH G. VERBONCOEUR, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 1, 2016.

IN THE MARINE CORPS

MARINE CORPS NOMINATION OF LUCAS M. CHESLA, TO BE MAJOR.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATION OF JAIME A. IBARRA, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH CURTIS J. SMITH AND ENDING WITH BRYAN E. STOTTS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ALLEN L. LEWIS AND ENDING WITH DAVID STEVENS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MICHAEL J. MALONE AND ENDING WITH MICHAEL C. ROGERS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATION OF CONRAD G. ALSTON, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATION OF JAMES C. ROSE, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATION OF SHAWN A. HARRIS, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH DAVID F. HUNLEY AND ENDING WITH ARLIE L. MILLER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MICHAEL J. BARRIBALL AND ENDING WITH JOHN V. RUSSELL IV, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JAMEEL A. ALI AND ENDING WITH AMBROSIO V. PANTOJA, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ISAAC RODRIGUEZ AND ENDING WITH BRIAN G. WISNESKI, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH KEITH D. BURGESS AND ENDING WITH KEITH J. LUZBETAK, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH CHRISTOPHER W. BENSON AND ENDING WITH SHELTON WILLIAMS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH KEVIN L. FREIBURGER AND ENDING WITH JASON H. PERRY, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH CHARLES W. DEMLING III AND ENDING WITH GLEN F. TEDTAOTAO, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

IN THE NAVY

NAVY NOMINATION OF KIELLY A. ANDREWS, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JEFFREY C. CHAO AND ENDING WITH JOSEPH A. MOORE, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 28, 2016.

NAVY NOMINATION OF ERIK J. KJELLGREN, TO BE COMMANDER.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE BRAINERD SENIOR CENTER

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to and honor Chicago's Brainerd Senior Center, which celebrated its fifth Black History Month celebration on Friday.

This year, the Center highlighted African American inventors and their inventions. This event, Mr. Speaker, helped educate many and remind others of the contributions of important people such as Madame C.J. Walker, Robert F. Flemming, Jr., and Sarah Boone.

I applaud the Brainerd Center for keeping the legacies of these and other great Americans alive and ensuring that their contribution not only to our Nation, but the world, is not forgotten.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to the Brainerd Senior Center.

ESTABLISHING ACCOUNTABILITY AT THE WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION: ILLICIT TECHNOLOGY TRANSFERS, WHISTLEBLOWING, AND REFORM

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, a hearing I held earlier this week put a spotlight on an organization that is a critical component of a global system of intellectual property and patent protection, the World Intellectual Property Organization, or WIPO. It is an organization that, unfortunately, appears to have lost its way under its current Director General, Francis Gurry, and is in need of major reform.

We heard from whistleblowers who related how they uncovered illicit transfers of technology to rogue nations such as North Korea and Iran, and how WIPO under Director General Gurry, unbeknownst to member States, cut deals with China and Russia to open offices in those countries, potentially putting our intellectual property at risk.

The hearing was about national security as much as the importance of sound governance and oversight. China, for example, has a notoriously bad record on protecting intellectual property rights—WIPO ought to be part of the solution.

You may know that I serve as Chairman of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China; Senator MARCO RUBIO is co-chair.

Ominously, the Commission's latest annual report released last October concluded that human rights violations had significantly worsened and were broader in scope than at any other time since the Commission was established in 2002.

Last week I travelled to China on a mission to promote human rights, the rule of law and democracy, which of course includes intellectual property rights.

In China I not only met and argued with government leaders, but I had the privilege of writing and delivering a keynote address to students and faculty at New York University-Shanghai.

Hopes in the 90's that China would eventually and inevitably matriculate from a dictatorship to democracy haven't even come close to materializing.

According to the Commission's report, U.S. companies faced significant difficulties related to intellectual property rights in China. And China is not the only place where these problems persist.

Two of our witnesses, Jim Pooley and Miranda Brown, recounted what they saw at WIPO, and what happened when they sought to bring to light what they saw. It is not a pretty story.

It is the personal aspect of governance and oversight that I want to emphasize, because at its heart the story we heard is a human drama, about brave individuals who at great personal cost to themselves and their comfort saw wrongdoing and decided to do something about it.

The hearing was timely as well as topical, as there has been an internal investigation of WIPO by the UN's Office of Internal Oversight Services into the allegations of wrongdoing. The results of this investigation are currently before the chairman of WIPO's General Assembly—this is a General Assembly of member states, including the United States, based in Geneva.

It is incumbent upon the General Assembly chairman—Gabriel Duque of Colombia—that he act upon this report, share it with the member states, and make it publically available. We also call upon our State Department to follow up on this, and to be persistent in pushing for reform, transparency and accountability of WIPO.

This week's hearing will have reverberations beyond WIPO, for there appears to be a culture of corruption at many international organizations, not only WIPO.

We hear revelations, for example, about FIFA and world soccer, and how the serpent of corruption wheedles its way even into the world of sport, undermining the nobility of athletic competition.

We hear of the sexual exploitation of minors occurring in UN peacekeeping missions—I chaired three hearings on that and traveled to DR Congo to investigate—transforming ostensible emissaries of mercy into envoys of exploitation, and supposed places of refuge maw pits of misery.

The hearing I held this week is the first in what we hope to be a series of hearings this Congress holds to focus on the need for reform at the United Nations and its institutions, with our next in the series being on UN Peacekeepers and the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse.

We believe by shining a light, we can help victims and help end corruption, bringing healing and true reform.

Organizations such as WIPO are too important to be abandoned. It is essential that we conduct vigorous oversight and demand accountability to help refocus this organization on fulfilling its vital mission.

Finally, I would like to thank my co-chairs from the co-sponsoring subcommittees, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN and MATT SALMON, and our various ranking members, for joining me at the hearing earlier this week. Rep. ROS-LEHTINEN in particular has been dogged in pursuing this issue over many years now, and deserves praise for first addressing the issue of corruption at WIPO.

INDIAN CONSUL GENERAL IN HOUSTON, MR. PARVATHANENI HARISH

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I celebrate and congratulate my friend Mr. Parvathaneni Harish, Indian Consul General in Houston. I celebrate his efforts on behalf of the Indian community in Houston and congratulate him on his new assignment as Ambassador to Vietnam.

I have met with Mr. Harish on many occasions and he is a thoughtful and caring representative of India. We agree that the United States and India have a unique and special bond, both founded on the importance of democracy and that our two nations have the utmost mutual respect for one another. We are both strongly engaged with trade and intellectual property projects.

I recently attended the Republic Day in India, celebrating the adoption of the Indian Constitution. Both the US and India are proud to celebrate unity in diversity. We recognized our two countries' work for many years for peace and prosperity, true patriotism, and independence.

Mr. Harish's efforts have strengthened relationships on the city, state, and federal levels. He has promoted visits to India and ways to benefit the US and Indian economy. I wish him the very best on his new assignment. He will be greatly missed in Houston and all of Southeast Texas.

And that's just the way it is.

IN RECOGNITION OF GEORGE W. JETER

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a great husband, father, philanthropist, entrepreneur, and friend of long

standing to my wife, Vivian, and me—Mr. George W. Jeter. Sadly, George passed away on February 26, 2016. His funeral service will be held today, February 29, 2016 at St. Paul United Methodist Church in Columbus, Georgia.

George William Jeter was born March 29, 1935, in Montgomery, Alabama. He graduated from Coffee County High School in Enterprise, Alabama in 1953 and earned his Bachelor of Science degree in accounting from the University of Alabama in 1957. After graduation, he went on to serve his country with distinction as an army officer from 1957–59, serving as a Weapons Instructor.

George was also an Internal Revenue Agent and Field Audit Supervisor from 1959–1969. He served as Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer at AFLAC, Inc. and affiliates from 1969–86. He played a tremendous role in helping to grow the company in its early days and helped to launch the business in Japan, where AFLAC now does almost 75 percent of its business. Following his retirement from AFLAC, George continued to serve as a consultant to the company until his passing.

George loved collecting guns, samurai swords, and Japanese Art. Moreover, he also loved people and Columbus. He served on numerous community boards and in leadership positions to include: the Chattahoochee Council of Boy Scouts of America; the Columbus State University Foundation; the Columbus Regional Health Foundation; The Ronald McDonald House Charities of West Georgia; St. Paul United Methodist Church; Troy University; American Hospital Association; Georgia Hospital Association; The Rotary Club of Columbus; and the Columbus Technical College Foundation. He also served as a consultant to Denim North America where he was a constant advocate for the American Textile Industry. He loved young people and had a great love for Scouting. He has received numerous awards for his dedication to Scouting and its mission. And the current Boy Scout Service Center in Columbus is named in honor of him and his wife, Jo. He also established the George W. Jeter Foundation so that he could find other ways to support the causes that he championed throughout his life. It has been said that ''The true person of success is not the person that climbs the ladder of this life with two hands, but climbs the ladder of this life with one hand and reaches back with the other.'' George William Jeter was always reaching back to help others to reach their full potential. Our country and humankind are better because he travelled this way.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join my wife, Vivian, and me, along with the 730,000 people of the Second Congressional District in extending condolences to his wife, Jo, their four children and two grandchildren and our gratitude for his life of service to humanity.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I was absent on Friday, February 26th, 2016. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following ways:

Yes on Roll Call Number 92 the Beyer of Virginia Amendment No. 2.

Yes on Roll Call Number 93 Jackson Lee of Texas Amendment No. 3.

Yes on Roll Call Number 94 Beyer of Virginia Amendment No. 8.

No on Roll Call Number 95 Smith of Missouri Amendment No. 9.

No on Roll Call Number 96 Griffith of Virginia Amendment No. 12.

No on Roll Call Number 97 Ribble of Wisconsin Amendment No. 14.

No on Roll Call Number 98 Young of Alaska Amendment No. 15.

Yes on Roll Call Number 99 Huffman of California Amendment No. 16.

Yes on Roll Call Number 100 Sportsmens Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act of 2015.

No on Roll Call Number 101 Sportsmens Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act of 2015.

HONORING SISTER DOROTHY COOK

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of an outstanding member of the East Bay community, Sister Dorothy Cook. We honor her life of service and spiritual devotion, and recognize the teachings she has given to our community.

Born in 1934 in Prescott, Arkansas, Sister Dorothy Cook has been a lifelong servant and messenger of the Lord's word. She attended Sunday school every weekend at Sweet Home Baptist Church, building her relationship with God and His word. Sister Cook relocated to San Francisco in 1947, where she then attended San Francisco City College and San Francisco State University.

Sister Cook's exemplary ministry promotes faith, family values, and the presence of God in every aspect of life. She seeks to bring religion back into the fabric of our society.

Ministry is the foundation and sole mission of Sister Cook's work. Whether building a gospel house or preparing videos, Sister Cook involved many believers in her endeavors. Ministry can be found anywhere, as Sister Cook has shown us, with many of these projects helping to train others to follow the path of their Lord.

Her patience is a testament to the endurance of service and devotion to God. She is selfless and unwavering in her motivation to do God's work.

Furthermore, Sister Cook has produced numerous literary works which have impacted our local youth and church community.

Sister Dorothy Cook has also had a profound impact on the most vulnerable in our community, helping lead many voices toward the word of God by offering opportunity and appreciation to those who have never had such chances in their life. Her dedication to community is unrivaled and fueled by the word of God.

Today, California's 13th Congressional District salutes the life of an exemplary individual and devoted community member, Sister Dorothy Cook. I join all of Sister Dorothy Cook's loved ones in wishing her continued happiness and success in life.

GETTING THE WORDS RIGHT: OUR NATION'S COURT REPORTERS AND HOUSE CLERKS

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the backbone of the court system, courtroom reporters make sure that the system works efficiently. Tasked with keeping complete, accurate and secure records, courtroom reporters handle verbatim documentation of criminal, civil or other court proceedings.

These individuals are highly skilled and trained in court reporting, which usually involves stenography. Reporting for the courts involves taking records of court proceedings, depositions, and administrative hearings, among other things.

They record everything that is being said in the courtroom by judges, witnesses, attorneys or other parties, as well as gestures and emotional reactions that accompany any statements.

While taking shorthand notes, they must accurately capture the spoken word. This does not mean paraphrasing or capturing every other word. Reporters must capture each word verbatim, with correct spelling and punctuation, despite the speed in which individuals are talking. After the hearing is over, they then must transcribe their notes into a readable, workable format for the public record.

Sometimes, a court reporter's work benefits those with special needs, such as the deaf or hard of hearing. Court reporters can even provide closed captioning or a real-time translation of spoken words.

During my 22 years as a judge in Texas, I had many court reporters who capably kept records of every word said in the courtroom. Being a court reporter is no easy feat, stressors come from every direction including security issues and daily deadlines.

In the House of Representatives, we have clerks who help us and our staff every day. These individuals serve as the congressional stenographers, working diligently, day in and day out. These individuals take notes on congressional hearings and floor debate, speeches and statements. They then work extremely fast to enter all the statements into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Every single entry must be completely correct. Each statement made goes on the record in congressional history. These individuals' work ensures that history is written correctly. Without their diligence we would not be able to do our jobs as efficiently.

These highly trained and talented men and women work tenaciously to record correctly the proceedings of the court system as well as Congress.

Court reporters and floor clerks are truly a vital asset to judges and Members of Congress. We thank them for getting the words right.

And that's just the way it is.

SENATE REPUBLICAN SUPPORT OF OBAMA'S SUPREME COURT NOMINATION

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to urge the Senate Republicans to consider President Obama's Supreme Court nominee. It is disappointing that our democratic process is being so unduly hindered by Senate Republicans who refuse to carry out their basic duties clearly laid out for them in the Constitution. The Constitution clearly informs us that the President has the power, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to nominate a successor for open seats in the Supreme Court. The message for Senate Republicans is simple—let the President do his job. It is time to put aside partisan issues and get back to the basics of governing.

In previous years, Supreme Court nominations have been at least considered during an election year; six times in our U.S. history to be exact. So I ask, why change now? If Senate Republicans fail to consider the President's Supreme Court nominee during the current election year, this will be the first time in U.S. history that our Supreme Court will have a vacancy for well over a year. There is simply no legitimate rationale for not giving consideration to the President's nominee once announced. There is an ample amount of time available for the Senate to consider the President's nominee.

The Supreme Court vacancy is a priority that deserves an unbiased hearing and timely vote. Justice and democracy are at stake and there is no time for this kind of divisiveness. Republican Senators have a constitutional obligation to put away partisan issues and fill this vacancy. Senate Republicans, I strongly urge you to fulfil your constitutional duty and consider President Obama's nominee for Supreme Court Justice.

RECOGNIZING BENNETT RICHARD ''BEN'' HOUSTON

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today to recognize the passing of Mr. Bennett Richard ''Ben'' Houston on February 26th, 2016. Mr. Houston was a beloved and nationally distinguished leader within the livestock industry.

Mr. Houston received many distinct honors throughout his lifetime. He founded the Aristocrat Angus Ranch in 1966, with his wife Nita, where they raised their family. In 1992, Aristocrat Angus Ranch flew Angus seed stock and beef cattle genetics to the Ukraine, establishing them as a leader in the cattle industry.

In addition, Mr. Houston participated in many notable committees and associations. He was elected to the Executive Committee of the Western Stock Show in 1976. He went on to be President in 1985, and ultimately Chairman of the Board in 1999. He was inducted into the Angus Heritage Foundation, served as a member of the American Angus Association for over 50 years, served as President of the Colorado Cattle Feeders, and was presented with the CSU Leadership in Agriculture Award. Mr. Houston was involved with a number of other organizations, where his limitless knowledge and service will always be remembered.

It is the hard work Mr. Houston embodied throughout his life that makes America exceptional. He has shown true leadership in his industry and community. I extend my deepest sympathies to Mr. Houston's family and friends.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Mr. Bennett Richard ''Ben'' Houston for his commitment to family, community, and the livestock industry.

HONORING MATT FRANKS

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Matt Franks for his outstanding achievement of being named the 2015 United Bowhunters of Missouri Conservation Agent of the Year for the Missouri Department of Conservation Ozark Region. Matt has earned this award after only six years of serving as a Howell County Conservation agent, displaying his exemplary determination and enthusiasm for Wildlife Code enforcement since joining the Conservation Agent Training Academy in 2009.

Matt has exhibited exceptional Wildlife Code enforcement presence throughout his six years as a Howell County Conservation Agent, making 19 arrests related to archery violations in the first two months of the 2015 archery season. In addition to Matt's admirable work ensuring conservation laws are adhered to, he has also served as an influential community leader and role model for local youth.

Matt has led numerous educational-involvement programs for youth over the last year, including bird hunting clinics and youth gigging classes. He has also hosted events for the National Wild Turkey Federation Hunting Heritage Program for young hunters known as Juniors Acquiring Knowledge, Ethics and Sportsmanship. Finally, he has served as a judge for Future Farmers of America public speaking contests, and assisted with their trap shooting team.

His involvement and contributions to the Howell County community make Matt an excellent selection for the United Bowhunters of Missouri Conservation Agent of the Year from the Ozark Region. For this award and his outstanding career achievements, it is my pleasure to recognize Matt Franks before the United States House of Representatives.

CELEBRATING 70 YEARS OF INDIANA AVENUE MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as the month of February 2016 comes to a close to recognize a milestone anniversary in the life of Toledo's Indiana Avenue Baptist Church. This month the congregation has been celebrating its 70th anniversary with a series of special gatherings. I was privileged to join the congregation yesterday.

Founded by Reverend M. J. Stephenson in February 1946, the congregation has been shepherded by Reverend John Roberts for more than half a century. Pastor Roberts, in fact, was part of the organizational meeting of the church. Thus, this long standing beacon in our city has been blessed with a continuity of leadership since its beginnings.

Indiana Avenue Missionary Baptist Church's first services in its building were held in its lower level in 1948. An upper level was added twenty years later and since 1980 services have been held in its newer sanctuary. In 1989 a fellowship hall was added which has served the congregation very well, with special focus on activities for youth. The hall bears the name of founding Pastor Stephenson and longtime Pastor Roberts.

Starting with less than 100 members, the congregation of Indiana Avenue Missionary Baptist Church has served over 7,000 people through its seven decades and currently serves about 2,000 people. An anchor in our community, the church serves its faithful while ministering to the needs of its neighbors. One of the wonderful traditions at the church is the Interfaith Mass Choir. The choir's beautiful blend of voices soar in faith-filled praise, lifting up in joy those it reaches through song.

Psalms Chapter 18 Verse 2 tells us, ''The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.'' Through the days of its ''threescore and ten'' years, the shepherds and flock of Indiana Avenue Missionary Baptist Church have lived this truth as their lives have given testament to Jesus' message of love which ''bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.'' (1 Corinthians 13:7)

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 85, Ordering the Previous Question on H. Res. 618—The Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 3624—Fraudulent Joinder Prevention Act of 2015, had I been present, I would have voted YES.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, on February 26, 2016, I was not present for roll call vote 93. Had I been present, I would have voted: YES on roll call vote 93.

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE OF JOHN STEWART BRYAN III

HON. ROBERT HURT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. HURT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, Congressman DAVE BRAT and I submit these remarks to commemorate the life of John Stewart Bryan who passed away January 23, 2016 at the age of 77.

During Mr. Bryan's more than 50-year career, he worked as a newspaper journalist, served as publisher of four newspapers, the Richmond Times-Dispatch, Richmond News Leader, The Tampa Tribune, and The Tampa Times, and later became the Chairman, President, and Chief Executive of Media General. Mr. Bryan proudly and accurately referred to himself as a ''newspaperman.''

J. Stewart Bryan III was born on May 4, 1938 in Richmond. A Virginian through and through, he attended St. Christopher's School in Richmond, the Episcopal High School in Alexandria, and the University of Virginia. Afterwards, he served our country as an infantry officer in the U.S. Marine Corps.

Mr. Bryan's accolades were numerous and well deserved. He was awarded honorary doctor of humane letters degrees from Hampden-Sydney College, Emory & Henry College, College of William & Mary, and Randolph-Macon College, and he was inducted as a laureate of the Virginia Communications Hall of Fame and the Richmond Business Hall of Fame. He also received the outstanding service award of the Florida Press Association, the lifetime achievement award of the Virginia Press Association, the Frank Mayborn Leadership Award of the Southern Newspaper Publishers Association, the George Mason Award for significant contributions to the advancement of journalism in Virginia from the Society of Professional Journalists, Virginia Pro Chapter (SPJVA), and the medal of honor of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Moreover, he was well known for supporting, and when necessary staunchly defending, his staff, and he fought steadfastly for the freedom of press.

But perhaps, his career and his passion are best summed up by the Richmond Times-Dispatch in an editorial after his passing: ''Stewart Bryan's heart pumped ink. He devoted his life to newspapers. A life devoted to print is a life devoted to time and place. Bryan loved Richmond. He considered The Times-Dispatch and News Leader vehicles of public service. When the press does its job, it improves its surroundings. Bryan may have belonged to a newspaper family but he answered a vocation's call.''

He is survived by his wife, Lisa-Margaret ''Lissy'' Stevenson Bryan: his daughters, Elizabeth Talbott Bryan Maxey ''Talbott'', and Anna Saulsbury Bryan (Stephen) Sullivan. Five grandchildren: Tennant and Alice Maxey, and Pryor, Stewart, and Harriett Sullivan. Two sisters: Mary Tennant Bryan Perkins and Florence Talbott Bryan Fowlkes.

Our thoughts and prayers remain with the entire Bryan family. Stewart Bryan's dedication to his craft is unmatched and admirable; he will be sorely missed.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 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 $19,070,657,293,114.53. We've added $8,443,780,244,201.45 to our debt in 7 years. This is over $7.5 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, February 26, I was unable to be present for recorded votes.

Had I been present, I would have voted the following on amendments to H.R. 2406, the SHARE Act: ''no'' on roll call no. 92, the Beyer amendment no. 2; ''no'' on roll call no. 93, the Jackson Lee amendment; ''no'' on roll call no. 94, the Beyer amendment no. 8; ''yes'' on roll call no. 95, the Smith amendment; ''yes'' on roll call no. 96, the Griffith amendment; ''yes'' on roll call no. 97, the Ribble amendment; ''yes'' on roll call no. 98, the Young amendment; ''no'' on roll call no. 99, Huffman amendment; and ''no'' on roll call no. 100, the Democratic Motion to Recommit.

I would have voted ''yes'' on roll call no. 101, final passage of H.R. 2406, the SHARE Act, offered by Mr. WITTMAN. This bill will help ensure access to federal lands for sportsmen, and includes provisions to protect our Second Amendment rights.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 86, Adoption of H. Res. 618—The Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 3624—Fraudulent Joinder Prevention Act of 2015, had I been present, I would have voted yes.

SEVEN YEARS OF CHANGE THAT YOU CAN SEE AND FEEL

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, today is the last day of Black History Month, a time when the nation pauses to remember the contributions of African American men and women that have enriched the fabric of our nation.

That is why it is fitting and proper that we take a moment to recount and appreciate the extraordinary accomplishments of one of the singular figures in American history: President Barack Obama.

Mr. Speaker, those of us who were there remember well that the morning of January 20, 2009 was one of the coldest days on record in Washington, DC.

But it was nothing compared to the chill wind blowing through the American economy and body politic.

The nation was facing economic challenges unseen since the Great Depression: Americans were losing their jobs at a frightening rate of 800,000 per month; the national unemployment rate had risen to 7.8 percent and would continue to climb until reaching its peak of 10.0 percent in October 2009.

For African Americans, the numbers were much grimmer, a jobless rate of 13.5 percent in January 2009 which would grow to 16.5 percent by the end of the year.

And on top of this, tens of thousands of American families each month were losing their health insurance and their homes to foreclosure.

The United States was still bogged down in the quagmire that was the Iraq War and young people by the thousands were being forced to defer or drop out of college because of lack of financial aid.

And the average price of gas exceeded $4 per gallon.

It was against this backdrop that I watched from the inaugural platform as Barack Obama, surrounded by his radiant and beautiful wife, Michelle, and their two adorable daughters, rose to take the oath of office.

After being sworn in as the nation's 44th President of the United States, President Obama reassured an anxious but hopeful nation, saying:

> Today I say to you that the challenges we face are real. They are serious and they are many. They will not be met easily or in a short span of time. But know this America: They will be met.

Watching Barack Obama address the nation that day, spectators in attendance and viewers across the country and around the world understood they were witnessing a historic president, the first African American ever to hold the nation's highest office.

But more than being a historic president, Barack Obama's actions and leadership over the ensuing seven years would demonstrate his would be a consequential presidency that changed America for the better.

His first and most pressing task was to rescue an economy on the brink of collapse.

Working with the Democratic-controlled Congress, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act was passed, which created 3.7 million jobs and saved the jobs of millions of teachers, firefighters, police officers, and social service providers.

The Recovery Act also cut taxes for working families, extended unemployment insurance, and expanded the Earned Income and Child tax credits, which disproportionately benefit African American families.

Seven years later the verdict is in on the economic plan put in place by President Obama and the Democratic Congress.

The Recovery Act ended the Great Recession, transformed the economy from one hemorrhaging jobs to one that has created over 16

million new jobs over a record 71 consecutive months.

The national unemployment rate has dipped under 5% for the first time since President Clinton left office, the deficit has been cut by 71%, and the Dow Jones stock market index topped 18,000 in 2015, an increase of 177% over where it stood the day President Obama took office.

And, as an added benefit, the average price of gasoline has been reduced from more than $4.11 per gallon to $1.80, the lowest price since before the tragedy of September 11.

These last seven years also effected policy changes in the areas of criminal justice reform, health and education, national security, and foreign affairs.

A partial listing of these achievements is substantial, impressive, and varied.

President Obama signed the Fair Sentencing Act in August 2010, which reduces the disparity in the amounts of powder cocaine and crack cocaine required for the imposition of mandatory minimum sentences and eliminates the mandatory minimum sentence for simple possession of crack cocaine.

In July 2015, President Obama became the first president ever to tour a federal prison when he visited the El Reno Federal Correctional Institution outside of Oklahoma City.

President Obama launched the Smart on Crime initiative through which the Department of Justice modified its charging policies for certain federal low-level drug-related offenses, improved diversion and re-entry policies, and strengthened protections for the most vulnerable.

President Obama established Smart on Juvenile Justice grant program to expand the use of effective community-based alternatives to youth detention and launched the Second Chance Pell Pilot Program for Incarcerated Individuals to test new models to allow incarcerated Americans to receive Pell Grants and pursue the postsecondary education with the goal of helping them get jobs, support their families, and turn their lives around.

President Obama directed the Office of Personnel Management to take action where it can to ''ban the box'' by modifying its rules to delay inquiries into criminal history until later in the hiring process and called on Congress to enact legislation ''banning the box'' on job applications in the private sector.

President Obama increased the use of body-worn cameras through $20 million in grants to state and local law enforcement.

President Obama issued an Executive Order to increase the capacity of VA mental-health programs by hiring 1,600 more mental-health professionals and expanding the capacity of the Veterans Crisis Line.

President Obama provided nearly $60 billion in benefit payments under the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill to over 1.5 million individuals and relaxed the evidence requirements for veterans seeking disability pay for post-traumatic stress disorder with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

President Obama acted to reduce gun violence by issuing executive orders requiring background checks for people trying to buy some of the most dangerous weapons and other items through a trust or corporation and an overhaul of the background check system to make it more efficient and effective.

President Obama signed into law the Affordable Care Act passed by the Democratic Congress which has provided access to quality, affordable health insurance to nearly 20 million previously uninsured Americans.

President Obama launched the ''My Brother's Keeper'' Initiative in 2014 to address persistent opportunity gaps faced by boys and young men of color and ensure that all young people can reach their full potential.

In October 2009, Congress passed and President Obama signed the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, historic legislation extending coverage of federal hate-crime law to include attacks based on the victim's race, religion, nationality, or actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

President Obama established the new Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy for young undocumented people who came to the U.S. as children in an effort to better focus enforcement resources.

President Obama expanded opportunity for America's children by strengthening Head Start.

President Obama made college more affordable by increasing Pell grants, keeping interest rates on student loans low, and helping students manageably repay their loans.

President Obama signed the Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act, which made historic investments in improved child nutrition and health for the 31 million children who rely on school meals and updated science-based school meal standards to increase fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein and low-fat dairy, while reducing fats and sodium.

In December 2010, the Congress passed and President Obama signed the Don't Ask, Don't Tell Repeal Act of 2010 into law, allowing gay men and women to serve openly and with integrity in the U.S. military.

President Obama also made history by appointing two women to the U.S. Supreme Court, including the first Hispanic American to serve on the Court.

President Obama appointed the first African American man and woman to serve as Attorney General and the first woman to Chair the Federal Reserve Board.

In the area of foreign affairs and national security, President Obama ended the Iraq War, assembled and led an international coalition to impose sanctions so crippling on Iran that it was forced to the negotiating table that yielded the Iran Nuclear Agreement that prevents Iran from ever attaining a nuclear weapon.

And of course, as the world knows, because of President Obama's leadership, General Motors is alive and Osama Bin Laden is dead.

For seven years, President Barack Obama has represented our country with grace, integrity, honor, and distinction.

He has provided consolation, hope, and healing in the face of unspeakable tragedies such as the massacre of innocent children at Sandy Hook, worshippers at Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, spectators at the Boston Marathon, and mass shootings in Aurora, Colorado and Tucson, Arizona.

He expressed and symbolized our joy and pride in the progress made over the last half century—and the distance we still have to travel—when he marched across the Edmund Pettus Bridge and addressed the multitude from the spot on the steps where the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. shared his dream for America's future.

So as President Obama serves the final year of his presidency, it is clear beyond doubt that he kept the promise he made to the nation seven years ago on that cold day in January when he said:

> Today I say to you that the challenges we face are real. . . . But know this America: They will be met.

They were more than just met; under his leadership they were overcome with amazing grace.

And because of President Barack Obama, today the United States is stronger, more prosperous, and better positioned than ever to win the future.

As a presidential candidate in 2008, then Senator Obama promised the America people ''change you can believe in.''

In office, President Obama made good on that promise, delivering positive change that the American people can see and feel.

And that is what makes his one of the most consequential presidencies in American history.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on Friday, February 26, 2016 due to important events being held in our district in Houston and Harris County, Texas.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, March 1, 2016 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MARCH 2

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold hearings to examine S. 2446, to amend subtitle D of the Solid Waste Disposal Act to encourage recovery and beneficial use of coal combustion residuals and establish requirements for the proper management and disposal of coal combustion residuals that are protective of human health and the environment, S. 1479, to amend the Comprehensive Environmental Response,

Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 to modify provisions relating to grants, and an original bill entitled, ''Good Samaritan Cleanup of Orphan Mines Act of 2016''.

SD–406

10 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of the Interior.

SD–124

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Federal Communications Commission.

SR–253

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the economic and geopolitical implications of low oil and gas prices.

SD–419

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Patrick Pizzella, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority, and Julie Helene Becker, Steven Nathan Berk, and Elizabeth Carroll Wingo, each to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia.

SD–342

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

SD–G50

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of Defense

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Navy and Marine Corps.

SD–192

2 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Food and Drug Administration.

SD–124

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of the Interior Bureau of Reclamation.

SD–138

Joint Economic Committee

To hold hearings to examine the Economic Report of the President.

SH–216

MARCH 3

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Air Force in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD–G50

10 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Health and Human Services.

SD–138

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment

To hold hearings to examine regulatory reforms to improve equity market structure.

SD–538

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Business meeting to consider S. 2555, to provide opportunities for broadband investment, the nomination of Thomas F. Scott Darling, III, of Massachusetts, to be Administrator of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, and routine lists in the Coast Guard.

SR–253

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Energy.

SD–366

Committee on Finance

To hold hearings to examine free trade agreement implementation, focusing on lessons from the past.

SD–215

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the path forward in Libya.

SD–419

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the dogs of the Department of Homeland Security, focusing on how canine programs contribute to homeland security.

SD–342

Committee on the Judiciary

Business meeting to consider S. 247, to amend section 349 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to deem specified activities in support of terrorism as renunciation of United States nationality, S. 2390, to provide adequate protections for whistleblowers at the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the nominations of Elizabeth J. Drake, of Maryland, Jennifer Choe Groves, of Virginia, and Gary Stephen Katzmann, of Massachusetts, each to be a Judge of the United States Court of International Trade, and Clare E. Connors, to be United States District Judge for the District of Hawaii.

SD–226

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship

To hold hearings to examine the impacts of Federal fisheries management on small businesses.

SR–428A

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple Veterans Service Organizations.

CHOB–345

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Commerce.

SD–192

11 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 and fiscal year 2018 for the Veterans Health Administration and Veterans Benefits Administration.

SD–124

2 p.m.

Select Committee on Intelligence

To receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters.

SH–219

MARCH 8

10 a.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Forest Service.

SD–366

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Homeland Security.

SD–342

MARCH 9

10 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of General Joseph L. Votel, USA, for reappointment to the grade of general and to be Commander, United States Central Command, and Lieutenant General Raymond A. Thomas III, USA, to be general and Commander, United States Special Operations Command.

SD–G50

2 p.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the enforcement of the antitrust laws.

SD–226

2:15 p.m.

Committee on Indian Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for Indian Country.

SD–628

MARCH 16

10 a.m.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple Veterans Service Organizations.

SD–G50

POSTPONEMENTS

MARCH 2

10 a.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine EB–5 targeted employment areas.

SD–226

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S1063–S1104

Measures Introduced: Three bills and four resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 2604–2606, and S. Res. 377–380. **Page S1085**

Measures Reported:

S. Res. 377, directing the Senate Legal Counsel to bring a civil action to enforce a subpoena of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, with a preamble. (S. Rept. No. 114–214)

S. 1419, to promote the academic achievement of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children with the establishment of a Native American language grant program, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 114–215)

S. 1436, to require the Secretary of the Interior to take land into trust for certain Indian tribes, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 114–216)

S. 1776, to enhance tribal road safety, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 114–217) **Page S1085**

Measures Passed:

American Heart Month and National Wear Red Day: Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions was discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 365, designating February 2016 as ''American Heart Month'' and February 5, 2016, as ''National Wear Red Day'', and the resolution was then agreed to. **Page S1101**

Black History Month: Senate agreed to S. Res. 379, celebrating Black History Month. **Page S1101**

Measures Considered:

Comprehensive Addition and Recovery Act—Agreement: Senate resumed consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use. **Pages S1074–80**

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

By a unanimous vote of 89 yeas (Vote No. 27), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn, having voted in the affirmative, Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the motion to proceed to consideration of the bill. **Page S1076**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of the bill, post-cloture, at approximately 10:30 a.m., on Tuesday, March 1, 2016; and that all time during recess or adjournment of the Senate, count post-cloture on the motion to proceed to consideration of the bill. **Pages S1102–03**

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nominations:

29 Air Force nominations in the rank of general.

Routine lists in the Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, and Navy. **Pages S1101–02, S1104**

Messages from the House: **Page S1085**

Measures Referred: **Page S1085**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S1085–86**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S1086–89**

Additional Statements: **Pages S1084–85**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S1089–S1101**

Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—27) **Page S1076**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 3 p.m. and adjourned at 6:59 p.m., until 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, March 1, 2016. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S1104.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

No committee meetings were held.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 6 public bills, H.R. 4648–4653; H. Res. 627–629 were introduced. **Pages H1044–45**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H1045–46**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 1471, to reauthorize the programs and activities of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, with an amendment (H. Rept. 114–436);

H.R. 4401, to authorize the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide countering violent extremism training to Department of Homeland Security representatives at State and local fusion centers, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 114–437);

H.R. 4084, to enable civilian research and development of advanced nuclear energy technologies by private and public institutions and to expand theoretical and practical knowledge of nuclear physics, chemistry, and materials science, with an amendment (H. Rept. 114–438); and

H.R. 4557, to allow for judicial review of any final rule addressing national emission standards for hazardous air pollutants for brick and structural clay products or for clay ceramics manufacturing before requiring compliance with such rule (H. Rept. 114–439). **Page H1044**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Thornberry to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H1003**

Recess: The House recessed at 12:11 p.m. and reconvened at 2 p.m. **Page H1004**

Recess: The House recessed at 2:03 p.m. and reconvened at 3:45 p.m. **Page H1005**

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

Amending 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. 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, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 376 yeas with none voting "nay", Roll No. 102; **Pages H1005–06**

EPS Improvement Act of 2016: H.R. 4444, to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to exclude power supply circuits, drivers, and devices designed to be connected to, and power, light-emitting diodes or organic light-emitting diodes providing illumination from energy conservation standards for external power supplies; **Pages H1006–08**

Promoting a 21st century energy and manufacturing workforce: H.R. 4583, amended, to promote a 21st century energy and manufacturing workforce; **Pages H1008–10**

Amplifying Local Efforts to Root out Terror Act of 2016: H.R. 4401, amended, to authorize the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide countering violent extremism training to Department of Homeland Security representatives at State and local fusion centers; **Pages H1010–13**

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: H. Res. 148, amended, 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; **Pages H1013–15**

Agreed to amend the title so as to read: "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 hostage in our Nation's history.". **Page H1015**

FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act: H.R. 1471, amended, to reauthorize the programs and activities of the Federal Emergency Management Agency; **Pages H1015–23**

Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act: H.R. 4084, amended, to enable civilian research and development of advanced nuclear energy technologies by private and public institutions and to expand theoretical and practical knowledge of nuclear physics, chemistry, and materials science; **Pages H1023–28**

Edward "Ted" Kaufman and Michael Leavitt Presidential Transitions Improvements Act: S. 1172, amended, to improve the process of presidential transition; and **Pages H1028–31**

Competitive Service Act: S. 1580, amended, to allow additional appointing authorities to select individuals from competitive service certificates. **Pages H1031–33**

Recess: The House recessed at 6:12 p.m. and reconvened at 6:30 p.m. **Page H1033**

Quorum Calls—Votes: One yea-and-nay vote developed during the proceedings of today and appears on pages H1033–34. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 12 noon and adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Committee Meetings

APPROPRIATIONS—GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government held a budget hearing on the General Services Administration. Testimony was heard from Denise Turner Roth, Administrator, General Services Administration.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

NEW PUBLIC LAWS

(For last listing of Public Laws, see DAILY DIGEST, *p. D147)*

H.R. 644, to reauthorize trade facilitation and trade enforcement functions and activities. Signed on February 24, 2016. (Public Law 114–125)

H.R. 1428, to extend Privacy Act remedies to citizens of certified states. Signed on February 24, 2016. (Public Law 114–126)

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 2016

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry: business meeting to consider the Chairman's mark on biotechnology labeling solutions, 10 a.m., SR–328A.

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine the state of the farm economy, 2:30 p.m., SD–116.

Subcommittee on Department of Homeland Security, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Transportation Security Administration, 2:30 p.m., SD–138.

Subcommittee on Legislative Branch, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Senate Sergeant at Arms and the Capitol Police, 3 p.m., SD–192.

Committee on Armed Services: to hold hearings to examine United States European Command, 9:30 a.m., SD–G50.

Subcommittee on Airland, to receive a closed briefing on the Air Force Long Range Strike-Bomber, 3 p.m., SVC–217.

Committee on Finance: to hold hearings to examine the multiemployer pension plan system, focusing on recent reforms and current challenges, 10:30 a.m., SD–215.

Committee on Foreign Relations: Subcommittee on State Department and USAID Management, International Operations, and Bilateral International Development, to hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development, 2:30 p.m., SD–419.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Agriculture, Subcommittee on Conservation and Forestry, hearing entitled ''Voluntary Conservation: Utilizing Innovation and Technology'', 2 p.m., 1300 Longworth.

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, budget hearing on the Department of Energy, 9:30 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Defense, budget hearing on the Navy and Marine Corps, 10 a.m., H–140 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Homeland Security, budget hearing on Customs and Border Protection, 10 a.m., 2362–B Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, budget hearing on Corporation for National and Community Service, 10 a.m., 2358–C Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, budget hearing on Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration, Weapons and Activities and Nuclear Nonproliferation and Naval Reactors, 1:30 p.m., 2362–B Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Legislative Branch, budget hearing on Capitol Police, 1:30 p.m., HT–2 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2 p.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Legislative Branch, budget hearing on the Architect of the Capitol, 2:30 p.m., HT–2 Capitol.

Committee on Armed Services, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Member Day—National Defense Priorities from Members for the FY 2017 National Defense Authorization Act'', 10 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces, hearing entitled ''Air Force Projection Forces Aviation Programs and Capabilities for Fiscal Year 2017'', 1 p.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities, hearing entitled ''Special Operations Forces in an Evolving Threat Environment: A Review of the Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Request for U.S. Special Operations Command'', 3:30 p.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Energy and Power, hearing entitled ''Legislative Hearing to Examine Pipeline Safety Reauthorization'', 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Health, hearing entitled ''Examining the Financing and Delivery of Long-Term Care in the U.S.'', 10:15 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, Task Force to Investigate Terrorism Financing, hearing entitled ''Helping the Developing World Fight Terror Finance'', 2 p.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security, hearing entitled ''Transparency, Trust and Verification: Measuring Effectiveness and Situational Awareness along the Border'', 10 a.m., 311 Cannon.

Committee on the Judiciary, Task Force on Executive Overreach, hearing entitled ''The Original Understanding of the Role of Congress and How Far We've Drifted From It'', 10 a.m., 2237 Rayburn.

Full Committee, hearing entitled ''The Encryption Tightrope: Balancing Americans' Security and Privacy'', 1 p.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Examining the Department of the Interior's Spending Priorities and the President's Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Proposal'', 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Subcommittee on Water, Power and Oceans, hearing on H.R. 4576, the ''Ensuring Access to Pacific Fisheries Act'', 2 p.m., 1334 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 2615, the ''Virgin Islands of the United States Centennial Commission Act''; H.R. 2908, the ''National Bison Legacy Act''; H.R. 4359, the ''Administrative Leave Reform Act''; H.R. 4361, the ''Federal Information Systems Safeguards Act of 2016''; H.R. 4392, to amend title 5, United States Code, to require that the Office of Personnel Management submit an annual report to Congress relating to the use of official time by Federal employees; H.R. 4612, the ''Midnight Rule Relief Act of 2016''; H.R. 4639, to reauthorize the Office of Special Counsel, to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide modifications to authorities relating to the Office of Special Counsel, and for other purposes; S. 1109, the ''Truth in Settlements Act of 2015''; H.R. 3866, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1265 Hurffville Road in Deptford Township, New Jersey, as the ''First Lieutenant Salvatore S. Corma II Post Office Building''; H.R. 4372, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 15 Rochester Street, Bergen, New York, as the ''Barry G. Miller Post Office''; and H.R. 4605, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 615 6th Avenue SE in Cedar Rapids, Iowa as the ''Sgt. 1st Class Terryl L. Pasker Post Office Building'', 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Rules, Full Committee, hearing on H.R. 3716, the ''Ensuring Terminated Providers are Removed from Medicaid and CHIP Act'', 3 p.m., H–313 Capitol.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management, hearing entitled ''Saving Taxpayer Dollars by Reducing Federal Office Space Costs'', 10:30 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Human Resources, hearing entitled ''Getting Incentives Right: Connecting Low-Income Individuals with Jobs'', 10 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

Joint Meetings

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: to hold hearings to examine Germany's chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, focusing on priorities and challenges, 2 p.m., 334–CHOB.

CONGRESSIONAL PROGRAM AHEAD

Week of March 1 through March 4, 2016

Senate Chamber

On *Tuesday*, Senate will continue consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of S. 524, Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, post-cloture.

During the balance of the week, Senate may consider any cleared legislative and executive business.

Senate Committees

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry: March 1, business meeting to consider the Chairman's mark on biotechnology labeling solutions, 10 a.m., SR–328A.

Committee on Appropriations: March 1, Subcommittee on Department of Homeland Security, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Transportation Security Administration, 2:30 p.m., SD–138.

March 1, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine the state of the farm economy, 2:30 p.m., SD–116.

March 1, Subcommittee on Legislative Branch, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Senate Sergeant at Arms and the Capitol Police, 3 p.m., SD–192.

March 2, Subcommittee on Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of the Interior, 10 a.m., SD–124.

March 2, Subcommittee on Department of Defense, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Navy and Marine Corps, 10:30 a.m., SD–192.

March 2, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Food and Drug Administration, 2 p.m., SD–124.

March 2, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of the Interior Bureau of Reclamation, 2:30 p.m., SD–138.

March 3, Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget

estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Health and Human Services, 10 a.m., SD–138.

March 3, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Commerce, 10:30 a.m., SD–192.

March 3, Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 and fiscal year 2018 for the Veterans Health Administration and Veterans Benefits Administration, 11 a.m., SD–124.

Committee on Armed Services: March 1, to hold hearings to examine United States European Command, 9:30 a.m., SD–G50.

March 1, Subcommittee on Airland, to receive a closed briefing on the Air Force Long Range Strike-Bomber, 3 p.m., SVC–217.

March 3, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Air Force in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program, 9:30 a.m., SD–G50.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: March 3, Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment, to hold hearings to examine regulatory reforms to improve equity market structure, 10 a.m., SD–538.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: March 2, to hold an oversight hearing to examine the Federal Communications Commission, 10 a.m., SR–253.

March 3, Full Committee, business meeting to consider S. 2555, to provide opportunities for broadband investment, the nomination of Thomas F. Scott Darling, III, of Massachusetts, to be Administrator of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, and routine lists in the Coast Guard, 10 a.m., SR–253.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: March 3, to hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Energy, 10 a.m., SD–366.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: March 2, to hold hearings to examine S. 2446, to amend subtitle D of the Solid Waste Disposal Act to encourage recovery and beneficial use of coal combustion residuals and establish requirements for the proper management and disposal of coal combustion residuals that are protective of human health and the environment, S. 1479, to amend the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 to modify provisions relating to grants, and an original bill entitled, "Good Samaritan Cleanup of Orphan Mines Act of 2016", 9:30 a.m., SD–406.

Committee on Finance: March 1, to hold hearings to examine the multiemployer pension plan system, focusing on recent reforms and current challenges, 10:30 a.m., SD–215.

March 3, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine free trade agreement implementation, focusing on lessons from the past, 10 a.m., SD–215.

Committee on Foreign Relations: March 1, Subcommittee on State Department and USAID Management, International Operations, and Bilateral International Development, to hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development, 2:30 p.m., SD–419.

March 2, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the economic and geopolitical implications of low oil and gas prices, 10 a.m., SD–419.

March 3, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the path forward in Libya, 10 a.m., SD–419.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: March 2, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Patrick Pizzella, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority, and Julie Helene Becker, Steven Nathan Berk, and Elizabeth Carroll Wingo, each to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, 10 a.m., SD–342.

March 3, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the dogs of the Department of Homeland Security, focusing on how canine programs contribute to homeland security, 10 a.m., SD–342.

Committee on the Judiciary: March 3, business meeting to consider S. 247, to amend section 349 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to deem specified activities in support of terrorism as renunciation of United States nationality, S. 2390, to provide adequate protections for whistleblowers at the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the nominations of Elizabeth J. Drake, of Maryland, Jennifer Choe Groves, of Virginia, and Gary Stephen Katzmann, of Massachusetts, each to be a Judge of the United States Court of International Trade, and Clare E. Connors, to be United States District Judge for the District of Hawaii, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship: March 3, to hold hearings to examine the impacts of Federal fisheries management on small businesses, 10 a.m., SR–428A.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: March 2, to hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, 10 a.m., SD–G50.

March 3, Full Committee, to hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple Veterans Service Organizations, 10 a.m., 345, Cannon Building.

Select Committee on Intelligence: March 1, to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

March 3, Full Committee, to receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters, 2 p.m., SH–219.

House Committees

Committee on Agriculture, March 2, Full Committee, hearing entitled "Past, Present, and Future of SNAP: Examining State Options", 10 a.m., 1300 Longworth.

Committee on Appropriations, March 2, Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on Department of Veterans Affairs, 9:30 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

March 2, Subcommittee on Defense, budget hearing on the Air Force, 10 a.m., H–140 Capitol.

March 2, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, budget hearing on Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 10 a.m., 2358–C Rayburn.

March 2, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, budget hearing on Department of Energy, Applied Energy, 10:30 a.m., 2362–B Rayburn.

March 2, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on Department of the Interior, 1 p.m., B–308 Rayburn.

March 2, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, budget hearing on Department of Energy, Science, 1:30 p.m., 2362–B Rayburn.

March 2, Subcommittee on Legislative Branch, budget hearing on House of Representatives officers, 1:30 p.m., HT–2 Capitol.

March 2, Subcommittee on Homeland Security, budget hearing on Transportation Security Administration, 2 p.m., H–309 Capitol.

March 2, Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on Federal Aviation Administration, 2 p.m., 2359 Rayburn.

March 2, Subcommittee on Legislative Branch, budget hearing on the Library of Congress, 2:30 p.m., HT–2 Capitol.

March 3, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, 9 a.m., B–308 Rayburn.

March 3, Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on Installations, Environment, Energy and BRAC, 9:30 a.m., HVC–210.

March 3, Subcommittee on Defense, budget hearing on the Army, 10 a.m., H–140 Capitol.

March 3, Subcommittee on Homeland Security, budget hearing on the Coast Guard, 10 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

March 3, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on Bureau of Land Management, 10 a.m., B–308 Rayburn.

March 3, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on Department of Agriculture, Marketing and Regulatory Programs, 10:15 a.m., 2362–A Rayburn.

March 3, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Ocean Worlds, 10:30 a.m., H–309 Capitol.

Committee on Armed Services, March 2, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''World Wide Threats'', 10 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

March 2, Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces, hearing entitled ''Ground Force Modernization Budget Request'', 1 p.m., 2212 Rayburn.

March 2, Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, hearing entitled ''Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Request for Department of Defense Nuclear Forces'', 2 p.m., 2118 Rayburn.

March 3, Subcommittee on Readiness, hearing entitled ''The Marine Corps 2017 Operation and Maintenance Budget Request and Readiness Posture'', 10:30 p.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, March 2, Subcommittee on Energy and Power, hearing entitled ''The Fiscal Year 2017 DOE Budget'', 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

March 2, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled ''Examining the U.S. Public Health Response to the Zika Virus'', 10:15 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

March 2, Select Investigative Panel of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, hearing entitled ''Bioethics and Fetal Tissue'', 10 a.m., HVC–210.

March 3, Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade, hearing entitled ''Disrupter Series: Wearable Devices'', 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, March 2, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 2121, the ''SAFE Transitional Licensing Act of 2015''; H.R. 2896, the ''Taking Account of Institutions with Low Operation Risk Act of 2015''; H.R. 2901, the ''Flood Insurance Market Parity and Modernization Act''; H.R. 3798, the ''Due Process Restoration Act of 2015''; H.R. 4096, the ''Investor Clarity and Bank Parity Act''; H.R. 4139, the ''Fostering Innovation Act of 2015''; H.R. 4166, the ''Expanding Proven Financing for American Employers Act''; H.R. 4498, the ''Helping Angels Lead Our Startups Act''; H.R. 4620, the ''Preserving Access to CRE Capital Act of 2016''; and H.R. 4638, the ''Main Street Growth Act'', 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, March 2, Full Committee, markup on H. Res. 269, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding the need for investigation and prosecution of war crimes and crimes against humanity, whether committed by officials of the Government of Syria or other parties to the civil war in Syria, and calling on the President to direct the United States representative to the United Nations to use the voice and vote of the United States to immediately promote the establishment of a Syrian war crimes tribunal, and for other purposes; and H. Con. Res. 75, expressing the sense of Congress that those who commit or support atrocities against Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities, including Yezidis, Turkmen, Sabea-Mandeans, Kaka'e, and Kurds, and who target them specifically for ethnic or religious reasons, are committing, and are hereby declared to be committing, ''war crimes'', ''crimes against humanity'', and ''genocide'', 9:15 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

March 2, Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations, hearing entitled ''The Growing Threat of Cholera and Other Diseases in the Middle East'', 2 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, March 2, Subcommittee on Transportation Security, hearing entitled ''The Transportation Security Administration's FY2017 Budget Request'', 10 a.m., 311 Cannon.

Committee on Natural Resources, March 2, Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources, hearing entitled ''The Impact of the President's FY 2017 Budget on the Energy and Mineral Leasing and Production Missions of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE), and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM)'', 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, March 2, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Geolocation Technology and Privacy'', 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn. March 2, Subcommittee on Government Operations, hearing entitled ''Firearms Lost: GSA's Administration of the Surplus Firearm Donation Program'', 2 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Rules, March 2, Full Committee, hearing on H.R. 4557, the ''Blocking Regulatory Interference from Closing Kilns Act of 2016'', 3 p.m., H–313 Capitol.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, March 2, Subcommittee on Research and Technology, hearing entitled ''Smart Health: Empowering the Future of Mobile Apps'', 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

March 3, Subcommittee on Energy; and Subcommittee on Oversight, joint hearing entitled ''Department of Energy Oversight: The DOE Loan Guarantee Program'', 9:30 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, March 2, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Commercializing on Innovation: Reauthorizing the Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer Programs'', 11 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, March 2, Full Committee, markup on General Services Administration Capital Investment and Leasing Program resolutions; H.R. 4487, the ''Public Buildings Reform and Savings Act of 2016''; H.R. 4465, the ''Federal Assets Sale and Transfer Act of 2016''; H.R. 3937, to designate the building utilized as a United States courthouse located at 150 Reade Circle in Greenville, North Carolina, as the ''Judge Randy D. Doub Courthouse''; H.R. 4618, to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 121 Spring Street SE in Gainesville, Georgia, as the ''Sidney Oslin Smith, Jr. Federal Building and United States Courthouse''; H. Con. Res. 119, authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby; H. Con. Res. 117, authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National Peace Officers Memorial Service and the National Honor Guard and Pipe Band Exhibition; H. Con Res. 120, authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the 3rd Annual Fallen Firefighters Congressional Flag Presentation Ceremony; H.R. 223, the ''Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act of 2015''; H.R. 1684, the ''Foreign Spill Protection Act of 2015''; H.R. 3030, the ''Baudette Coast Guard Housing Conveyance Act''; and possible other matters cleared for consideration, 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Ways and Means, March 2, Subcommittee on Oversight, hearing entitled ''Protecting the Free Exchange of Ideas on College Campuses'', 10 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, March 3, Full Committee, hearing on Fiscal Year 2017 ODNI Budget, 9 a.m., HVC–304. This hearing will be closed.

Joint Meetings

Joint Economic Committee: March 2, to hold hearings to examine the Economic Report of the President, 2:30 p.m., SH–216.

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: March 1, to hold hearings to examine Germany's chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, focusing on priorities and challenges, 2 p.m., 334–CHOB.

Joint Hearing: March 2, Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, to hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, 10 a.m., SD–G50.

March 3, Full Committee, to hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple Veterans Service Organizations, 10 a.m., 345, Cannon Building.

Next Meeting of the **SENATE**

10:30 a.m., Tuesday, March 1

Senate Chamber

Program for Tuesday: Senate will continue consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of S. 524, Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, post-cloture.

(Senate will recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. for their respective party conferences.)

Next Meeting of the **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

10 a.m., Tuesday, March 1

House Chamber

Program for Tuesday: Consideration of the following measures under suspension of the rules: 1) H.R. 2814—To name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Sevierville, Tennessee, the Dannie A. Carr Veterans Outpatient Clinic, 2) H.R. 2347—Federal Advisory Committee Act Amendments of 2016, 3) H.R. 3735—To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 200 Town Run Lane in Winston Salem, North Carolina, as the ''Maya Angelou Memorial Post Office'', 4) H.R. 136—To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1103 USPS Building 1103 in Camp Pendleton, California, as the ''Camp Pendleton Medal of Honor Post Office'', 5) H.R. 1132—To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1048 West Robinhood Drive in Stockton, California, as the ''W. Ronald Coale Memorial Post Office Building'', 6) H.R. 2458—To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 5351 Lapalco Boulevard in Marrero, Louisiana, as the ''Lionel R. Collins, Sr. Post Office Building'', 7) H.R. 3082—To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 5919 Chef Menteur Highway in New Orleans, Louisiana, as the ''Daryle Holloway Post Office Building'', 8) H.R. 3274—To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4567 Rockbridge Road in Pine Lake, Georgia, as the ''Francis Manuel Ortega Post Office'', 9) H.R. 3601—To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 7715 Post Road, North Kingstown, Rhode Island, as the ''Melvoid J. Benson Post Office Building'', 10) H.R. 4046—To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 220 East Oak Street, Glenwood City, Wisconsin, as the Second Lt. Ellen Ainsworth Memorial Post Office, 11) S. 1596—To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2082 Stringtown Road in Grove City, Ohio, as the ''Specialist Joseph W. Riley Post Office Building'', and 12) S. 1826—To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 99 West 2nd Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, as the Lieutenant Colonel James ''Maggie'' Megellas Post Office.

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