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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DONOVAN).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 1, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DANIEL M. DONOVAN, Jr. to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2016, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

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

UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, in a few moments this morning, I will be introducing a House resolution, a bipartisan House resolution, with Congressman DON YOUNG from the State of Alaska calling on the Senate to, once and for all, ratify the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea Treaty.

Mr. Speaker, this is a treaty which was negotiated by the Reagan administration back in the late 1980s. It is a treaty which has been endorsed by Democratic Presidents, Republican Presidents, Condoleeza Rice, and military leadership of all stripes, to create a system of rules of the road in terms of maritime disputes.

As I said, the military leadership of this country has been adamant and consistent year in and year out about the need for our country to join 166 other countries in the world in terms of ratifying this treaty. As Marine General Joe Dunford said a short time ago, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff: ''We undermine our leverage by not signing up to the same rule book by which we are asking other countries to accept.''

Today, as this map shows, all the purple countries are those that have ratified the treaty, and the blue countries are those that have not. The United States joins the following company in terms of refusing to ratify this treaty: North Korea, Iran, Syria, Libya, and Venezuela.

Now, again, this is a measure which has been debated over the years, and it has been, I would argue, sort of a Washington, D.C., parlor game in terms of the theoretical impact that it may or may not have; but in recent months, the need to do this has become much sharper and clearer.

This past week at the House Committee on Armed Services, which I serve on, and I am the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces, Admiral Harry Harris testified. He is our commander of PACOM. He has all of Asia-Pacific, the region of the world where China today is blatantly violating maritime law by creating islands out of nothing, creating landing strips and militarizing those new land masses in a clear attempt to, again, violate the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea Treaty by creating an economic zone that is going to interfere with the free passage of commercial traffic. Ninety-five percent of the world's commodities go by sea. Their intentions are crystal clear.

Admiral Harris, when he testified the other day, made it also very clear that ''acceding to the convention''—the Law of the Sea Treaty—''gives us the moral high ground to criticize those countries that would seek to inhibit freedom of maneuver in the oceans and airspace around the world, including the Asia-Pacific region.''

Interestingly, the following day, General Philip Breedlove, the commander of NATO, European Command for the U.S., came in and without any prompting testified to exactly the same policy position because what he is seeing in his region of the world is that a resurgent Russia is militarizing the Arctic Circle, that they are using this, again, melting of the ice cap as an opportunity to militarize that region of the world and try and control what is going to be a maritime passage, where both military assets and commercial traffic are going to move back and forth.

General Breedlove, again, made exactly the same point: we need to get into the game. This was made crystal clear just a few months ago. The Government of the Philippines, to its credit, has challenged China. They filed an application before The Hague, citing the Law of the Sea Treaty, that what they are doing in the South China Sea blatantly violates international law.

The United States asked not to participate directly as a party, because we haven't ratified the treaty, but simply to be an observer, to be a friend of the court to be able to contribute ideas and data—which our Navy has more than any other Navy in the world—and we were denied observer status because we have not ratified this treaty.

So right now people are hard at work in The Hague writing the rules of the road in terms of maritime issues that are going to determine budgets. And, again, I am the ranking member of the

Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces, so this is driving a lot of decisions about building submarines and surface ships and stronger munitions because of what is happening in the South China Sea.

It is also going to be driving the outcomes of what is happening with resurgent Russia. Putin is not kidding around in terms of what he is doing in the Arctic Circle or in the North Atlantic. General Breedlove made that very clear. We are playing, right now, zone defense in terms of what is happening in that region of the world.

It is time for the Congress to listen, if nothing else, to our military leadership and recognize the international Law of the Sea Treaty, which 166 nations in the world have ratified. It is time for the U.S. to get in the game, get off the bleachers, and be able to set those rules because it is going to determine, for decades to come, decisions that this body is going to be stuck with if we are not part of that process.

Again, our military leadership, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, our CNO of the Navy, the head of the Coast Guard, they have all been very clear and public about the fact that it is time for this Nation to get into the game and endorse the international Law of the Sea Treaty.

I am very pleased that Congressman YOUNG is joining me in this effort. I urge all Members to support this resolution which will be filed this morning.

RESTORING AMERICA'S GIANTS

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to talk about a blight that nearly rendered the American chestnut extinct and recognize a teacher in Alexander County, North Carolina, who is helping to lead in the rebirth of these great trees.

The American chestnut was once the dominant hardwood species in the Eastern United States. Prior to the European colonization of North America, American chestnut trees were found in vast stands from Maine to Florida, with the largest trees occurring in the southern Appalachians.

When early European settlers arrived, the species was used in many different ways, including providing timber and tools. The edible nut was also a significant contributor to the rural economy. Families would collect the nuts to sell and eat, and they were also used as feed for livestock. Domesticated hogs and cattle were often fattened for market by allowing the animals to gorge themselves on these highly nutritious nuts.

Chestnut ripening coincided with the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, and turn-of-the-century newspaper clippings show traincars rolling into major cities that were overflowing with chestnuts to be sold fresh or roasted. The American chestnut was truly a heritage tree.

However, the booming trade industry introduced fungal diseases that would change the species composition of eastern North American forests. A root rot disease, thought to have caused mortality of chestnuts in low, moist areas infested southern populations of the American chestnut and constricted its natural range. This fungal disease was followed by the more commonly known chestnut blight, which spread throughout eastern hardwood forests at a rate of up to 50 miles per year.

By the 1950s, virtually all mature American chestnut trees had succumbed to the disease, and this catastrophe became known as one of the worst ecological disasters in the United States. The American chestnut has been relegated to a minor understory component, existing as sprouts from old stumps and root systems.

Today modern techniques are being used to bring the species back from near extinction, but the success of these efforts will be the result of decades of genetic hybridization. The American Chestnut Foundation has embarked on an elaborate and time-consuming breeding program to develop a tree that can withstand blight and exhibit virtually every characteristic of the American chestnut of the past. By backcrossing the American chestnut with the blight-resistant Chinese chestnut, the foundation has produced the Restoration chestnut.

Last December The American Chestnut Foundation planted four Restoration chestnuts on the campus of Alexander Central High School in Taylorsville. Becky Dupuis, a biotech and biology teacher with Alexander County Schools, has partnered with the foundation to gather information about the health, diversity, and blight resistance of these trees. Her students will actively participate in collecting data, documenting growth rates, and transplanting American chestnut sprouts in Alexander County.

Ms. Dupuis should be commended for raising awareness about the American chestnut and for her work to reintroduce these giants to their rightful place in Alexander County and America's ecosystem.

SUPREME COURT VACANCIES IN ELECTION YEARS

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

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, as you know, it has been the custom of the last couple of Congresses to open the Congress with a reading of the entire United States Constitution. I have generally not participated in that because I am not all that comfortable with public displays of piety, and I am a big believer in the notion that what really matters is what you do, not what you say.

Never has the spread between what we say and what we do been quite as wide as it is when we consider the approach that my friends on the Republican side have taken with respect to the absolutely essential constitutional duty of appointing a Supreme Court Justice.

So I am going to break with my past pattern and read briefly from the Constitution, Article II, section 2, which reads:

''He shall have power''—that is referring to the President—''by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to make treaties, provided two-thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, Judges of the Supreme Court.''

And there it ends. He shall appoint Justices of the Supreme Court. There it ends.

There is nothing there about he won't do that in an election year. There is nothing there saying that if there is not enough time, he won't exercise his constitutional authority. There is nothing there that, maybe because then-Senator BIDEN said something 25 years ago, he won't appoint a Supreme Court Justice.

And yet my colleagues on the other side of the Capitol have said they won't even offer the President's nomination the courtesy of a meeting. And let's be very clear. That is a profound abrogation of the constitutional duty that is set out in black and white in the Constitution of the United States.

So let's just spend a minute on the three objections that we are hearing from the Republicans on why the President shouldn't appoint and why they shouldn't even extend the courtesy of a meeting to the President's proposed appointment to the Supreme Court.

First and foremost, they say that it is an election year. The precedent would dictate that the President not nominate in an election year. Well, that is exactly wrong, and you can look it up. These are historical facts. I will just read quickly from SCOTUSblog, which a lot of people look at, in which Amy Howe, the editor, says: ''The historical record does not reveal any instances since at least 1900 of the President failing to nominate and/or the Senate failing to confirm a nominee in a Presidential election year because of the impending election.''

The historical record does not reveal any instances. And then it goes on to list those that have occurred:

President William Taft nominated Mahlon Pitney. Woodrow Wilson made two nominations in 1916—Louis Brandeis and John Clarke. President Herbert Hoover nominated Benjamin Cardozo. President Franklin Roosevelt nominated Frank Murphy. President Ronald Reagan, patron saint of my friends on the other side of the aisle, nominated Justice Anthony Kennedy.

So the idea that there is no precedent is exactly wrong.

This brings us to the other argument, the second argument, which is that there is not time. I brought this graphic here to show that, for the last several Presidents, the average approval time was something like 2 months. The current President has some 300 days left in his term.

Take a look at this one: approval time for Justices Alito, Roberts, Breyer, Ginsburg, and Thomas. If you add all of those individual periods of time together, you still don't get the amount of time that the current President has left in his term.

This, of course, brings us to the arguably most laughable argument that we hear lately, which is that some 20-plus years ago, then-Senate Committee on the Judiciary Chairman JOE BIDEN said something along the lines of perhaps then the President shouldn't make an appointment because it was an election year.

□ 1015

I don't need to point out that, as much as I like and respect the Vice President, his words of 25 years ago do not carry constitutional force or the force of law. We shouldn't spend a lot of time on that argument.

So what is really going on here? If those are the best arguments against even extending the courtesy of a senatorial meeting to the President's nominee, an unprecedented action, what is really going on?

Here is what is really going on. It is a government shutdown. We have seen this before. When the rules we read at the opening of every Congress result in an outcome my friends on the other side of the aisle don't like, they simply shut it down. They did that in October 2013.

Between the days of October 1 and October 16, they shut down the Federal Government, an action that Standard & Poor's estimated cost the U.S. economy $24 billion, or fully 0.6 percent of our economic growth is gone because the Republicans wouldn't accept the Affordable Care Act.

Look, I get that. They don't like it. But it has been passed in due course in this House, shown to be constitutional by the Supreme Court, and the answer was: No. We don't like it. We are shutting down the government.

Let's not shut down the government over the Supreme Court.

COLOMBIA

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to the attention of this body the current negotiations taking place in Cuba between the Colombian Government and the FARC, which is a U.S.-designated terrorist organization. That deal is dangerous for Colombia and for our U.S. national security.

Let me explain. As a friend of the Colombian people, I have been a proponent of widening and strengthening our bilateral ties with Colombia by supporting the United States-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement. This agreement has helped many companies in my congressional district of south Florida strengthen their trade capabilities with Colombia.

I have also supported Plan Colombia, a collaborative effort alongside the Colombian Armed Forces and security forces aimed at improving the security environment. Plan Colombia enjoys wide bipartisan support, resulting in a significant reduction in the cultivation of coca in years past, record dismantling of labs, and drastically reducing kidnappings, which are an important source of revenue for the FARC.

Despite great advances in the conflict during the Uribe administration prior to President Santos, I have expressed serious misgivings about the negotiation initiated by the Colombian Government with the murderous Castro regime as a supposedly impartial mediator.

Mr. Speaker, the Castro brothers run an impressive communist state, with complete disregard for human rights, due process, and a notorious history of supporting nefarious actors throughout the region.

Using Cuba as a mediator in the negotiation is misguided, at best. It is widely known that the Castro brothers have been great supporters of the terrorist group FARC, have allowed the FARC to use Cuba as a safe haven, and have even trained some FARC terrorists in guerilla warfare tactics.

Yet, despite knowing that the Castro regime has internationally voiced strong support for the FARC, even lending materiel and monetary aid to the rebels, we expect the Castros now to be acting as impartial mediators? Absolutely not, Mr. Speaker.

With the Colombian Government negotiating with the FARC and with Cuba as a mediator that is supposedly impartial, the pending agreement includes no jail time for any of the FARC criminals. These criminals have kidnapped and tortured scores of Colombian citizens and have even held American citizens hostage. No jail time.

According to the agreement, if the FARC members admit to their crimes, they would be put in what is the equivalent of house arrest from 2 to 8 years—8 years is the maximum—and they would not serve any jail time and they will not be extradited to the United States to face any charges they have pending here.

You heard that right, Mr. Speaker. This agreement could include a request to drop any arrest warrant and drop any extradition process from the United States that we have filed to prosecute members of the FARC. This is completely unacceptable, Mr. Speaker.

I am also concerned about provisions in the agreement that would allow members of the FARC to run for political office, as they would likely use the massive funds that they have from their illegal narcotics trade to finance their campaigns and further undermine what the Colombian people are trying to achieve by having a safe, secure Colombia again.

Evidence has shown that, since the negotiations began with the FARC in Havana, coca cultivation numbers in Colombia have increased. From 2014 and 2015, we have seen an increase of drugs flowing from Colombia. Who do we think is responsible for that? The FARC. Who is making more money from narcotrafficking? The FARC.

What I find most disturbing, Mr. Speaker, was the call by the Colombian Government to remove the FARC, an organization with American blood on its hands, from the U.S. State Department's Foreign Terrorist Organizations List.

Lastly, there are several unanswered questions about the implementation of this misguided deal. How will the FARC disarm? How will they surrender their weapons? What role will the United Nations play as it oversees the implementation of the process? Will the Obama administration continue its pattern of granting concessions and end up releasing FARC leader Simon Trinidad, who is serving time in our prison?

Mr. Speaker, the United States must reexamine this agreement and urge the Colombian Government to address some of these grave concerns. We have a responsibility to our taxpayers to be good stewards of their funds as well as a moral imperative to support and seek justice for the victims of the FARC, not their perpetrators.

AIRCRAFT NOISE

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

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of Phoenix, I rise to demand an end to business as usual at the Federal Aviation Administration.

In 2014, the FAA decided, without any input from civic leaders or members of our community, to implement new flight paths for aircraft from Sky Harbor International Airport. The impact of this decision on local residents was swift and severe. Without warning, our communities were suddenly exposed to constant, deafening aircraft noise.

As they run businesses, raise families, and struggle to sleep at night, Phoenix residents must now contend with the incessant roar of planes passing overhead. Simply put, the new flight paths have deprived the Arizonans I represent of the peace and quiet they enjoyed before the FAA intervened.

Unfortunately, the agency has only exacerbated this difficult situation by overlooking the objections of local residents and ignoring clear direction from Congress to reconsider these routes.

When urged by the House in the 2015 omnibus to ''identify appropriate mitigation measures'' to address the problem of aircraft noise in Phoenix, the agency disregarded the will of this body and took no meaningful action. That is simply unacceptable. The American people deserve a government that is responsive to their needs and accountable to their elected officials.

We have seen the same pattern of indifference repeated in cities across the country. But now, finally, leaders from both parties are demanding real reform at the FAA.

Democrats and Republicans came together to include the language in the fiscal year 2016 spending bill that will require the FAA to develop a plan to proactively address the concerns of Americans, including Phoenix residents, exposed to high levels of aviation noise.

In addition, legislation introduced earlier this month to reauthorize the FAA contains several key provisions that could help provide relief to Phoenix residents plagued by noise from passing aircraft. The bill will require the agency to review flight path changes if the FAA administrator determines that they have harmed communities in the vicinity of the airport.

The measure will also compel the FAA to consider steps to mitigate aircraft noise-related concerns if requested to do so by a local community or airport operator.

Finally, the FAA will be required to submit a report to Congress on how the agency intends to improve its woeful community outreach and engagement efforts.

Collectively, these provisions represent an important step forward, but they aren't enough. Together with other members of the Quiet Skies Caucus, I am committed to strengthening this legislation as the process moves forward.

Mr. Speaker, civic leaders, businessowners, and families in Phoenix have been ignored for too long. The flight paths over our city must change and so must the course of an agency that for too long has disrespected Congress and disregarded the needs of my constituents.

Now is the time to pass legislation to ensure that local communities have a seat at the table when new flight paths are plotted. Let's give local residents the ability to appeal routes that are undermining their quality of life.

Mr. Speaker, on the issue of aircraft noise, the people of Phoenix are speaking loudly. They deserve to be heard.

HONORING CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH ON ITS 150TH ANNIVERSARY

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

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an institution that has served the people of Pinellas County, the people of Florida, and people in all corners of the world for 150 years. It is an institution that continues each day to serve our loving God.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Calvary Baptist Church in Clearwater, Florida, as it celebrates its 150th anniversary.

In 1866, Reverend C.S. Reynolds and his wife Judith, along with a handful of Christ followers, founded the Midway Baptist Church in Clearwater Harbor, Florida. The church is considered to be the first organized church of any kind in what later became the city of Clearwater, and it was the very first Baptist Church in Pinellas County.

During the 1920s, under the leadership of Pastor A.J. Kroelinger, the church undertook a major building project in the heart of Clearwater.

The ornate rotunda was completed in 1926 and became known as one of the most magnificent buildings in the Southland. It stood as the home for Calvary Baptist Church and was recognized as a Clearwater landmark for nearly 80 years.

Calvary's history is a story of God's grace and providence. It endured the effects of both World Wars and the Great Depression. It continued to experience eras of significant growth under the leadership of Pastor O.E. Burton throughout the 1950s and 1960s and Pastor Bill Anderson, who led the church from 1975 to 2002. Since 2004, Pastor Willie Rice has led this vibrant church and its expanding outreach.

The church is distinguished by its faithful adherence to the message of God's love and the redemptive purposes in and through Jesus Christ. The church has served its local community and partnered with others through its historic affiliation with the Southern Baptist Convention, extending its influence of compassion-based ministries around the world.

Throughout its history, the body of believers who make up the church have been instrumental in founding and supporting many local ministries in the Tampa Bay area. These ministries reach into every facet of human experience.

Through partnerships with several community-based pregnancy centers, members of the church provide resources and support to struggling pregnant mothers and their unborn children, honoring the sanctity of life. They provide clothing, food, and shelter to the homeless. The church is faithful each day to honoring our veterans.

Calvary expresses the redemptive grace of our loving God by directly supporting individuals transitioning out of prison as well as recovering addicts. The support they provide to these individuals helps restore dignity and purpose of life.

The church ministers in many ways to the young people of the community through a vibrant in-house youth program as well as numerous community outreach programs.

Calvary Christian High School opened its doors in the fall of 2000 with the goal of challenging all students to achieve academically to the highest levels of their God-given abilities.

Another community outreach program provides school materials to disadvantaged elementary students through the Adopt a Classroom project. Supporting children and families is a central element of a Christian lifestyle. It is central to the mission of Calvary Baptist Church.

Internationally, Calvary provides financial and material resources and hundreds of volunteers to support disaster relief and recovery efforts worldwide.

Through medical mission trips, the church provides much-needed care to communities in far reaches of the globe. With direct support and through global partnerships, Calvary assists in community development efforts throughout the world.

In short, Mr. Speaker, Calvary Baptist Church in Clearwater, Florida, has become a part of the fabric of our Pinellas County community, enriching the lives of its members and neighborhoods.

But far more important, Calvary continues each day to share the message of the saving grace of the Christ in whom we put our faith and in whom we put our trust.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me today in recognizing Calvary Baptist Church of Clearwater, Florida, as it celebrates 150 magnificent years of ministry and service.

□ 1030

RECOGNIZING GRACE PRESTON, AWARD-WINNING BROCKWAY VOLUNTEER

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Grace Preston, a sixth-grader from the Brockway Area Elementary School, which I am proud to say is located in the Pennsylvania Fifth Congressional District.

Grace was recently among two students in Pennsylvania to be honored with a Prudential Spirit of Community Award. This award is given to young people for outstanding acts of volunteerism.

Grace has raised more than $4,000 in the past 3 years to improve the lives of animals in her community. She has done this through the sale of homemade dog treats, cat toys, and flea and tick repellent.

She became interested in helping animals after her family adopted a dog from a local shelter. Now, through her efforts, Grace has raised enough money to enable the local Humane Society to purchase a storage shed, as well as other supplies such as rabies gloves.

She has also provided animal oxygen mask kits to a local fire department for pets that are caught in fires, helped pay for a shelter dog's recent surgery, and collected animal food for the pets of needy families.

Mr. Speaker, it is wonderful to see such dedication to community from someone so young.

Great work, Grace.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 31 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

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

PRAYER

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

Merciful God of the universe, we give You thanks for giving us another day. We hunger for Your wisdom and pray that there might be an end to all hunger in our world.

You know the Members of this assembly through and through. You know each personally. You know how they all relate with one another. You know them, as the American people do, as the 114th Congress of the United States.

Lord, help them to know You. Allow them to come to know You, even as they are known by You. As ultimate truth, enter in and make them suitable for Your dwelling within so that their constituents might place trust in them as their Representatives.

May their service continue faithfully, for they were elected by their voters back home and called by You to selfless service.

Bless them and us all this day, and may all that is done be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. CAPPS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

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

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

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

HONORING THE CAREER OF THE HONORABLE THOMAS J. McAVOY

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

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the career of an esteemed public servant, the Honorable Thomas J. McAvoy.

Judge McAvoy has now served as a Federal District Court judge in the Northern District of New York for the past 30 years. During my time as a Federal prosecutor from the Northern District of New York, I had the high honor of regularly appearing before Judge McAvoy.

A native of New York's southern tier, Judge McAvoy completed his undergraduate education at Villanova University and continued on to graduate third in his class from Albany Law School.

He continues to be a very valuable member of the local legal community, mentoring young lawyers through continuing education programs and meeting regularly with young people through the Open Doors to Justice and Court Outreach programs.

Throughout his 30 years on the bench, Judge McAvoy has tried over 900 cases and recently received the longevity award for 50 years of service to the bar by the Broome County Bar Association. Judge McAvoy has dedicated his life and career to making our community a better place to live.

Thank you, Judge McAvoy, for your outstanding public service to our community and to our Nation. I look forward to your next 30 years on the bench.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

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

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, in honor of Women's History Month, I want to recognize a remarkable woman from south Florida, my friend, Rosemary Barkett.

Rosemary is an inspiring, humble woman with a joyous spirit and passion for justice who has devoted her life to service. Her story reflects the greatness of diversity in our country.

She was born in Mexico to Syrian immigrants. At age 6, her family moved to Miami, where she started school knowing no English. As a teen, Rosemary joined the Sisters of St. Joseph, becoming a nun and teacher.

Eight years later she left the convent to pursue her own education and eventually went on to law school, private practice, and a brilliant judicial career as a trial court judge, appellate judge, first woman on the Florida Supreme Court, and first woman to be Chief Justice of that court.

Today Justice Barkett sits on the prestigious Iran-United States Claims Tribunal in The Hague.

My friend has broken down many barriers to achieve big dreams. This March we honor women like Rosemary Barkett, women of our past, present, and future who are making history.

KEEP TERRORISTS AT GUANTANAMO

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last Wednesday The Post and Courier, under the leadership of publisher Pamela Browning and editorial page editor Charles Rowe, editorialized:

> President Barack Obama has asked Congress to agree to close the prison at Guantanamo . . . Governor Nikki Haley, Senator Tim Scott, and Republicans on the South Carolina delegation are right to reject his call . . . Even the President has to follow the law.
>
> In a world that has given rise to the Islamic State, it is hard to credit the argument that the existence of Guantanamo incites terror. In a recent op-ed column for the Washington Post, Gordon England, a former Deputy Secretary of Defense, observed that some of the terrorists who have been released from Guantanamo have returned to the same nefarious activities for which they have been jailed. Those who remain had a record of participating in terrorism, financing terrorism, or outright leadership of terrorism activity, Mr. England wrote.
>
> In a little over 4 weeks, Mr. Obama is headed to Cuba for a state visit with the Castro brothers, who may be considered experts in the use of political prisons.

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

TIGER GRANTS

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Transportation has announced its eighth round of grants will be awarded under the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery, or TIGER, program.

TIGER grants are awarded on a competitive basis to surface transportation capital projects. Weight is given to proposals that will have a significant local or national impact, generate economic development, and increase access to affordable transportation.

Western New York has received TIGER grants totaling more than $39 million to restore access to Main

Street in Buffalo and construct a new international train station in Niagara Falls. As a result, businesses are returning to the theater district and tourism is growing in Niagara Falls, New York.

The TIGER program sends the message during this period of tragic underinvestment in our infrastructure that America can still tackle the big projects that historically have grown our economy.

I urge support of the TIGER program.

RETIREMENT OF TITUSVILLE POLICE CHIEF GARY THOMAS

(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 have the deepest respect for the law enforcement men and women who are tasked with protecting the communities of Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District. It is with deep respect that I congratulate Titusville Police Chief Gary Thomas on his upcoming retirement.

Chief Thomas has served his community for nearly 26 years, after being hired as a patrolman in 1990. He is credited with helping fight back against a rise in methamphetamine production in Titusville, which spread through northeastern Pennsylvania, starting in the late 1990s. He worked together with State police and the State Attorney General's Office to crack down on this plague. More importantly, he enlisted the help of the Titusville community to fight back.

After being promoted to police chief in 2009, he continued the battle against drugs—this time, against bath salts and synthetic marijuana—educating the public on what to look for. The effort got results in the form of tips from the community, which helped cut down on abuse.

Chief Thomas' last day on the job is March 4. I wish him the best of luck in retirement, and I commend him for a job well done.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH: SALLY RIDE

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

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to celebrate the beginning of Women's History Month by recognizing a woman from my home State of California, Sally Ride.

Sally Ride personifies the Californian and American spirit of exploration and discovery. In 1983, she became both the first woman and the youngest astronaut NASA has ever sent into space.

Over the course of her distinguished career, Ride logged a total of nearly 350 hours in space, and she went on to serve on the committees that investigated the *Challenger* and the *Columbia* shuttle disasters.

After leaving NASA, she cofounded Sally Ride Science at UC San Diego, which develops educational programs to inspire middle and high school students, especially girls, about science.

Sally Ride had a passion for science and space exploration that inspired generations of girls to pursue STEM. I had a chance to meet her and see how everyone reacted to her. She is exactly the kind of woman we should honor this month, one who achieved her own dreams and paved the way for others to do the same.

TERESA HAYWOOD'S STORY

(Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, the war on coal hurts every family in West Virginia.

A local small-business owner affected by the war on coal is Teresa Haywood, who owns a floral shop in McDowell County. She is a true West Virginia coal voice.

She writes to me:

> Our business has dropped majorly, and I am struggling day to day to just try to decide to pay the bills or to restock. People keep asking if I am going to keep my business open.
>
> It has gotten hard to survive, much less stay in business, when we have to cut on groceries just to make the bills so we can have a home to live in. And then us losing our only Walmart in the county has just been another kick in the teeth.
>
> I have a teenage son who worries about finding a job every day because he doesn't want to move from home and a college senior who won't come back here because he knows there is nothing for him here.

Mr. Speaker, these are the true West Virginia coal voices. The war on coal must stop.

ABORTION ACCESS AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS

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

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, as has been mentioned, today, March 1, marks the beginning of Women's History Month.

While there is much to celebrate, we must use this time to continue the fight toward full equality. That is why I rise today to reaffirm my support for a woman's right to make her own decisions about her health and her family.

This week the Supreme Court will hear arguments on yet another effort to undercut this freedom. By imposing unnecessary requirements whose sole purpose is to close reproductive health clinics, lawmakers continue to play politics with women's health.

Some of us remember the time before women had safe access to abortion care. Countless women made desperate decisions that put their health at risk. We cannot go back to that day. No one can fully know the circumstances that a woman who faces a decision to end a pregnancy is challenged by.

We need to trust women and let them make their own decisions along with their healthcare providers, family, and faith, not politicians.

HONORING ISAAC OLEMBERG

(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, this weekend I had the pleasure of being at Temple Menorah in Miami Beach at the Hadassah Inter-American Chapter Gala in honor of an old and close friend, Isaac Olemberg.

Isaac is a pillar of the Jewish and south Florida communities and has greatly enriched our area as well as helped to strengthen the unbreakable bond between the U.S. and Israel.

But I know that the work that Isaac was most proud of was working side by side with his wife, Nieves. Sadly, she passed away in 2014, but Sunday's luncheon was an opportunity to honor her memory as well.

Together with Isaac, Nieves helped found the Hadassah Inter-American Chapter in Miami. This couple truly embodied grace, kindness, and humility. Nieves is missed, but her memory and legacy are carried on by Isaac; their children, Roberto, Lilly, Hannah, and Lisette; and their many grandchildren.

I am proud and humbled to call the Olembergs my friends.

□ 1215

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

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

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, today we mark the beginning of Women's History Month.

For centuries, women have broken through barriers to move our country forward. The progress that women have made has taken the courage of countless trailblazers.

In Sacramento, Eleanor McClatchy took over the family newspaper business at a young age. Eleanor had a background in theatre, but a lack of experience in the publishing business did not stop her from stepping up to the plate in 1936 to become president of the McClatchy newspapers. She led the company for 42 years, and under her leadership, the business grew significantly through the acquisition of additional newspapers, radio, and television platforms.

Eleanor's story may be unique, yet it embodies the spirit of all women. In the face of challenges, we find a path forward.

Let us honor women like Eleanor by opening up opportunity to future generations of women because we all know when women succeed, America succeeds.

RARE DISEASE DAY

(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, yesterday was Rare Disease Day, Leap Year, and researchers around the world have identified more than 6,000 rare diseases, half of which impact children.

Last year, the House took a major step toward advancing rare disease research. I was proud not only to cosponsor, but to help pass 21st Century Cures. 21st Century Cures is a bill designed to help the world's best scientists find cures for the most deadly diseases that we face.

But it is not just the researchers, it is folks like Pat Livney, who is a friend and an advocate working to help cure Charcot-Marie-Tooth disorder, and folks like Jeff Aronin and his team working to solve Duchenne's disease.

Mr. Speaker, every day, scientists across the country are using NIH grants to discover the causes, the symptoms, the treatments, and ultimately search for the cures for rare diseases.

In honor of Rare Disease Day, I encourage my colleagues to join me in calling for more funding for the NIH this year and every year so that NIH can cure many of these diseases and ultimately save lives.

And that is just the way it is.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

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

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Women's History Month and the bold women pioneers who shattered glass ceilings and paved the way for women across this country to succeed.

From the courageous women at the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention who came up with the audacious new idea of women's rights, to the suffragettes who won the right to vote in 1920, we stand on the shoulders of the giants that came before us.

But women's history does not end there. From the first woman Speaker of the House, NANCY PELOSI, to the three women on the Supreme Court, to women candidates for President, bold women continue to break barriers.

But there is work to be done. Women are still paid less for the same work as their male counterparts. We are more than half the population, but just 20 percent of Congress. The United States continues to be one of just three nations in the world with no paid maternity leave law.

I know my daughter and my granddaughters deserve the same opportunities as my sons and grandsons. I am going to fight on behalf of the women across this country until that is a reality.

HONORING OUR FALLEN POLICE OFFICERS

(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, Ashley Guindon was 28 years old when she reported for duty after being sworn in to the Prince William County Police Department the day before.

On her first call, she responded to a domestic violence disturbance. She and her fellow officers rushed to the scene and, upon arrival, multiple gunshots came from the house.

Officer Guindon was shot and murdered. Yet another one of America's finest killed in the line of duty. Here she is, a photograph of her, taken the day she was sworn in. The next day, she was murdered.

Officers David McKeown, 33, and Jesse Hempen, 31, were also shot, but did survive.

Inside the house, the shooter's wife had also been murdered by the outlaw.

Before having her life coldly ripped from her, Guindon served in United States Marine Corps for 6 years.

Officers who answer and respond to domestic violence calls respond to some of the most dangerous situations in America. Those who wear the badge protect the rest of us from the evil that lives among us.

In the first 2 months of 2016, 14 police officers have been killed in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, as her body was transported, over a hundred of Guindon's fellow officers somberly lined the streets to pay tribute to one of their own. Death is the harsh reality that these remarkable men and women face every day.

Officer Guindon risked her life responding to a domestic violence call. Her life was stolen from her while on duty, her 1 day of service and career as a police officer.

Officers like her are a cut above the rest of us, Mr. Speaker. They are a rare and remarkable breed of Americans.

And that is just the way it is.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

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

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to join the millions of Americans who will mark the annual celebration of March as Women's History Month.

During Women's History Month, we celebrate the successes of America's women throughout our history and the sacrifice of the bold women who broke down so many barriers.

This year I would like to devote Women's History Month to saluting our female veterans and military members who work to keep us safe.

And even though the Department of Defense 3 months ago announced that females will now be able to serve in military combat roles, women actually have been serving in combat since the Civil War; like Army Specialist Brittany Gordon of St. Petersburg, Florida, who was the first woman from the Tampa Bay area killed in action in Iraq and Afghanistan in 2012 at the young age of 24.

And like the many women who serve at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, whether it is at Air Mobility Command, Special Operations Command or Central Command, you women are making history, and you are doing so while you are working to keep us safe.

We are grateful for your service to this country during Women's History Month and every year.

CLIMATE CHANGE

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

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Speaker, as a lifelong resident of Northern Michigan, I know how important it is to protect and conserve our precious natural resources. Northern Michigan's economy depends on our Great Lakes and outdoor spaces for tourism, agriculture, and sporting activities.

Generations of people in my district have grown up experiencing the outdoors, from the shores of Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, to Isle Royale National Park.

However, we need to make sure that there is a balance and that we do not undertake rash and unproven regulatory policies that are almost guaranteed to negatively impact our economy in the hope of some potential, and often unquantifiable, environmental gain.

All too often, the consequence of overly burdensome regulations here in America is the flight of manufacturing and industry to nations such as China and India. Mr. Speaker, these nations simply do not have the same level of protections or respect for the environment that we have here in America.

I fail to see how this benefits our planet's environment. I know that far too often the result is American citizens losing their jobs.

I hope we can join together to find commonsense and bipartisan ways to continue to protect our environment.

DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INC.

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

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., established January 13, 1913, by 22 collegiate women at Howard University.

From those humble beginnings 103 years ago, to today, there are more than 200,000 Deltas and 1,000 college and alumni chapters worldwide.

Mr. Speaker, today is the first day of Women's History Month. Thousands of

Deltas flood Capitol Hill to meet with Members of Congress to discuss some of our most pressing issues.

I thank you, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, for standing up for Attorney General Loretta Lynch of the United States and for coming today with a national agenda: equal pay for equal work, sustaining the Affordable Care Act, educational reform for college school funding, and yes, opposing the Voting Rights Act.

Mr. Speaker, please join me and the three other Members of Congress of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, for saluting them for being on the Hill today, and to my Columbus Alumni Chapter, and Delta Kappa, where I was made.

THE TRAGIC SHOOTING IN HESSTON, KANSAS

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

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay my respects to the victims of the tragic shooting last week in Hesston, Kansas. Renee Benjamin, Joshua Higbee, and Brian Sadowsky each saw their lives lost too early at the hands of a cold-blooded killer.

Another 14 people were wounded, and some critically, before authorities arrived on the scene at Excel Industries and brought the violence to an end.

As someone who grew up just a few short miles away from there, near Yoder, Kansas, and whose father went to school in Hesston, Thursday's shooting, sadly, hit close to home for me.

My wife, Brooke, and I want to send our condolences to the victims of this terrible tragedy and their families.

We also want to thank the first responders, police officers, EMTs, doctors, and nurses, who are all serving the Hesston community with skill and effectiveness in this time of need.

Mr. Speaker, nothing that we do or say will ever be able to bring back the lives lost, but our prayers and support will hopefully be able to help the Hesston community recover and heal from this horrible tragedy.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

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

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of National Women's History Month, the roots of which are in my district.

It was in Santa Rosa, California, that the National Women's History Project was founded, and I am proud to continue the legacy of recognizing the many contributions women have made to our country by introducing the National Women's History Month Resolution.

The theme of this year's bipartisan Women's History Month is honoring women in public service and government. And this year I am recognizing five extraordinary women in my district: Josephine Orozco, Maria Guevara, Evelyn Cheatham, Linda Parks, and Monica Rosenthal.

Honoring women should not be limited to 1 month out of the year. We need to work every day to make sure women have the same opportunities as men have to succeed because when women succeed, America succeeds.

RECOGNIZING VINNIE VAN GO GO'S

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Vinnie Van Go Go's. For over 25 years, Vinnie's has served quality food at affordable prices in Savannah's downtown City Market area.

Since its founding on February 16, 1991, Vinnie's has continued to serve excellent ''thin hearty crust Neapolitan pizza'' to Savannahians and tourists from all over the world.

Just like other Savannah mysteries, its founder and owner notoriously remains nameless as numerous Savannah myths revolve around his or her true identity and eccentricities.

As a cash-only establishment, Vinnie's has won multiple awards for its food, including best pizza in the State of Georgia by the Food Network in 2012. It also delivers by professional bicyclists to customers in Savannah's downtown area.

I am proud to recognize Vinnie Van Go Go's achievement for 25 years as a successful, local and nationally recognized business.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

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

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Women's History Month. This month is our chance to recommit ourselves to the principle that, when women succeed, America succeeds.

Women make up almost half of all workers in America, and working mothers are the primary breadwinners in 40 percent of families. More than ever, women's success is essential to our Nation's economy.

As we begin Women's History Month in 2016, I encourage this body to meaningfully address the challenges that still exist for women and our families.

I am pleased that the National Women's History Month Project is highlighting two incredible Floridians as they honor women in public service and government: Nadine Smith, an LGBT civil rights activist and the executive director of Equality Florida; and my good friend, Betty Mae Tiger Jumper, the first woman to chair of the Seminole Tribe of Florida and a Presidential adviser.

I am so grateful for the contributions these extraordinary women have made to our country, and I am thrilled that they are being recognized in this year's celebration.

EXPRESSING GRATITUDE FOR CAPITOL POLICE OFFICERS

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

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, 62 years ago today, in 1954, four gunmen entered the House Chamber and they opened fire. They wounded five Members of our body. As you know, you can still see a bullet hole in the desk on the floor and where they hit the ceiling of our Chamber.

And on this day in 1971, a bomb exploded in the Capitol in a Senate bathroom. No one was hurt, but it was a shock that another act of such violence could happen here.

In both instances and every day since, our Capitol Police sacrifice and put their lives on the line to protect our visitors, Members, and staff here in the people's House.

It can be easy to forget the importance and the quiet vigilance from those who keep us safe. Our Capitol Police officers go unappreciated too often.

Every day, but especially today, we should take some time and thank them for protecting the safety of everyone who visits and works in the Capitol.

RECOGNIZING CHARLOTTE CITY COUNCILMAN MALACHI GREENE

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

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to recognize former Charlotte City Councilman Malachi Greene, who departed this life on February 25.

Although he was born in South Carolina, North Carolina was indeed his home. A graduate of Livingstone College, an HBCU in Salisbury, North Carolina, Malachi was a businessman, a teacher, public servant, and overall model citizen.

I had known Malachi for many decades and had the pleasure of working with him on numerous occasions. I admired his steadfast dedication to improving the lives of others throughout his work at Bennett College and in the community.

In later years, Malachi served two terms on the Charlotte City Council. Throughout his political endeavors, he maintained the ability to appeal to diverse audiences and work with both parties to ensure that good policies rose above politics.

Malachi Greene put his all into public service and was a voice for the voiceless. He truly loved his community and his people, and we loved him. North Carolinians across our State will remember his life and his legacy for

years to come and are grateful for his service.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the start of Women's History Month and to honor all of the women who have shaped our country's history. So many women have shattered glass ceilings along the way, like my friend Dolores Watkins Ennis, one of the first African American secondary schoolteachers in my hometown of Flint, Michigan.

While this month we celebrate all of the great achievements of women like Dolores, let us not lose sight of the barriers that women still face in this country.

Women make up almost half of all workers. Working mothers are the primary breadwinners for many American families, yet the fight for justice, for equal rights and greater opportunity is far, far from over.

We need to promote policies that mean greater opportunity for women and their families, like commonsense sick leave and making child care more affordable. As a Nation, we have to make sure that women who are doing the same work as men get equal pay for that work.

This country is a place where we should be building an economy that works for everyone, meaning all families. We owe it to our mothers, to our daughters, and to our granddaughters.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

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

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Women's History Month by highlighting the exemplary life of Frances E. Willard.

Frances Willard earned her place in history by pioneering the temperance movement, breaking barriers in the field of education and leading the movement to obtain women's right to vote. Her suffrage arguments hinged on her feminist interpretation of Scripture. She said: ''God sets male and female side by side throughout His realm.''

Although Frances was born in Churchville, New York, in 1839, she quickly made her way to my hometown of Evanston, Illinois, where, among other things, she was the first woman college president in the country to confer degrees, the second president of the national Woman's Christian Temperance Union, and a founder of the National Council of Women.

In 1905, the great State of Illinois chose to honor her memory by making her the first woman whose statue appears in the National Statuary Hall Collection. That statue still stands today—just a few feet from us—where she is now a constant reminder of the powerful role of women in American history.

This Women's History Month, let us honor the lives of women like Frances Willard who came before us to create equality for women by helping to give us the right to vote, and let's do it by expanding that role.

When women succeed, America succeeds.

LYDIA MARIA CHILD

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

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, the district I serve, the Fifth District of Massachusetts, is home to women who have shaped our Nation's history. I would like to celebrate one of those extraordinary women in celebration of Women's History Month.

When you hear the song, ''Over the River and Through the Woods,'' you are hearing the words of Medford native Lydia Maria Child, a 19th century novelist, poet, abolitionist, Native American rights activist, and women's rights advocate who pioneered early progressive activism with her groundbreaking work.

In her fight for justice and equality, she wrote one of the earliest American historical novels, the first comprehensive history of American slavery, and the first comparative history of women.

As we celebrate Women's History Month and continue to strive for equality and justice for all women, we take great pride in celebrating the contributions of Lydia Maria Child and the other women leaders who have shaped our great country.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCCLINTOCK). 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.

DANNIE A. CARR VETERANS OUTPATIENT CLINIC

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2814) to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Sevierville, Tennessee, the Dannie A. Carr Veterans Outpatient Clinic.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2814

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

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The State of Tennessee, the Volunteer State, holds a proud tradition of selfless volunteerism to the United States Armed Forces.

(2) Specialist Four Dannie A. Carr, of Sevier County, Tennessee, served with distinction in B Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division during the Vietnam War in defense of the United States.

(3) Specialist Four Dannie A. Carr, twice wounded in battle and later killed in action by artillery fire on July 3, 1969, has been duly recognized by the Army, having been awarded the Bronze Star for Valor and the Purple Heart.

(4) The heroism of Dannie A. Carr is well known and held in high regard within the community of Sevier County, Tennessee.

(5) The municipalities of Pittman Center, Sevierville, Pigeon Forge, Gatlinburg, and Sevier County have agreed to and passed resolutions supporting the renaming of the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Sevier County, Tennessee, in honor of Specialist Four Dannie Arthur Carr.

SEC. 2. NAME OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMUNITY-BASED OUTPATIENT CLINIC, SEVIERVILLE, TENNESSEE.

The Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic located at 1124 Blanton Drive, Sevierville, Tennessee, shall after the date of the enactment of this Act be known and designated as the ''Dannie A. Carr Veterans Outpatient Clinic''. Any reference to such community-based outpatient clinic in any law, regulation, map, document, record, or other paper of the United States shall be considered to be a reference to the Dannie A. Carr Veterans Outpatient Clinic.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I do rise today in proud support of H.R. 2814, to name the Department of Veterans Affairs CBOC in Sevierville, Tennessee, the Dannie A. Carr Veterans Outpatient Clinic.

I thank the bill's sponsor, my colleague and friend, Congressman PHIL ROE from Tennessee, for recognizing an American hero through this legislation today.

Specialist Fourth Class Dannie Arthur Carr was born in June of 1947 in Sevierville, Tennessee. During the Vietnam war, Specialist Carr served with distinction in the United States Army.

It is only appropriate that his service and his life also be recognized by designating the VA community-based outpatient clinic in Sevierville, his hometown, the Dannie A. Carr Veterans Outpatient Clinic.

H.R. 2814 satisfies the committee's naming criteria and is supported by the entire Tennessee congressional delegation, veterans service organizations, including The American Legion, AMVETS, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Paralyzed Veterans of America, and Blinded Veterans Association.

I understand that the resolutions in support of this action and in honor of Specialist Carr have also passed the municipalities of Pittman Center, Sevierville, Pigeon Forge, Gatlinburg, and Sevier County in Tennessee.

Once again, this bill is sponsored by my good friend from Tennessee, Dr. ROE. He himself is an Army veteran and a senior member of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs. I am grateful to him for his hard work and advocacy on behalf of our Nation's veterans through his bill and through his valuable participation on our committee.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 2814.

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

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this legislation to name the community-based outpatient clinic in Sevierville, Tennessee, after Mr. Dannie A. Carr.

Specialist Four Dannie Arthur Carr was born on June 30, 1947, and was originally from Tennessee. He served his country in the Vietnam war as a member of the U.S. Army and as an infantryman in B Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division.

Dannie was a 1-year veteran of the Army when his tour began on November 5, 1968. On July 3, 1969, he was killed from artillery fire under hostile conditions in Tay Ninh Province, South Vietnam. He was only 22 years old. He was awarded the Bronze Star for Valor and the Purple Heart.

SP–4 Carr is buried at Zion Grove Cemetery in Tennessee, and each year he is memorialized on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on panel 21W, line 50.

Dannie was just one of the many young men who fought and died for the freedom we hold most dear. Naming this facility is just one small way we can honor his memory and make sure that his sacrifice for our Nation will never be forgotten.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all of the Vietnam veterans. When they came home from Vietnam 40 years ago, we as a Nation did not properly recognize them, and we should have. Today we are finding that the largest portion of our veterans who are committing suicide are our Vietnam veterans.

Many of those men and women were not integrated into the VA health system; yet if they could get the treatment that they need, we could reduce the incidences of suicide, which number about 22 a day. Of this number, only three of these veterans are in the VA health system.

It is our time for all of us to soldier up. We need to ensure that all of our veterans are enrolled in the VA system. So if you know a veteran, make sure to encourage him or her to register and actively seek help at the VA. If you know a veteran who served during the Vietnam conflict, make sure you let that veteran know that our country loves them and we really appreciate their service.

Saying ''God bless America'' means that God has blessed America with the service of the Vietnam veterans.

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

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE), a very important person to our committee. Dr. ROE is an Army veteran himself from the First District of Tennessee, Johnson City.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I thank both Chairman MILLER and Ranking Member BROWN for their kind remarks.

It is a great honor to be here today, Mr. Speaker, as I rise to support H.R. 2814, which honors the sacrifice of a Vietnam war hero and names the VA clinic in Sevierville, Tennessee, after Specialist Four Dannie Arthur Carr.

Four Specialist Carr was an unmarried soldier who was killed in action and left no children to carry his name. I can think of no higher honor than to lend his name forever to the Veterans Affairs facility in his hometown.

The son of a Baptist minister and World War II veteran, Carr was born in June of 1947 in Sevier County, Tennessee. He attended Gatlinburg-Pittman High School, where he was a star basketball player.

□ 1245

Carr entered the United States Army at the age of 20 in 1967 and proudly served B Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry, 1st Division. In combat, Carr displayed valor, having been awarded two Purple Hearts and a Bronze Star. He was killed in action by artillery fire on the day before Independence Day, July 3, 1969, at age 22.

The heroism of Specialist Carr is well known and held in high regard throughout Sevier County. All the local municipalities have approved resolutions supporting the naming of this Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic after Carr.

In Tennessee, aptly nicknamed the Volunteer State, we hold a proud history of volunteerism in military service and ensure that the legacy of those who fought and died for this country is preserved.

Naming this facility after Dannie Carr will do exactly that, preserve the legacy of an American patriot who bravely gave his life at such a young age.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to note that this bill does not remove anyone's name from the VA clinic in Sevier County. The facility I propose naming after Carr is a vacant medical facility that, through the leadership of Sevier County Mayor Larry Waters and Sevierville Mayor Bryan Atchley, we were able to secure a lease to the Department of Veterans Affairs for a whopping $1 per year. It is not currently named after another soldier. Specialist Carr is an obvious top choice when considering this honor.

I urge my colleagues to preserve the legacy of this brave American soldier, Specialist Dannie A. Carr, taken from this Earth at such a young age, and pass this legislation.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to acknowledge that there are 1,000 Delta Sigma Theta visiting with us on the Hill today during Women's History Month.

I want to thank the families and thank the leadership for bringing this bill naming to us today, Mr. Dannie A. Carr.

I want to once again thank the Vietnam veterans for their service to this country. God has blessed America with their service.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, again I urge all of my colleagues to support 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 Florida (Mr. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2814.

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.

CAMP PENDLETON MEDAL OF HONOR POST OFFICE

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

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 136

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

SECTION 1. CAMP PENDLETON MEDAL OF HONOR POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1103 USPS Building 1103 in Camp Pendleton, California, shall be known and designated as the ''Camp Pendleton Medal of Honor Post Office''.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''Camp Pendleton Medal of Honor Post Office''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days 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 Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA), a fellow Army veteran.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, of the several postal namings that we will be voting on today, in my humble opinion, none can recognize a more significant contribution than this one. Many will pay honor to those who have served their country, particularly those in the military.

But this post office, located at the Mainside of Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, is being named not on behalf of one or two or five, but for the many, many, many marines who have deployed from Camp Pendleton since 1942.

With over 42,000 marines and sailors currently stationed there and with its history in World War II, the Medal of Honor recipients whose names will appear on the plaque at what is now a numbered Mainside post office will remind all of those who come to that base and come to that facility that people like Colonel William Barber, who received the Medal of Honor for actions at the Chosin Reservoir in Korea, and over 250 Medal of Honor recipients, more than any other base I know of in the world—it will represent those who gave their last measure, those who did for their colleagues and their comrades far more than any of us could imagine ever finding the courage to do.

I hope the naming of this will finally allow us to name what we do not have enough roads for, we do not have enough signs for, we do not have enough post offices for, and that is to recognize that the base at Camp Pendleton and its post office, as a result of the authority of this committee, has put out corpsmen and marines for decades who have served our country in a way that no other base could take such pride in.

I hope that all who hear this will recognize that we have named many post offices after an individual, but never after an act. And the act of heroism that earns the Medal of Honor is unparalleled to any American.

I thank the chairman for his assistance, and I thank the ranking member for bringing this bill in a timely fashion.

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

I, too, am pleased to join my colleagues—in particular, my friend from California (Mr. ISSA)—in the consideration of H.R. 136.

Camp Pendleton, located in southern California, is the West Coast's largest expeditionary training facility for the U.S. Marine Corps. In the over 230 years of Camp Pendleton's existence, hundreds of thousands of brave men and women have made great sacrifices there to protect our country.

Many of these courageous marines and Navy corpsmen have posthumously received the Medal of Honor, our Nation's highest award for valor, in recognition of their extreme heroism and selflessness.

Mr. Speaker, we should pass this bill to commemorate the heroic actions members of our military take every day to defend our freedom. The Medal of Honor recipients who have passed through Camp Pendleton have earned our eternal gratitude. By naming this post office in their honor, we show them the respect they deserve.

I urge passage of H.R. 136.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

I rise today in support of this measure introduced by Congressman ISSA of California.

Mr. Speaker, Camp Pendleton, in addition to being a United States Marine Corps base in southern California that is home to 42,000 active marines and sailors, also has a distinguished history. Many of our Nation's servicemen and -women have been based out of Camp Pendleton since it was first opened during World War II.

H.R. 136 designates the main post office on base in honor of all of the brave warriors from Camp Pendleton units that have received the Medal of Honor. I urge Members to support this bill to name a post office for these distinguished warriors.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 136.

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. RUSSELL. 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.

FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT AMENDMENTS OF 2016

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2347) to amend the Federal Advisory Committee Act to increase the transparency of Federal advisory committees, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2347

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 ''Federal Advisory Committee Act Amendments of 2016''.

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

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Ensuring independent advice and expertise.
Sec. 3. Preventing efforts to circumvent the Federal Advisory Committee Act and public disclosure.
Sec. 4. Increasing transparency of advisory committees.
Sec. 5. Managing Federal advisory committees.
Sec. 6. Comptroller General review and reports.
Sec. 7. Application of Federal Advisory Committee Act to Trade Advisory Committees.
Sec. 8. Definitions.
Sec. 9. Technical and conforming amendments.
Sec. 10. Effective date.
Sec. 11. No additional funds authorized.

SEC. 2. ENSURING INDEPENDENT ADVICE AND EXPERTISE.

(a) BAR ON POLITICAL LITMUS TESTS.—Section 9 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by inserting ''MEMBERSHIP;'' after ''ADVISORY COMMITTEES;'';

(2) by redesignating subsections (b) and (c) as subsections (e) and (f), respectively; and

(3) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

''(b) APPOINTMENTS MADE WITHOUT REGARD TO POLITICAL AFFILIATION OR ACTIVITY.—All appointments to advisory committees shall be made without regard to political affiliation or political activity, unless required by Federal statute.''.

(b) MINIMIZING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.—Section 9 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.), as amended by subsection (a) of this section, is further amended by inserting after subsection (b) (as added by such subsection (a)) the following:

''(c) PUBLIC NOMINATIONS OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS.—Prior to appointing members to an advisory committee, the head of an agency shall give interested persons an opportunity to suggest potential committee members. The agency shall include a request for comments in the Federal Register notice required under subsection (a) and provide a mechanism for interested persons to comment through the official website of the agency. The agency shall consider any comments submitted under this subsection in selecting the members of an advisory committee.

''(d) DESIGNATION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS.—

''(1) An individual appointed to an advisory committee who is not a full-time or permanent part-time officer or employee of the Federal Government shall be designated as—

''(A) a special Government employee, if the individual is providing advice based on the individual's expertise or experience; or

''(B) a representative, if the individual is representing the views of an entity or entities outside of the Federal Government.

''(2) An agency may not designate committee members as representatives to avoid subjecting them to Federal ethics rules and requirements.

''(3) The designated agency ethics official for each agency shall review the members of each advisory committee that reports to the agency to determine whether each member's designation is appropriate, and to redesignate members if appropriate. The designated agency ethics official shall certify to the head of the agency that such review has been made—

''(A) following the initial appointment of members; and

''(B) at the time a committee's charter is renewed, or, in the case of a committee with an indefinite charter, every 2 years.

''(4) The head of each agency shall inform each individual appointed to an advisory committee that reports to the agency whether the individual is appointed as a special Government employee or as a representative. The agency head shall provide each committee member with an explanation of the differences between special Government employees and representatives and a summary of applicable ethics requirements. The agency head, acting through the designated agency ethics official, shall obtain signed and dated written confirmation from each committee member that the member received and reviewed the information required by this paragraph.

''(5) The Director of the Office of Government Ethics shall provide guidance to agencies on what to include in the summary of ethics requirements required by paragraph (4).

''(6) The head of each agency shall, to the extent practicable, develop and implement strategies to minimize the need for written determinations under section 208(b)(3) of title 18, United States Code. Strategies may include such efforts as improving outreach efforts to potential committee members and seeking public input on potential committee members.''.

(c) REGULATIONS IMPLEMENTING FACA.—Section 7(c) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended by inserting ''promulgate regulations and'' after ''The Administrator shall''.

(d) ENSURING INDEPENDENT ADVICE AND RECOMMENDATIONS.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended—

(1) in section 8—

(A) in the section heading, by inserting ''INDEPENDENT ADVICE AND RECOMMENDATIONS;'' after ''RESPONSIBILITIES OF AGENCY HEADS;'';

(B) by redesignating subsection (b) as subsection (c); and

(C) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

''(b) The head of each agency shall ensure that the agency does not interfere with the free and independent participation, expression of views, and deliberation by committee members. Each advisory committee shall include a statement describing the process used by the advisory committee in formulating the advice and recommendations when they are transmitted to the agency.''; and

(2) in section 10—

(A) in the section heading, by inserting ''; CHAIR'' after ''ATTENDANCE''; and

(B) by inserting after subsection (f) the following new subsection:

''(g) The Chair shall not be an employee of the agency to which the advisory committee reports, unless—

''(1) a statute specifically authorizes selection of such an employee as the Chair; or

''(2) the head of the agency directs an employee to serve as the Chair.''.

SEC. 3. PREVENTING EFFORTS TO CIRCUMVENT THE FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT AND PUBLIC DISCLOSURE.

(a) DE FACTO MEMBERS.—Section 4 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(d) TREATMENT OF INDIVIDUAL AS MEMBER.—An individual who is not a full-time or permanent part-time officer or employee of the Federal Government shall be regarded as a member of a committee if the individual regularly attends and participates in committee meetings as if the individual were a member, even if the individual does not have the right to vote or veto the advice or recommendations of the advisory committee.''.

(b) SUBCOMMITTEES.—Section 4 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.), as amended by subsection (a) of this section, is further amended by striking subsection (a) and inserting the following:

''(a) APPLICATION.—The provisions of this Act or of any rule, order, or regulation promulgated under this Act shall apply to each advisory committee, including any subcommittee or subgroup thereof, except to the extent that any Act of Congress establishing any such advisory committee specifically provides otherwise. Any subcommittee or subgroup that reports to a parent committee established under section 9(a) is not required to comply with section 9(f).''.

(c) COMMITTEES CREATED UNDER CONTRACT.—Section 3(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended in the matter following subparagraph (C) by adding at the end the following: ''An advisory committee is considered to be established by an agency, agencies, or the President if it is formed, created, or organized under contract, other transactional authority, cooperative agreement, grant, or otherwise at the request or direction of an agency, agencies, or the President.''.

(d) ADVISORY COMMITTEES CONTAINING SPECIAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.—Section 4 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.), as amended by subsections (a) and (b) of this section, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(e) SPECIAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.—Committee members appointed as special Government employees shall not be considered full-time or permanent part-time officers or employees of the Federal Government for purposes of determining the applicability of this Act under section 3(2).''.

SEC. 4. INCREASING TRANSPARENCY OF ADVISORY COMMITTEES.

(a) INFORMATION REQUIREMENT.—Section 11 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 11. DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—With respect to each advisory committee, the head of the agency to which the advisory committee reports shall make publicly available in accordance with subsection (b) the following information:

''(1) The charter of the advisory committee.

''(2) A description of the process used to establish and appoint the members of the advisory committee, including the following:

''(A) The process for identifying prospective members.

''(B) The process of selecting members for balance of viewpoints or expertise.

''(C) The reason each member was appointed to the committee.

''(D) A justification of the need for representative members, if any.

''(3) A list of all current members, including, for each member, the following:

''(A) The name of any person or entity that nominated the member.

''(B) Whether the member is designated as a special Government employee or a representative.

''(C) In the case of a representative, the individuals or entity whose viewpoint the member represents.

''(4) A list of all members designated as special Government employees for whom written certifications were made under section 208(b) of title 18, United States Code, a copy of each such certification, a summary description of the conflict necessitating the certification, and the reason for granting the certification.

''(5) Any recusal agreement made by a member or any recusal known to the agency that occurs during the course of a meeting or other work of the committee.

''(6) A summary of the process used by the advisory committee for making decisions.

''(7) Detailed minutes of all meetings of the committee and a description of committee efforts to make meetings accessible to the public using online technologies (such as video recordings) or other techniques (such as audio recordings).

''(8) Any written determination by the President or the head of the agency to which the advisory committee reports, pursuant to section 10(d), to close a meeting or any portion of a meeting and the reasons for such determination.

''(9) Notices of future meetings of the committee.

''(10) Any additional information considered relevant by the head of the agency to which the advisory committee reports.

''(b) MANNER OF DISCLOSURE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the head of an agency shall make the information required to be disclosed under this section available electronically on the official public website of the agency and to the Administrator at least 15 calendar days before each meeting of an advisory committee. If the head of the agency determines that such timing is not practicable for any required information, such head shall make the information available as soon as practicable but no later than 48 hours before the next meeting of the committee. An agency may withhold from disclosure any information that would be exempt from disclosure under section 552 of title 5, United States Code.

''(2) WEBSITE AVAILABILITY.—The head of an agency shall make available electronically, on the official public website of the agency, detailed minutes and, to the extent available, a transcript or audio or video recording of each advisory committee meeting not later than 30 calendar days after such meeting.

''(3) GRANT REVIEWS.—In the case of grant reviews, disclosure of information required by subsection (a)(3) may be provided in the aggregate rather than by individual grant.

''(c) PROVISION OF INFORMATION BY ADMINISTRATOR OF GENERAL SERVICES.—The Administrator of General Services shall provide, on the official public website of the General Services Administration, electronic access to the information made available by each agency under this section.

''(d) AVAILABILITY OF MEETING MATERIALS.—Except where prohibited by contractual agreements entered into prior to the effective date of this Act, agencies and advisory committees shall make available to any person, at actual cost of duplication, copies of advisory committee meeting materials.''.

(b) CHARTER FILING.—Subsection (f) of section 9 of the Federal Advisory Committee

Act (5 U.S.C. App.), as redesignated by section 2(a) of this Act, is amended to read as follows:

''(f) No advisory committee shall meet or take any action until an advisory committee charter has been filed with the Administrator, the head of the agency to whom any advisory committee reports, and the standing committees of the Senate and of the House of Representatives having legislative jurisdiction of such agency. Such charter shall contain the following information in the following order:

''(1) The committee's official designation.

''(2) The authority under which the committee is established.

''(3) The committee's objectives and the scope of its activity.

''(4) A description of the duties for which the committee is responsible, and, if such duties are not solely advisory, a specification of the authority for such functions.

''(5) The agency or official to whom the committee reports.

''(6) The agency responsible for providing the necessary support for the committee.

''(7) The responsibilities of the officer or employee of the Federal Government designated under section 10(e).

''(8) The estimated number and frequency of committee meetings.

''(9) The period of time necessary for the committee to carry out its purposes.

''(10) The committee's termination date, if less than two years from the date of the committee's establishment.

''(11) The estimated number of members and a description of the expertise needed to carry out the objectives of the committee.

''(12) A description of whether the committee will be composed of special Government employees, representatives, or members from both categories.

''(13) Whether the agency intends to create subcommittees and if so, the agency official authorized to exercise such authority.

''(14) The estimated annual operating costs in dollars and full-time equivalent positions for such committee.

''(15) The recordkeeping requirements of the committee.

''(16) The date the charter is filed.

A copy of any such charter shall also be furnished to the Library of Congress.''.

SEC. 5. MANAGING FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES.

(a) COMMITTEE MANAGEMENT OFFICERS.—Subsection (c) of section 8 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.), as redesignated by section 2(d) of this Act, is amended to read as follows:

''(c) The head of each agency that has an advisory committee shall designate an Advisory Committee Management Officer who shall—

''(1) be a senior official who is—

''(A) an expert in implementing the requirements of this Act and regulations promulgated pursuant to this Act; and

''(B) the primary point of contact for the General Services Administration;

''(2) be responsible for the establishment, management, and supervision of the advisory committees of the agency, including establishing procedures, performance measures, and outcomes for such committees;

''(3) assemble and maintain the reports, records, and other papers (including advisory committee meeting materials) of any such committee during its existence;

''(4) ensure any such committee and corresponding agency staff adhere to the provisions of this Act and any regulations promulgated pursuant to this Act;

''(5) maintain records on each employee of any such committee and completion of training required for any such employee;

''(6) be responsible for providing the information required in section 7(b) of this Act to the Administrator; and

''(7) carry out, on behalf of that agency, the provisions of section 552 of title 5, United States Code, with respect to the reports, records, and other papers described in paragraph (3).''.

SEC. 6. COMPTROLLER GENERAL REVIEW AND REPORTS.

(a) REVIEW.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall review compliance by agencies with the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended by this Act, including whether agencies are appropriately appointing advisory committee members as either special Government employees or representatives.

(b) REPORT.—The Comptroller General shall submit to the committees described in subsection (c) two reports on the results of the review, as follows:

(1) The first report shall be submitted not later than one year after the date of promulgation of regulations under section 7(c) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.), as amended by section 2(c).

(2) The second report shall be submitted not later than five years after such date of promulgation of regulations.

(c) COMMITTEES.—The committees described in this subsection are the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate.

SEC. 7. APPLICATION OF FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT TO TRADE ADVISORY COMMITTEES.

Section 135(f)(2)(A) of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2155(f)(2)(A)) is amended by striking ''subsections (a) and (b) of sections 10 and 11 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act'' and inserting ''subsections (a) and (b) of section 10 and subsections (a)(7), (a)(8), (a)(9), (b)(2), and (d) of section 11 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act''.

SEC. 8. DEFINITIONS.

Section 3 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(5) The term 'special Government employee' has the meaning given that term in section 202(a) of title 18, United States Code.''.

SEC. 9. TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

Section 7(d)(1) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''the rate specified for GS–18 of the General Schedule under section 5332'' and inserting ''the rate for level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315''; and

(2) in subparagraph (C)(i), by striking ''handicapped individuals (within the meaning of section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794))'' and inserting ''individuals with disabilities (as defined in section 7(20) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 705(20)))''.

SEC. 10. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act shall take effect 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 11. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days 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 Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

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

I rise today in support of H.R. 2347, introduced by Congressman WILLIAM ''LACY'' CLAY. H.R. 2347 was introduced by Representative CLAY to help improve the governance and transparency of the Federal advisory committees.

Congress acknowledged the merits of using advisory committees to acquire viewpoints from business, academic, and other interests when it passed the Federal Advisory Committee Act in 1972.

While not necessarily well known, Federal advisory committees are small bodies of people who provide advice, guidance, or recommendations to Federal policymakers on a wide range of topics. All told, in fiscal year 2014, 825 Federal advisory committees held 7,173 meetings at a cost to the American taxpayer of more than $334 million.

While these committees undoubtedly provided a number of valuable insights, it is important that we continue to work to ensure that these committees produce the best value for the taxpayer.

Unfortunately, some agencies note that the FACA requirements are cumbersome and resource intensive, thus reducing the ability of the committees to focus on substantive issues in a timely fashion.

Both governmental agencies and private groups say that the 1972 act does not do enough to require agencies to promote openness and transparency.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2347 works to address these problems and bring transparency to Federal advisory committees and the Federal agency decision-making process.

It also clarifies transparency of committee membership by requiring members to be selected without political affiliation, giving agency heads authorization to require members to fully disclose conflicts of interest and treating those individuals who regularly attend and participate in committee meetings to be considered as a member, even if they are not allowed to vote.

H.R. 2347 classifies transparency of committee activities further by ensuring the committee's advice, information, and recommendations are judgments of the committee and not the agency and, also, by requiring each agency to make available on their Web site the committee and its activities.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM,
Washington, DC, December 10, 2015.

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: On October 9, 2015, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform ordered reported without amendment H.R. 2347, the Federal Advisory Committee Act Amendments 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 Ways and Means.

I ask that you allow the Ways and Means 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 Ways and Means 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 WAYS AND MEANS,
Washington, DC, December 10, 2015.

Hon. JASON CHAFFETZ,
Chairman, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter regarding the Committee on Ways and Means' jurisdictional interest in H.R. 2347, the ''Federal Advisory Committee Act Amendments of 2015.'' I wanted to notify you that the Committee on Ways and Means will forgo action on H.R. 2347 so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

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 Ways and Means. In addition, the Committee reserves that right to seek conferees and requests your support when such a request is made.

I would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 2347, 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. 2347.

Sincerely,

KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman.

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

Let me first thank my colleague, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL), as well as the majority party for working with us to get this bill to this forum and to get it ready for passage.

I rise in strong support of the Federal Advisory Committee Act Amendments. I have introduced this bill in each of the last four Congresses, and I am hopeful that this time the bill will make it to enactment.

□ 1300

The Federal Advisory Committee Act is one of our core open government laws. FACA is intended to ensure that advisory committees provide objective advice and operate with transparency. Over time, however, agencies have implemented FACA inconsistently and judges have created loopholes in the law.

This bill closes the loopholes that allow agencies to get around the Act. Currently, agencies can avoid FACA's requirements by conducting committee business through subcommittees. This bill makes it clear that FACA applies to subcommittees as well as to the parent committees.

The bill also clarifies that a committee that is set up by a contractor is subject to FACA if it is formed under the direction of the President or an agency. Under FACA, agencies would be required to disclose how advisory members are chosen, whether they have financial conflicts of interest if they are appointed to provide their own expertise, and who they work for if they are representing a specific interest.

This bill includes changes to lower the cost of implementation based on discussions with the Congressional Budget Office. Specifically, the bill would include a more streamlined definition of what would be considered a committee under the bill.

This bill will make the government more accountable by shedding light on who is advising the government and on how one is advising the government.

I thank my colleagues for their cooperation in this effort. This is a good government bill, and I urge its passage.

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

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I urge the adoption of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2347, 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.

MAYA ANGELOU MEMORIAL POST OFFICE

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (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''.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3735

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

SECTION 1. MAYA ANGELOU MEMORIAL POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 200 Town Run Lane in Winston Salem, North Carolina, shall be known and designated as the ''Maya Angelou Memorial Post Office''.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''Maya Angelou Memorial Post Office''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam 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 the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 3735, which was introduced by Congresswoman ALMA ADAMS of North Carolina and is supported by the entire North Carolina delegation. The bill designates the post office located at 200 Town Run Lane in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, as the Maya Angelou Memorial Post Office.

Madam Speaker, Dr. Maya Angelou held a distinguished career that earned her over 80 honorary degrees. She was an American author, poet, and civil rights activist.

Dr. Angelou was born on April 4, 1928, in St. Louis, Missouri. In 1981, she moved to Winston-Salem, North Carolina, where she accepted the Lifetime William Neal Reynolds Professorship of American Studies at Wake Forest University. For over 30 years, she served as a professor at Wake Forest University and became a community leader.

Dr. Angelou made literary history with her 1969 acclaimed memoir, ''I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings,'' when she became the first African American woman to make the nonfiction bestseller list.

She served on two Presidential committees: the American Revolution Bicentennial Council, under President Ford, and the National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year, under President Carter.

In 1993, upon the request of President Clinton, Dr. Angelou composed a poem to read at his inauguration. That poem, entitled ''On the Pulse of Morning,'' was broadcast live around the world. In 2000, President Clinton awarded Dr. Angelou the National Medal of Arts.

She received recognition from the White House under the following Presidents as well. In 2005, Dr. Angelou

penned and delivered the poem entitled ''Amazing Peace'' for President George W. Bush at the Christmas tree lighting ceremony. In 2010, President Barack Obama presented her with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the country's highest civilian honor.

Dr. Angelou called Winston-Salem home, which became her final resting place on May 28, 2014. Madam Speaker, H.R. 3735 would name a post office in her honor, a post office located in the community she called home.

I urge Members to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am pleased to join my colleagues in the consideration of H.R. 3735, a bill 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.

Born in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1928, Maya Angelou is best known for her literary talents as an author and poet. While the 1970 autobiography that recounts her life, ''I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings,'' remains her most notable work, Maya Angelou authored dozens of other award-winning novels, essays, and poems, many of which reflect on her own life and experiences as well as on broader social and political issues.

Prior to her prolific literary career, Angelou also experienced success as a singer, actress, civil rights activist, and educator. Her many accolades include the Presidential Medal of Freedom, which was bestowed upon her by President Barack Obama in 2010. Dr. Angelou passed away in May 2014.

Madam Speaker, we should pass this bill to honor the legacy of Maya Angelou and the countless contributions her life and work made to the many facets of American society. I urge the passage of H.R. 3735.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. ADAMS), my fellow freshman colleague.

Ms. ADAMS. I thank my colleague for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise during a special month, Women's History Month, to urge the passage of H.R. 3735, which is legislation to honor the life of Dr. Maya Angelou, an African American woman who broke barriers and served as an inspiration for so many young and old throughout this Nation. My legislation, H.R. 3735, designates the Center City postal facility at 200 Town Run Lane in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, as the Maya Angelou Memorial Post Office.

Dr. Angelou was a distinguished author, writer, poet, and activist, which earned her renowned success and over 80 honorary degrees. She became the first nonfiction bestselling African American female author for her 1969 memoir, ''I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings.'' She was also the first African American woman to have a script filmed for the 1972 movie ''Georgia,'' which was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize.

In addition to her literary successes, Dr. Angelou became a prolific academician. In 1981, she moved to Winston-Salem, North Carolina, which I am proud to represent. She accepted the Lifetime William Neal Reynolds Professorship of American Studies at Wake Forest University, and she went on to serve there for more than 30 years.

Dr. Angelou received many accolades throughout her lifetime, including three Grammies for spoken word albums and two NAACP Image Awards.

Her work has become the crown of American literature and has been recognized by Presidents Carter, Clinton, and George W. Bush. In 2010, President Barack Obama presented her with our Nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Winston-Salem was Dr. Maya Angelou's home and is her final resting place; so renaming this postal facility in her honor is a small, yet thoughtful, way to recognize her influence and to celebrate her life in the community she deeply loved.

Dr. Angelou understood the importance of history. She was historic in her own right. She understood who she was, what her history was, and she understood her struggles. In her own words, she said, ''History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again.''

Madam Speaker, it is my hope that my colleagues will join me in voting favorably for H.R. 3735 so as to rename the Center City postal facility in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, after Dr. Maya Angelou, one of our country's greatest writers, inspirational thought leaders, and an overall phenomenal woman.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN).

Mr. GROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, it is always a big decision when you name a local post office after somebody. I think people should investigate Maya Angelou a little bit and perhaps Google ''Maya Angelou'' and look at other articles in places like the ''American Thinker'' or ''The American Spectator.''

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I urge the adoption of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3735, a bill to name a post office in Winston-Salem, North Carolina as the Maya Angelou Memorial Post Office.

Dr. Maya Angelou's illustrious legacy is befitting this well-deserved recognition.

Multi-talented barely covers the depth and breadth of Maya Angelou's accomplishments.

She was an author, actress, screenwriter, dancer, civil rights activist, professor, and poet.

Born Marguerite Annie Johnson on April 4, 1928, in St. Louis, Missouri, Maya Angelou is perhaps best known for her 1969 memoir, I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings.

In 1971, Maya Angelou published the Pulitzer Prize-nominated poetry collection Just Give Me a Cool Drink of Water 'Fore I Die.

Maya Angelou received several honors throughout her career, including two NAACP Image Awards in the outstanding literary work (nonfiction) category, in 2005 and 2009 and the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2010.

During World War II, Maya Angelou moved to San Francisco, California, where she won a scholarship to study dance and acting at the California Labor School.

Also during this time, Maya Angelou became the first black female cable car conductor in San Francisco, California.

In the mid-1950s, Maya Angelou's career as a performer began to take off, when she landed a role in a touring production of Porgy and Bess, later appearing in the off-Broadway production Calypso Heat Wave (1957) and releasing her first album, Miss Calypso (1957).

As a member of the Harlem Writers Guild and a civil rights activist, Maya Angelou organized and starred in the musical revue Cabaret for Freedom as a benefit to raise funds for Dr. King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference,

Maya Angelou also served as the SCLC's northern coordinator.

In 1961, Maya Angelou appeared in an off-Broadway production of Jean Genet's The Blacks with James Earl Jones, Lou Gossett Jr. and Cicely Tyson.

While the play earned strong reviews, Maya Angelou moved on to other pursuits, spending much of the 1960s abroad, first living in Egypt and then in Ghana, working as an editor and a freelance writer at the University of Ghana.

After returning to the United States, Angelou was urged by friend and fellow writer James Baldwin to write about her life experiences.

Maya Angelou's efforts resulted in the enormously successful 1969 memoir about her childhood and young adult years, I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings, which made literary history as the first nonfiction best-seller by an African-American woman, making Maya an international superstar.

Since publishing Caged Bird, Maya Angelou continued to break new ground not just artistically, but educationally and socially.

She wrote the screenplay for the film drama Georgia, Georgia in 1972—and made history as the first African-American woman to have her screenplay produced.

Maya Angelou went on to earn a Tony Award nomination for her role in the 1973 play Look Away and an Emmy Award nomination for her work on the television miniseries Roots (1977).

Maya Angelou also published several collections of poetry, including Just Give Me a Cool Drink of Water 'Fore I Die (1971), which was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize.

One of Maya Angelou's most famous works is the poem ''On the Pulse of Morning,'' which she wrote especially for and recited at President Bill Clinton's inaugural ceremony in January 1993, the first inaugural recitation since 1961, when Robert Frost delivered his poem ''The Gift Outright'' at President John F. Kennedy's inauguration.

Maya Angelou went on to win a Grammy Award (best spoken word album) for the audio version of the poem.

In 1995, Maya Angelou again made history, this time for remaining on The New York Times' paperback nonfiction best-seller list for two years—the longest-running record in the chart's history.

Seeking new creative challenges, Maya Angelou made her directorial debut in 1998 with Down in the Delta, starring Alfre Woodard.

She also wrote a number of inspirational works, from the essay collection Wouldn't Take Nothing for My Journey Now, to her advice for young women in Letter to My Daughter.

Interested in health, Angelou has even published cookbooks, including Hallelujah! The Welcome Table: A Lifetime of Memories With Recipes and Great Food, All Day Long.

Among her numerous accolades are the Chicago International Film Festival's 1998 Audience Choice Award, Acapulco Black Film Festival in 1999 for Down in the Delta; and two NAACP Image Awards for Outstanding Literary Work

The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a close friend, was assassinated on Maya Angelou's 40th birthday, April 4, 1968, and from that year forward Maya Angelou refused to celebrate her birthday; instead, she would send flowers to Dr. King's widow, Coretta Scott King, for more than 30 years, until her death in 2006.

President Barack Obama has called Maya Angelou "a brilliant writer, a fierce friend, and a truly phenomenal woman," who "had the ability to remind us that we are all God's children; that we all have something to offer."

Madam Speaker, I can think of so many other reasons why Dr. Maya Angelou's illustrious legacy deserves this profound recognition, but I leave you with these words from Dr. Angelou's poem, Still I Rise:

Leaving behind nights of terror and fear. I rise.
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear. I rise.
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave.
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.
I rise. I rise. I rise!

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3735.

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. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam 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.

W. RONALD COALE MEMORIAL POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (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''.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1132

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

SECTION 1. W. RONALD COALE MEMORIAL POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1048 West Robinhood Drive in Stockton, California, shall be known and designated as the ''W. Ronald Coale Memorial Post Office Building''.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''W. Ronald Coale Memorial Post Office Building''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

□ 1315

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days 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 Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

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

I rise today in support of H.R. 1132, introduced by Congressman JERRY MCNERNEY of California. The bill designates the post office located at 1048 West Robinhood Drive in Stockton, California, as the W. Ronald Coale Memorial Post Office Building.

Madam Speaker, Mr. Coale spent much of his life in public service and was incredibly involved in his community in Stockton, California. Born in Stockton, he attended the local schools there and graduated from Stockton College. He also earned his teaching certificate in the field of transportation and distribution from the University of California at Berkeley.

A veteran of the Korean war, he served in the United States Army from 1952 to 1954 and was honorably discharged. Mr. Coale went on to serve in numerous capacities, supporting local government and public transportation. In fact, he served as a member of the Stockton Port Commission for 22 years.

Madam Speaker, Mr. Coale was elected to the Stockton City Council in 1983 and was subsequently elected to the office of vice mayor in 1985, where he served for the next 5 years until 1990.

He also served as chair of the San Joaquin County Council of Governments in 1958, while representing the Stockton City Council as vice mayor. Mr. Coale was then appointed by the Stockton City Council to the Stockton Port District board of port commissioners in 1981 and served in that position until March of 2013.

He also served in the San Joaquin County Council of Governments, representing the Stockton Metropolitan Transit District board of directors, the Stockton City Council, and the Stockton Port District board of port commissioners.

Mr. Coale was a former member and past chairman of the Stockton Salvation Army advisory board and a former gubernatorial appointee to the Atascadero State Hospital advisory board, serving for 8 years as the Governor's appointee.

A Thirty-third Degree Scottish Rite Mason, Mr. Coale was appointed to the Office of Personal Representative of the Sovereign Grand Inspector General of California for the Stockton Scottish Rite in April of 1992. He served in that position until May of 2003. He also served as a trustee of the California Scottish Rite Foundation during that time period.

As a veteran, Ron also belonged to the Karl Ross Post of the American Legion in Stockton.

Madam Speaker, Mr. Coale passed away in April of 2014 at the age of 81. He left a legacy of many years of service to both his Nation in wartime and to his community and set a strong example of the importance of community involvement.

I urge Members to support this measure.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am pleased to join my colleagues in the consideration of H.R. 1132, a bill 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.

Ronald Coale was born in 1932 and led a life of dedicated public service, beginning with service to his country during the Korean war.

A member of the Stockton Metropolitan Transit District board of directors beginning in 1973, Mr. Coale rather quickly took on a leadership role, chairing the board from 1975 until 1983.

He later served local government and the transit sector through his positions as a council member and vice mayor for the city of Stockton, chairman of the Stockton Port Commission, a member of the San Joaquin Council of Governments board of directors, and worked on behalf of the California Public Utilities Commission and California Trucking Association.

Mr. Coale passed away at the age of 81 in April 2014.

Madam Speaker, we should pass this bill to recognize W. Ronald Coale's inspiring life of public service and to

honor his accomplishments and his memory. I urge passage of H.R. 1132.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I would like to make my colleague from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE) aware that I have no further speakers and am prepared to close.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCNERNEY).

Mr. MCNERNEY. Madam Speaker, all the things I wanted to say about Mr. Coale have already been said, so it is going to be personal.

I met Mr. Coale when I first got elected. He approached me and asked me if he could be on my service academy advisory board. Of course, I didn't know much about that at the time. I was glad to appoint him. He did a wonderful job. He always was there with a smile and a warm handshake. He did his best for the community. He did his best for our United States Army and the service academies. I really appreciated the opportunity to get to know him.

He is missed. His family has always been very fond of their father and their husband and so on. I share that fondness, and I miss him.

Mr. Coale has a great legacy, and I am proud that we are able to get a post office named after him. I urge my colleagues to vote ''aye'' on this measure.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I urge adoption of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1132.

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.

LIONEL R. COLLINS, SR. POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (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''.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2458

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

SECTION 1. LIONEL R. COLLINS, SR. POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 5351 Lapalco Boulevard in Marrero, Louisiana, shall be known and designated as the ''Lionel R. Collins, Sr. Post Office Building''.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''Lionel R. Collins, Sr. Post Office Building''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days 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 Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

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

I rise today in support of H.R. 2458, introduced by Congressman RICHMOND of Louisiana. The bill designates the post office located at 5351 Lapalco Boulevard in Marrero, Louisiana, as the Lionel R. Collins, Sr. Post Office Building.

Madam Speaker, Judge Collins made history by being the first African American to win an elected office position in the Jefferson Parish of Louisiana. He dedicated his life to making New Orleans a more just and equal community.

Judge Collins was born in Harvey, Louisiana, and not only maintained his roots in the New Orleans area, but also contributed tremendously to the city.

After serving in the United States Army and graduating from Howard University School of Law, Judge Collins returned to New Orleans and initiated his career as a pioneering civil rights attorney. He led groundbreaking cases that overturned discriminatory practices. He also integrated West Jefferson Hospital and Jefferson Parish Public Schools.

In 1977, Judge Collins received an interim appointment from the Louisiana Supreme Court to serve as a judge. He was the first African American to do so. He was then reelected to serve a second term, during which his fellow judges elected to name him chief judge. He was the first African American to hold this position. Judge Collins broke further barriers, both in his courtroom decisions and in his personal accomplishments.

In 1988, Judge Collins passed away at the age of 60. Naming this postal facility for the Honorable Lionel Collins will memorialize his groundbreaking achievements in civil rights and his lifelong dedication to the New Orleans community.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am happy to echo and second the eloquent words that were just said by my colleague on the other side of the aisle.

Rather than repeat them or preempt the next speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. RICHMOND).

Mr. RICHMOND. Madam Speaker, I am honored to stand here today in support of a bill to designate the Marrero, Louisiana, post office for Lionel Collins, Sr.

We will name a number of post offices today, and I just want to state why it is important to me and why it makes a difference: because as a kid, when you pass buildings and you pass things that have names on them, it makes you go back and research who was that person and what did they do so great to get a building or a facility named after them.

I hope that today when we pass this bill to name this post office after Judge Lionel Collins, that kids will get a chance to pass by and say: ''What made Lionel Collins deserving of a post office?'' and ''When I grow up, will I be deserving of a post office?'' and ''What is it I need do in my life to make a difference?''

When they go back and they do the research, they will see that Judge Lionel Collins was a pioneering civil rights lawyer. He dedicated his life to making Louisiana a more just and equal State for them. He was the first African American to win elected office in Jefferson Parish where he served as the judge in the 24th Judicial District in Gretna.

Lionel had long roots in the metropolitan area. He was born in Harvey in 1927 and attended Gilbert Academy before serving in the United States Army. After that, he went on to the esteemed Xavier University, and then went on to receive his juris doctorate from Howard University in 1954.

Throughout his career as a lawyer, Judge Collins played a major role in the civil rights struggle in the South. Beginning in 1957, Lionel led groundbreaking cases that helped to overturn practices of White-only jobs and higher pay for White employees at the Celotex Corporation.

Lionel continued to successfully steer desegregation cases with the NAACP across Louisiana. His work integrated West Jefferson Hospital and the Jefferson Parish Public Schools.

His courtroom successes and courage in the civil rights initiatives earned him the role of Jefferson Parish's first African American assistant parish attorney in 1968. As already mentioned, in 1977, Lionel made history by receiving an interim appointment from the Louisiana Supreme Court to serve as judge to the newly created Division L of the 24th Judicial District. He was reelected to a second term and named chief judge by his fellow judges.

In addition to his civil rights work, Judge Collins served the New Orleans area community throughout his career. He served as a board member for the Urban League and Selective Service. As a testament to his life legacy, the Jefferson Parish School Board voted to rename Ames Montessori School in Marrero as Judge Lionel R. Collins Elementary in 2011.

I thank Chairman CHAFFETZ and Ranking Member CUMMINGS for bringing this bill to the floor and congratulate Lionel's family for this wonderful recognition. I hope that this postal facility will serve as a reminder of Lionel's courage, his intellect, and his passion for generations to come.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, again, I urge passage of this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I urge adoption of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2458.

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.

DARYLE HOLLOWAY POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (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''.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3082

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

SECTION 1. DARYLE HOLLOWAY POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 5919 Chef Menteur Highway in New Orleans, Louisiana, shall be known and designated as the ''Daryle Holloway Post Office Building''.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''Daryle Holloway Post Office Building''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

□ 1330

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days 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 Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3082, introduced by Congressman CEDRIC RICHMOND of Louisiana. The bill designates the post office located at 5919 Chef Menteur Highway in New Orleans, Louisiana, as the Daryle Holloway Post Office Building.

Madam Speaker, Officer Daryle Holloway was a 22-year veteran of the New Orleans Police Department and the father of three children. On June 20, 2015, Officer Holloway lost his life in the line of duty while transporting a suspect to the police station.

Prior to his tragic death, Officer Holloway served his community for more than two decades. He attended Corpus Christi Elementary and graduated from St. Augustine High School, both located in New Orleans, the community in which he served.

Madam Speaker, Officer Holloway had deep roots in the community he served. Throughout his life, he continued to attend the Friday night football games in support of the St. Augustine High School Purple Knights.

His connection to the community was reflected in the way he approached his work. He became a police officer during the early days of community-oriented policing, an initiative where officers and residents worked together in order to combat crime and ensure safety.

During his 22 years at the New Orleans Police Department, he not only protected the streets of New Orleans, but worked with children in the Cops for Kids summer camps. There, he again emphasized and maintained a healthy relationship among the police, youth, and their families.

Madam Speaker, New Orleans will remember Officer Holloway as a dedicated law enforcement officer and, more importantly, as a friend. Naming this post office after Officer Daryle Holloway will memorialize both his unforgettable sense of humor and his lifelong dedication to the city of New Orleans. I urge Members to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, it is clearly a busy day in New Orleans. Much like the previous bill, rather than speaking and simply repeating the eloquent words that were previously spoken, I would rather yield such time as he may consume again to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. RICHMOND), my colleague, who proudly represents his State.

Mr. RICHMOND. Madam Speaker, again, I will say that naming this post office in honor of a true public servant and a young man who grew up in the area, a young man who ultimately sacrificed his life to make sure that other people would be safe, who dedicated his life to protecting and serving the residents of New Orleans, will inspire other young kids in that same area, other young kids who grow up in that area, like I did, to look at police work as a life of service and with the possibility of going into law enforcement. That post office bearing the name for Officer Daryle Holloway, I think, will do just that.

But Daryle was special. He was a big guy. He was the life of the party, but he knew at a young age that he wanted to be a police officer. Unfortunately, he was killed at the young age of 46 in the line of duty on June 20, 2015, while transporting a suspect to the police station. He was the father of three children.

As mentioned earlier, he had very deep roots in the community. He attended Corpus Christi and was a graduate of St. Augustine High School. He joined the police force not too long after finishing high school and remained a passionate supporter of his alma mater.

It was mentioned that he would be at the football games cheering on the Purple Knights, but what wasn't mentioned was that he was always the life of the party.

Daryle did become a police officer in the early days of community policing in an effort to focus on officers' engagement with residents in the communities they serve. He was a natural fit for the police department because he was friends with just about everyone in the city.

He was drawn to police work because he genuinely wanted to help people and make New Orleans a safer place for all of us to live. Daryle served with the New Orleans Police Department for 22 years. In addition to protecting our streets, he spent 10 years working with children in the Cops for Kids summer camps, which help develop relationships between police, youth, and their families. Daryle also brought community policing into the Florida and Desire housing developments.

After his passing, many of those former residents and summer campers organized a vigil to honor the man they considered not only a police officer but a friend.

I would like to personally add that in my eighth grade year at St. Aug, Daryle Holloway, big Daryle Holloway, made sure that little CEDRIC RICHMOND was protected from everyone in the school. He started his life of serving and protecting probably with me.

What he did to mentor kids in the neighborhood and live his life so that he could be an example, especially for young men of color growing up in rough neighborhoods, to show how you carry yourself, responsibility, and commitment, and how to be a family man, how to be a great father, and how to be

a great son was truly a testament to Daryle Holloway.

I know his mother, Olander Belfield Holloway, is probably watching us today. When I talked to her, she said: CEDRIC, I just feel so special that people remember my son and remember the fact that he died in the line of duty doing what he wanted to do the most, and that was protect the citizens of New Orleans.

Again, I would like to thank Chairman CHAFFETZ and Ranking Member CUMMINGS for bringing this bill to the floor and to once again offer the Holloway family my sincerest condolences. I hope that this postal facility will serve as a reminder of Officer Holloway's courage and compassion for generations to come.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, clearly, as we just heard, Officer Holloway is exactly the kind of person that we should recognize as a country. It is also a reminder—and I say this representing hundreds, if not thousands, of Philadelphia police officers in my district. It is a reminder of just how dangerous the job of being a police officer is in our society.

It is quite clear that Officer Holloway paid the ultimate sacrifice to Louisiana and also to our country. He is worthy of this honor. I urge all those in this House to adopt this bill.

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

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I urge adoption of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3082.

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.

FRANCIS MANUEL ORTEGA POST OFFICE

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (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''.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3274

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

SECTION 1. FRANCIS MANUEL ORTEGA POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4567 Rockbridge Road in Pine Lake, Georgia, shall be known and designated as the ''Francis Manuel Ortega Post Office''.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''Francis Manuel Ortega Post Office''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days 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 Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3274, introduced by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON). The bill designates the post office located at 4567 Rockbridge Road in Pine Lake, Georgia, as the Francis Manuel Ortega Post Office.

Madam Speaker, Officer Ortega was a dedicated public servant who was tragically killed in the line of duty. He was born in New York City on February 27, 1980. He later attended Lawrence High School in Lawrence, Massachusetts. At the time of his death, he was pursuing an associate of science degree in criminal justice from Griffin Technical College in Griffin, Georgia.

Officer Ortega had two children, Frankey and Kaylie. He worked as a part-time officer at Pine Lake Police Department and as a full-time officer at Georgia Regional Hospital. His dedication to peace and safety compelled Officer Ortega to regularly work 80-hour weeks.

Tragically, on August 11, 2005, a suspect fatally shot Officer Ortega in front of the Pine Lake Post Office during a routine traffic stop. It is only fitting that this post office be named in honor of this dedicated public servant.

Madam Speaker, Officer Ortega will be remembered for his commitment to justice and courage in the face of danger. He desired to stand up for what was right and not what was easy, having made the ultimate sacrifice in giving his life for the protection of his community.

Naming this post office after Officer Francis Ortega will memorialize his passion for justice and tremendous dedication to the community of Pine Lake, Georgia. I urge Members to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) in order to speak and elaborate a little more on Officer Ortega's life and his sacrifice and service.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I thank the ranking member, and I also thank the chair for bringing this bill forward. I also want to thank the members of the DeKalb County, Georgia, chapter of the Fraternal Order of Police, as well as the Georgia chapter of the Fraternal Order of Police, for helping us with this legislation.

Madam Speaker, today I rise in support of H.R. 3274, a bill to rename the Pine Lake, Georgia, Post Office in honor of a fallen police officer, Officer Francis Manuel Ortega.

On August 11, 2005, Officer Ortega was tragically killed in front of the Pine Lake Post Office while conducting a routine traffic stop. Officer Ortega was shot and killed after stopping a vehicle for a minor traffic violation.

As Officer Ortega communicated with dispatch, the perpetrator exited his vehicle and approached the police cruiser. The perpetrator ignored Officer Ortega's order to get back into his vehicle, and a struggle ensued. The perpetrator pulled a gun, shot, and killed Officer Ortega. The killer then ran into the post office and committed suicide.

Officer Ortega was a part-time officer of the Pine Lake Police Department, and he was a full-time officer at the Georgia Regional Hospital. Officer Ortega, like many men and women who choose law enforcement as a career, was not driven by the mere pursuit of wealth. Officer Ortega was motivated by the desire to serve others and to keep our communities safe.

Unfortunately, because society doesn't pay police officers the full value of their service, Officer Ortega was forced to work a number of part-time jobs. His dedication to peace and safety within the community compelled him to work, regularly, 80-hour workweeks. As the chair just mentioned, he was a student pursuing a degree in criminal justice.

Officer Ortega is survived by his parents, Francisco and Luz; his sister, Joann; and his children, Frankey and Kaylie.

Officer Ortega made the ultimate sacrifice and gave his life to protect his community. I can think of no better way to preserve his memory and to honor his legacy than to dedicate this facility as the Francis Manuel Ortega Post Office Building.

□ 1345

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, like we heard previously about Officer Holloway, Officer Francis Manuel Ortega is clearly worthy of this honor.

My heartfelt sympathies go to his family. I hope today it might bring them some small measure of comfort.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I urge adoption of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3274.

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.

MELVOID J. BENSON POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (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''.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3601

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

SECTION 1. MELVOID J. BENSON POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 7715 Post Road, North Kingstown, Rhode Island, shall be known and designated as the ''Melvoid J. Benson Post Office Building''.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''Melvoid J. Benson Post Office Building''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam 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 Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

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

I rise today in support of H.R. 3601, introduced by my colleague from Rhode Island, Congressman JAMES LANGEVIN. The bill designates the post office located at 7715 Post Road, North Kingstown, Rhode Island, as the Melvoid J. Benson Post Office Building.

Madam Speaker, Ms. Benson was born on February 13, 1930, in Jackson, Tennessee, and moved to North Kingstown, Rhode Island, in the 1960s. Once there, Ms. Benson dedicated her life to public service and to the people of the State of Rhode Island.

In 1965, she began what would become a 25-year teaching career in the North Kingstown School Department. Ms. Benson then served in the Rhode Island State House of Representatives for 14 years and spent the subsequent 8 years serving on the North Kingstown School Committee.

She served on the School Committee until 2014, when, at the age of 84, Ms. Benson made the decision not to seek reelection. Madam Speaker, all told, Ms. Benson spent nearly 50 years in public service.

In February 2015, Ms. Benson was honored with a lifetime achievement award from the North Kingstown Democratic Town Committee.

In continued appreciation to Ms. Benson, Representative LANGEVIN introduced H.R. 3601, which names a post office in her honor.

The Melvoid J. Benson Post Office Building would be an important fixture showing the gratitude of many for Ms. Benson's years of dedication to her community and her service to the State of Rhode Island.

I urge Members to support the bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN), my friend.

Mr. LANGEVIN. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I am truly honored and pleased to rise today in support of H.R. 3601, a bill 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.

As my colleague stated, for more than 50 years Mel Benson has been a consummate public servant, dedicating her time to educating our youth, fighting for social justice, building up our communities, and giving back to her friends and neighbors.

Born Melvoid Estes on February 13, 1930, in Jackson, Tennessee, Mel grew up in the segregated South, but that did not stop her from pursuing an education and becoming active in politics.

Her father worked for the railroad, and her mother was a teacher. According to Mel, they both instilled in her the importance of education. ''Every generation,'' they said, ''must do better than the last.''

Mel took their advice to heart and made education a priority. She graduated from high school in 1947 and went on to receive her bachelor's degree from Lane College in social science with a minor in education. Two years later she married her high school sweetheart, Arnathia ''Ben'' Benson, who joined the Navy after college.

Mel taught her first class at an all-Black school in Madison County. However, as a Navy wife, she wouldn't stay in Tennessee for long. She and her husband were eventually stationed at Quonset Naval Base in North Kingstown, Rhode Island, which would become Mel's new home and a community she would forever change for the better.

After moving to Rhode Island in the 1960s, Mel taught in the North Kingstown school system for 25 years. She educated students at Hamilton Elementary, the former Quonset Elementary; Davisville Middle School; and Wickford Middle School.

Every student she taught was touched by her wisdom and guidance. According to Matthew Leonard, chairman of the North Kingstown Democratic Town Committee, who had Mel as a teacher in the eighth grade, she possessed a wonderful gift.

Her whole focus was education and children,'' Matthew recounted. ''She believed the future is in children, and our greatest goal is to continue on to the next generation.''

She carried that belief all the way to the State house of representatives, where she became the first Black woman elected to the Rhode Island Legislature from the Second Congressional District and the second Black woman elected to the legislature from the entire State.

According to Mel, she never thought of herself as a Black woman in the statehouse. She was there to do the work of the people. That is exactly what she did, proudly representing the town of North Kingstown for 14 years.

I was fortunate enough to serve with Mel in the statehouse and she made a wonderful teammate and friend. She always spoke her mind and knew how to get things done.

As State Senator James Sheehan put it, ''Mel could be tough as bricks. When she was after something, she'd let you know it.''

It was that passion that led to some of her proudest accomplishments as a member of the Rhode Island General Assembly, including her early involvement with the planning and development of Quonset Business Park and particularly the rehabilitation of the old Kiefer Park into modern housing.

After a distinguished career in the statehouse, Mel was elected to the North Kingstown School Committee, where she served for 8 years, until 2014. At the age of 84, Mel decided not to seek reelection. But 2 years later, she still hasn't lost her spark.

Well known for her perseverance, wit, and unmistakable candor, Mel has touched the lives of countless Rhode Islanders—my own included—and people still love to regale in stories of the great Mama Mel.

State Representative Robert Craven, who has known Mel since 1974, described her as someone who just relished the opportunity to be involved in people's lives and make a difference in every capacity, as a wife, a mother, a schoolteacher, a State representative, and a School Committee member.

Beth Cullen, who considers Mel like a mother, characterized Mel's impact upon our community perfectly:

''She really taught North Kingstown a lesson that it doesn't matter what you look like. It's what you do; and she lived it every day.''

Madam Speaker, I couldn't agree more. Mel has truly dedicated her life

to public service. Whether it was at the statehouse, in the School Committee chambers, or in the classroom, she has always put the best interests of Rhode Island and its young people first.

I would like to thank Chairman CHAFFETZ and Ranking Member CUMMINGS of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee for their work in bringing this legislation to the floor.

I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring Mel Benson for a lifetime of distinguished service and achievement by supporting H.R. 3601, designating the North Kingstown Post Office as the Melvoid J. Benson Post Office Building.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I urge passage of this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I also urge adoption of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3601.

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.

SECOND LT. ELLEN AINSWORTH MEMORIAL POST OFFICE

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

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4046

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

SECTION 1. SECOND LT. ELLEN AINSWORTH MEMORIAL POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 220 East Oak Street, Glenwood City, Wisconsin, shall be known and designated as the ''Second Lt. Ellen Ainsworth Memorial Post Office''.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''Second Lt. Ellen Ainsworth Memorial Post Office''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY), my friend and colleague.

Mr. DUFFY. I thank the gentleman from Oklahoma for yielding.

Madam Speaker, today I rise to recognize Second Lieutenant Ellen Ainsworth of the Seventh District of Wisconsin for her bravery, sacrifice, and service to her country during World War II.

Second Lieutenant Ainsworth grew up in the Wisconsin farming community of Glenwood City, where she is still recognized for her service and her sacrifice.

Ellen was well known around town as a caring young woman who loved to sing. She had a beautiful voice. Folks in town saw her as a leader and a go-getter. When duty called, she selflessly answered that call of duty.

In 1942, she entered the United States Army Nurse Corps after graduating from nursing school at the Minneapolis Eitel Hospital. She was first deployed to Tunisia and then, shortly after, to Italy, where she was assigned to the 56th Evacuation Hospital. Although the risk was high, it did not stop Lieutenant Ainsworth from honorably serving her country.

On February 10, 1944, Lieutenant Ainsworth's hospital tent came under heavy artillery attack in an area many described as hell's half acre. Under heavy enemy fire, Lieutenant Ainsworth disregarded her own well-being, evacuating 42 patients to safety, only stopping when she was hit by shrapnel from an exploding ordnance.

Lieutenant Ainsworth succumbed to her wounds 6 days later. At just 24 years old, she was the only Wisconsin servicewoman to make the ultimate sacrifice during World War II. Ainsworth was buried in the Sicily-Rome American Cemetery and Memorial in Italy.

Lieutenant Ainsworth was posthumously awarded a Silver Star, a Purple Heart, and a Red Cross Bronze Medal. A portrait of her currently hangs in the Pentagon as a testament to her bravery in the face of chaos and destruction.

The courageous actions of Lieutenant Ainsworth are witnessed today by the children of the soldiers who she saved, who would not be here if not for her heroism. She personified the honor and dignity through sacrifice that so many of her fellow Wisconsinites displayed during World War II.

Her death was a tragedy for the small town of Glenwood City. Over 72 years later, Lieutenant Ainsworth still has a large presence in that community. A health clinic, a veterans home as well as the American Legion post in her hometown have all been named in her honor.

Madam Speaker, it is my honor to sponsor H.R. 4046, a bill that names the Glenwood City Post Office after Lieutenant Ellen Ainsworth. It will stand as a reminder of the bravery of one American from Wisconsin's Seventh Congressional District.

Please join me to recognize this most deserving hero and Wisconsinite as we name the post office at 220 East Oak Street, Glenwood City, Wisconsin, the Second Lt. Ellen Ainsworth Memorial Post Office.

□ 1400

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days 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 Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I also support this important piece of legislation introduced by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY), my colleague and friend. Rare is the individual, such as Second Lieutenant Ellen Ainsworth, who served in the Army Nurse Corps.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, but I will be brief.

One of the nice things about doing this is getting to hear the stories of ordinary Americans who make tremendous sacrifices. And clearly, Second Lieutenant Ainsworth was an extraordinary American who made such a sacrifice.

I am proud to support this resolution, and I urge its adoption.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I urge the adoption of this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4046.

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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 136, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 3735, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. The remaining electronic vote will be conducted as a 5-minute vote.

CAMP PENDLETON MEDAL OF HONOR POST OFFICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (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'', 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 Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 381, nays 0, not voting 52, as follows:

[Roll No. 103]

YEAS—381

Abraham
Adams
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Barletta
Barr
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Benishek
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Conyers
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)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins
Himes
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Israel
Issa
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
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
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
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
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)
Price, Tom
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
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—52

Aderholt
Babin
Barton
Brady (TX)
Byrne
Castro (TX)
Comstock
Connolly
Culberson
Doggett
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fleming
Flores
Gohmert
Granger
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Harper
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hill
Hinojosa
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Kline
Lewis
Maloney, Carolyn
Marchant
Moore
Mulvaney
Napolitano
Pascrell
Perlmutter
Ratcliffe
Roby
Rogers (AL)
Rohrabacher
Ryan (OH)
Sanchez, Loretta
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Veasey
Vela
Westmoreland
Whitfield

□ 1422

Mr. NUGENT changed his 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:

Mr. HILL. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 103, 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," had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Ms. GRANGER. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 103, had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

MOMENT OF SILENCE TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR THE ''HESSTON STRONG'' OF HESSTON, KANSAS

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

Mr. POMPEO. Madam Speaker, last week, a gunman shot his way across south central Kansas, and then inside of Excel Industries in Hesston, Kansas, killed three people and injured over a dozen.

It is impossible to make sense of such violence and suffering. Renee Benjamin, known by her friends for her ''infectious personality''; Joshua Higbee, a loving father who family and friends said ''would give the shirt off his back for you''; and Brian Sadowsky, a passionate Kansas City Royals fan who coworkers said stayed behind to help the wounded escape were simply doing their jobs taking care of themselves and families. The loss of these three innocent people is something that no one in Hesston or our larger community will ever forget. The lives of those who loved them are changed forever.

I was not surprised to see so many people working side by side the day after the attack trying to mend what happened less than 24 hours before. Everywhere I went, there were helping hands. This is so typical of the people of Hesston and Harvey County that I know so well. Their actions amidst this tragedy are a true reflection of what the Scriptures tells us: ''Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.''

There was remarkable power in the work of law enforcement officials and city leaders, including Harvey County Sheriff T. Walton and Hesston Mayor David Kauffman. Excel Industries, where the shootings took place, is blessed by the steady leadership of President Paul Mullet, who, along with his team, will lead the Excel Industries family through this tragedy.

We remember, too, all the first responders, the Hesston Police Department, Harvey County Sheriff's Office, the FBI, and the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, all of whom acted heroically to save lives and secure the scene, and the leaders at Newton Medical Center, Wesley Medical Center, and Via Christi in Wichita, who cared for the injured. We can never thank them enough.

The community has rallied around the words ''Hesston Strong.'' They have been, they are, and I know they will continue to be strong.

May God bless the entire Hesston community.

Madam Speaker, I ask that the House pause for a moment of silence in honor of those impacted by the tragic events in Hesston, Kansas.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would ask all in the Chamber to rise in a moment of silence.

MAYA ANGELOU MEMORIAL POST OFFICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (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'' 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 Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 371, nays 9, answered ''present'' 1, not voting 52, as follows:

[Roll No. 104]

YEAS—371

Abraham
Adams
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Barletta
Barr
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Benishek
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Bustos
Butterfield
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Conyers
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 (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers (NC)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Griffith
Guinta
Guthrie
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins
Himes
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Israel
Issa
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
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
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
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Pallone
Palmer
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
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
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—9

Brooks (AL)
Buck
Burgess
Duncan (SC)
Grothman
Harris
Massie
Mooney (WV)
Palazzo

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—1

Young (AK)

NOT VOTING—52

Aderholt
Babin
Barton
Brady (TX)
Byrne
Cárdenas
Castro (TX)
Comstock
Connolly
Culberson
Doggett
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Flores
Gohmert
Granger
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Harper
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hill
Hinojosa
Jackson Lee
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Kline
Lewis
Maloney, Carolyn
Marchant
McNerney
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Napolitano
Pascrell
Perlmutter
Perry
Ratcliffe
Roby
Rogers (AL)
Rohrabacher
Ryan (OH)
Sanchez, Loretta
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Veasey
Vela
Westmoreland

□ 1432

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:

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 104, 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,'' had I been present, I would have voted ''yes.''

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 104, had I been present, I would have voted ''yea.''

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, on March 1, 2016, I was detained in my district and missed the two rollcall votes of the day. Had I been present, I would have voted:

''Aye''—rollcall No. 103—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.''

''Aye''—rollcall No. 104—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.''

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, my vote was not recorded today. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows: rollcall No. 103: ''aye''; and rollcall No. 104: ''aye.''

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on Tuesday, March 1, 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. 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,'' I would have voted ''yea.''

On 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,'' I would have voted ''yea.''

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall Nos. 102, 103, and 104, I missed votes due to district business. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yes.''

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ZELDIN). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the additional 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.

Any record votes on the postponed questions will be taken later.

SPECIALIST JOSEPH W. RILEY POST OFFICE BUILDING

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

(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''.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1596

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

SECTION 1. SPECIALIST JOSEPH W. RILEY POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2082 Stringtown Road in Grove City, Ohio, shall be known and designated as the ''Specialist Joseph W. Riley Post Office Building''.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''Specialist Joseph W. Riley Post Office Building''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days 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 Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

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

I rise today in support of S. 1596, introduced by Senator ROB PORTMAN of Ohio. The bill designates a post office that is located at 2082 Stringtown Road in Grove City, Ohio, as the Specialist Joseph W. Riley Post Office Building.

Mr. Speaker, on November 24, 2014, United States Army Specialist Joey Riley gave his life serving his country as part of Operation Enduring Freedom in Kabul Province, Afghanistan.

Specialist Riley was just 27 years of age. A native of Grove City, Ohio, he graduated from Grove City High School in 2005.

Specialist Riley made the honorable and brave decision to enlist in the United States Army in June of 2012.

In March 2013, Specialist Riley was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

He became a decorated soldier with awards and decorations, including the Bronze Star Medal, the Purple Heart, the Army Commendation Medal, the Army Achievement Medal, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal with a Campaign Star, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Service Ribbon, the NATO Medal, the Combat Infantryman Badge, and the Parachutist Badge.

Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that we will name the post office in his hometown to memorialize the courage and sacrifice of the United States Army and this fine paratrooper, Specialist Joey Riley.

I urge Members to support this bill to name a post office in honor of this soldier.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I am pleased to join my colleagues in consideration of S. 1596.

Joseph Riley, a native of Grove City, Ohio, excelled in football at Grove City High School. Following his graduation in 2005, he went on to play football at Capital University.

In 2012, as was mentioned, Joseph joined the Army and was assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division, stationed at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

Specialist Riley showed a special concern for the people of Afghanistan, believing that the fight was worthwhile in order to improve the lives of others.

Specialist Riley's life was tragically cut short when a suicide bomber attacked his vehicle in Kabul, Afghanistan, killing him and seven others.

Remembered by friends and colleagues as a superb paratrooper and the kind of friend everyone hopes for in their lives, Specialist Riley's honors, as mentioned, included the Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart, Combat Infantryman Badge, and Basic Parachutist Badge.

Mr. Speaker, we should pass this bill to honor the courage and selflessness exhibited by Specialist Joseph Riley and to memorialize the sacrifices he made for our country.

I urge the passage of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I urge the adoption of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 1596.

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.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL JAMES ''MAGGIE'' MEGELLAS POST OFFICE

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

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1826

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

SECTION 1. LIEUTENANT COLONEL JAMES "MAGGIE" MEGELLAS POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 99 West 2nd Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, shall be known and designated as the ''Lieutenant Colonel James 'Maggie' Megellas Post Office''.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''Lieutenant Colonel James 'Maggie' Megellas Post Office''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days 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 Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

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

I rise today in support of S. 1826, introduced by Senator RON JOHNSON of Wisconsin.

The bill designates the post office at 99 West Second Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, as the Lieutenant Colonel James ''Maggie'' Megellas Post Office.

Our colleague and fellow member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Representative GLENN GROTHMAN, introduced a House companion bill, but we are pleased today to be taking up the Senate version, as it will get to the President's desk faster.

Retired United States Army Lieutenant Colonel Megellas is a highly decorated veteran of World War II and an individual whose story is one of remarkable bravery.

He graduated from college in 1942, accepting a commission as a second lieutenant in the United States Army, where he served—courageously, I might add—as an elite paratrooper in the 82nd Airborne Division.

One of the most remarkable stories about Lieutenant Colonel Megellas comes during service in the Battle of the Bulge, where he single-handedly destroyed a German Panther tank and saved the lives of many of his men.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to support this bill and name a post office after this true American hero.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Megellas was born and raised in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, and was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army following his graduation from Ripon College in 1942.

As was mentioned, serving as a paratrooper in the 82nd Airborne Division during World War II, then-1st Lieutenant Megellas courageously led his platoon in the Battle of the Bulge.

Mr. Speaker, we should pass this bill to commemorate the strong leadership

Lieutenant Colonel James Megellas exhibited in his courageous defense of our country during World War II.

I urge the passage of S. 1826.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1445

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN), my friend and colleague.

Mr. GROTHMAN. First, I thank my colleague from Oklahoma and my colleague from Missouri for saying such nice things about Lieutenant Colonel Megellas. I also thank Senator JOHNSON, who did a good job of getting this through the U.S. Senate.

Mr. Speaker, as has been said, Lieutenant Colonel Megellas was born in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, and went to school in Ripon, Wisconsin, before he joined the military. He was truly a hero of the Greatest Generation. His most notable battle experiences included action in the Italian mountains near the Anzio beachhead, his combat jump into Holland as part of the Operation Market Garden, his crossing of the Waal River under heavy German fire in broad daylight, and the Battle of the Bulge in January of 1945, when he singlehandedly destroyed a German Mark V Panther Tank and led his platoon on one of the most distinctive actions of the war without there being a single American casualty.

We have also offered a private bill that tries to get Mr. Megellas the Medal of Honor for his actions during the Battle of the Bulge.

Today, Mr. Megellas lives in Colleyville, Texas, with his wife, Carole. I have met him and it was just tremendous. Currently he is 98 years old. In a couple of weeks he will be 99. He is as sharp as a tack and is agile. I am very honored to be able to introduce this bill, and I just can't look forward enough to the day in Fond du Lac when I will see Lieutenant Colonel Megellas' name up there at the post office on 2nd Street.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, that was quite a description of Mr. Megellas at the young age of—about to be—99. He should be an inspiration to us all. I urge the passage of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I urge the adoption of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call for the immediate passage of S. 1826, a bill to rename the post office located at 99 West 2nd Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, as the Lieutenant Colonel James "Maggie" Megellas Post Office.

It is my great honor to recognize Lieutenant Colonel James Megellas (Ret), and to call Maggie a constituent of the 24th District of Texas.

In 1942, Maggie accepted an ROTC commission as a second lieutenant in the infantry and shortly thereafter faced combat in Italy. Notably, in January 1945, Maggie and his platoon advanced toward Herresbach, Belgium, and came upon 200 German troops who were advancing out of town. In an act of selflessness and bravery, Lt. Col. Megellas sprinted toward a German tank as it took aim at his fellow soldiers. He disabled the tank with a grenade, then dropped another into the tank eliminating the threat his men faced from the combat vehicle.

Lt. Col Megellas has been honored with many awards, including the Silver Star and the Distinguished Service Cross. Lt. Col Megellas is beyond deserved of having this post office location named in his honor. I continue to commend Maggie on serving his country with honor and bravery, as a shining example of courage and as a member of the greatest generation America has known.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 24th Congressional District of Texas, I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in recognizing the sacrifice and bravery of Lt. Col Megellas and urge for the swift passage of S. 1826.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 1826.

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. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

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

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women, Connecticut's leading force for women's equality.

Formed under State statute in 1973 to study and improve the economic security, health, and safety of Connecticut women, the Commission undertakes vital work to eliminate gender discrimination in its many forms. They have helped to shape the debate around issues that impact the lives of Connecticut women and their families, and it has created public policy that makes a difference. Notably, it had a leadership role in creating the first family and medical leave protections in the country and, in Connecticut, in becoming the first State in the Nation to pass paid sick days.

I have focused much of my time in Congress on these issues and I have often turned to the Commission for guidance and for support. It is with great pride and with my deepest thanks that I rise today to celebrate their work.

OPERATION RESPECT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, today is a different subject than I usually discuss in the course of these Special Order hours. Normally we come down here and we talk about how we are going to create jobs, how we are going to make better opportunities for people through education. We talk about making it in America, rebuilding our infrastructure, manufacturing, and the like. Yet, today, there is something else on my mind, and it happens to be an issue that I first came across in elementary school.

On the school grounds at Mokelumne Hill Elementary School—a three-room school that was built in the late 1800s—there were not many kids, but there was always one kid who seemed to be picked on. I am not exactly sure why that young boy was the one to be picked on, but he was bullied.

As the years go by, I suspect we forget about those things, but we know that the children are always listening. They are listening to each other on the school grounds and they are likely to join in this bullying and in picking on some kid on the grounds. That happened at Mokelumne Hill Elementary School many, many years ago.

As our own kids were growing up, my wife would always say, "Remember the children are listening. They are listening to what you have to say and they are going to copy what you say."

In the year 2000, I was with my wife at a concert here in the Washington area, and Peter, Paul and Mary were performing that night. Towards the end of the performance, Peter Yarrow said, "I have a new song, and I would like you to pay careful attention to this song. This song is really important to me."

I suppose his other songs dealing with wars and peace were equally important, but he highlighted this particular song. The song was "Don't Laugh At Me." Don't call me names. Don't make fun of me because I am short or tall or wear glasses.

After the performance was over, we were invited to go out to dinner with Peter that night.

He asked, "What did you think of the song?"

I said, "It reminded me of my school," because people were laughing at that kid.

He said, "I want you to do something." He said, "I want you to take this song and make it into a national movement against bullying so as to try to teach our young children to stop bullying."

I told him I didn't have time for that, as we were returning to California after the 2000 election. He said that doesn't make any sense because California has the same problem.

I learned right away you don't say no to Peter Yarrow, so I began to work with him on a program that became

known as Operation Respect. I worked with him for about 3 to 4 years, and then I moved on and Operation Respect moved on.

It is now found in 22,000 schools across the United States. It is a simple program. You can find it online. It is Operation Respect. You can download the song. You can download the text. It is there. There are 22,000 schools across the United States that are trying to help our young children understand what bullying means.

Bullying means that 160,000 American children do not go to school each day because they are afraid. They are afraid to endure another day of bullying—verbal, sometimes physical—from their peers. Twenty-two percent of teenagers in a National Study of Adolescents reported that they had been bullied or victimized. The reasons for bullying are many. Usually it is about looks, as 55 percent say it is about looks; it is about body shape—too big, too tall, too fat, too slender—at 37 percent; and race at 16 percent.

Students who experience bullying are at an increased risk of experiencing poor adjustment at school, sleep difficulties, anxiety, depression. Also, students who engage in the bullying behavior are at risk of having academic problems, substance abuse, and violent behavior later in their adolescence and adulthood.

In surveys, approximately 30 percent of young people admit to bullying others, and 70 percent of young people say that they have seen bullying in their schools. I did when I was growing up. Seventy percent of schools' staffs say that they see it. Eighty-one percent of students who identify as LGBT were bullied last year based on their sexual orientation.

What does it mean?

It means that certain lives are seriously disrupted and that there is unhappiness and depression in those lives, but it also means violence.

Do you remember Columbine?

The perpetrators were frequently harassed by athletes and other students before coming to school, and then they came to school with firearms and explosives, killing 13 and injuring 21.

Do you remember Virginia Tech?

Seung-Hui Cho was picked on and bullied by his peers before he killed 32 people in 2007.

In Santa Barbara, California, the shooter wrote a 130-page manifesto about how he had been severely bullied in high school, and he killed six and injured 14.

There are those who are violent to others and who are equally violent to themselves. 12-year-old Rebecca Sedwick suffered from cyberbullying. She received messages over social media, and she killed herself. In Montana, an 18-year-old with learning disabilities committed suicide. Another shot himself in the chest after enduring bullying and hazing from the high school football team. He was pushed into lockers, punched in the head. He quit the football team after the first week, telling his dad, ''I am being picked on at school,'' in the suicide note he left that night. He shot himself. He blamed bullying.

The children are listening. They listen to each other. They learn bullying and they carry it on. Operation Respect attempts to deal with this, as does Peter Yarrow's song from Peter, Paul and Mary, ''Don't Laugh At Me.'' Don't laugh at me because I am tall, short, Black, White, young, old, or because I wear glasses. Don't laugh at me. The children are listening.

Across America, what are the children listening to today? What are they listening to today by our leaders, by the people who purport to lead the strongest nation in the world?

□ 1500

What are they hearing?

My daughter is a kindergarten teacher. Her kids come to class and are repeating what they hear on television. They are calling each other a desperate person. They are saying to each other: ''He's a desperate person,'' ''He's a sad person,'' ''He's a pathetic person.''

Kids come to class and are repeating what they heard on television: ''He doesn't even use his last name in his ads,'' ''He's a sad person,'' ''He's absolutely crazy,'' ''I mean, this guy is a nervous wreck.''

I have never seen anything like it. They repeat what they have heard on television. So what are our kids learning? What are they learning from people who want to be our national leader?

Well, they are probably learning that you can say things like: ''He's the least talented. . . .'', ''He's done poorly,'' ''He goes away like a little sheep.''

Maybe our kids are talking to each other and they are repeating what they have heard on television: ''You could see the blood coming out of her eyes,'' ''She's a bimbo,'' ''Look at that face,'' ''Would anyone vote for that?'', ''Can you imagine that face on the next president?'', ''I mean, she's a woman and I'm not supposed to say bad things, but really, folks, come on. Are we serious?''

The kids are listening, folks. The kids are listening to the national debate. For years, we have known bullying is a problem. We know it. We see it in the classrooms.

We see the result of violence. We see the fact of disrespect. We know it leads to shootings. We know it leads to school shootings. We know it leads to suicides.

Yet, on our national television every night people that want to lead this Nation are bullying each other. They are saying disrespectful things that are personal that don't have a thing to do with policy, just as though it was a kindergarten school ground: ''Now, I've watched a part of his little act and he's a desperate guy,'' ''He's not presidential material, I can tell you,'' ''He doesn't have the demeanor,'' ''He's a nervous Nellie,'' ''Putting on makeup with a trowel,'' ''He was so scared like a little puppy.''

That is bullying. That is bullying. And if you were in kindergarten, you would be at the principal's office.

Our kids are listening. So what is the message? That it is okay to bully? It is okay to demean people? What is the message? 16,000 kids stay home from school each day because of bullying. And on national television? They purport to lead this Nation.

So what are we to do? I guess we are going to have to take programs like Operation Respect, Operation Trevor, and other programs that try to help our children understand the result of bullying, what actually happens, not just to the children that are being bullied, but also to those who engage in bullying.

So what are we teaching? What are we teaching our children? What Pandora's box are we opening across this Nation when demeaning each other is the national discourse in how we select the next President of the United States? That it is okay to call your rival names?

It is not about their policies, not about what we are going to do with our national security, but, rather, what makeup you might be wearing or the nature of one's face. Calling each other unhinged, unstable, a liar, is this what we have come to?

That night Peter Yarrow sang that song for the first time in concert: ''Don't laugh at me. Don't call me names. Don't make fun of me.''

There are consequences. There are consequences. You tear a person down far enough and maybe you will win an election, but every child across this Nation is listening. They are listening.

What are they going to do when they go to school the next day? Well, it is okay. We could call each other names. I can make fun at you. I could laugh at you. After all, it is on television: ''Had one of those sweet little mustaches,'' ''Maybe to make sure his pants weren't wet,'' ''Maybe he should sue whoever did that to his face.''

Operation Respect. 22,000 schools across this Nation are trying to impart to our children that we all have value, that whether you are tall or short or fat, whether you are Black or White or whatever color, whatever you want to be in life, it is okay.

It is okay. You are important. You have value. We are not going to demean each other. We are not going to bully each other. You are important. Whatever you are, whatever you may be, you are important. That is Operation Respect.

Trying to teach the young children in 22,000 schools to respect each other, to respect the differences, to understand and to learn that we all share space on this planet and that each one of us, whatever we may be, whatever we may think about the solution to the world's problems, we have value.

So tonight I will go from this Chamber. I will go back to my home and will

turn the TV on. I will guarantee you that I will find a Presidential candidate bullying another candidate just as though it was a school ground.

I know that the children are watching. I know that all that Operation Respect is trying to do and all of the other programs around this Nation that are trying to teach our children to respect each other, to not engage in bullying—I know that their work will be erased from the blackboard by tonight's television.

After all, it is Super Tuesday. And leading up to Super Tuesday, you and I know what we have heard.

Is our Nation better for it? I don't think so. Because I know that the children are watching, and I know somehow an awful message is going out across this Nation that it is okay to demean another person, it is okay to pick on somebody because of their makeup, because of the nature of their face, because they happen to be a woman.

I fear the result of all of this. I don't fear the policies. The policies come and go. We debate here on the floor more military, less military; more education, less education; the environment is good, climate change is real, climate change is not. That is legitimate. That is the way America ought to be.

But to call a woman a bimbo or to say you peed your pants, what in the world is this all about? It is about our children. It is about our future and about telling us what it is okay to do.

Well, it is not okay because the children are listening. Thank God we have organizations—Operation Respect and others—that are somehow trying to push back. They are not going to stop every violent act. At least some kid isn't going to pick up a gun and walk into the school and start blasting away because he has been bullied.

I yield back the balance of my time.

NATIONAL DEBT AND SPENDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the subject of this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I was trained as an engineer. In my engineering training, we were taught that, before you can solve a problem, you have to identify and define the problem. If you solve the wrong problem, you accomplish very little.

I serve on the Budget Committee. On the Budget Committee, we take an in-depth look at all of government. As we examine the programs and as we examine revenues and expenditures of the Federal Government, we see many issues that are of great concern to the future of our country. We see threats to our safety and our security. We see overreach and hassles created by the very government that is here to serve.

Mr. Speaker, there is a gargantuan issue facing our country that threatens all our futures. Our gross national debt, fueled by out-of-control spending, continues to grow and is past $19 trillion, which exceeds our gross domestic product.

Today, while much of the country focuses on primary elections, several of my colleagues from the Budget Committee, including Chairman PRICE, wish to have an open and honest conversation about this issue of debt and spending that you are probably not going to hear much about anywhere else.

We not only hope to bring attention to this issue by defining the problem. We will propose real solutions to restore fiscal order so that Americans can thrive and Americans—not the government or any one person, but Americans—can make America all that she can be.

If we delve into the major fiscal issues facing our country, it becomes obvious that we have an enormous spending problem. I have a chart here.

This chart shows us where we have been, where we were in 1965. It shows where we are today with the numbers through 2015. It also predicts where we will be in the future in 2026.

The spending represented by the red on these pie charts is what is called mandatory spending. If you want to think of it this way, this spending is on cruise control. This spending is on programs that were put in place by previous Congresses. Really, if we didn't even meet anymore, this spending in the red will continue to go on.

The spending in the blue is the discretionary spending. That is the money that is spent by appropriations that are done in Congress every year.

The 12 appropriation bills that we hope to get back to regular order this year and pass each of those 12 bills out of the House and out of the Senate and put them on the President's desk relate to the spending that is highlighted in blue on these pie charts.

□ 1515

The omnibus bill from last year, that affected what is in the blue. It didn't affect what is in the red.

As you look at these charts, you can see that in 50 years we have had a little bit of a flip-flop. In 1965, we were right at two-thirds of our spending was discretionary, which was controlled by the appropriations process, and right around one-third of our spending was mandatory.

But over that 50-year period, we have seen tremendous growth in spending. We have seen that now over two-thirds of our spending is mandatory and less than one-third of our spending is discretionary. So, when Congress meets and we debate these appropriations bills, we are only debating about one-third of the spending that takes place by the Federal Government.

The real story is what is projected to happen in 2026, just 10 years from now. Over 50 years, we saw $17.8 trillion of increased spending in our gross debt. That is $356 billion a year. But in just 10 short years from today, the Congressional Budget Office projects that our gross debt will be $29.3 trillion. That will be a growth of over $11.2 trillion in a 10-year period. That is over $1 trillion per year that we will see in spending growth between now and 2026 if we stay on the path that we are currently on.

Mr. Speaker, I hope to explain today why we can't stay on this path. There are a lot of issues to look at. My colleagues on the Committee on the Budget will look at the path that we are on, and they will look at different areas of this spending. We will provide solutions to how to avoid the future financial crisis that is only getting worse. We are already in a financial crisis.

When we look at what contributes to our national debt, to our gross debt, $645 billion this year will go to debt all because of mandatory spending. Our national debt, our gross debt, will increase $1.1 trillion. It is at about $19.3 trillion this fiscal year. Only part of that can be controlled through discretionary spending. We have to start addressing the issues with mandatory spending if we truly want to address the fiscal condition of our country.

This next slide breaks it down in a little bit more detail. Remember, red is mandatory spending and blue is discretionary spending. We see that under the discretionary spending, the part that we debate so vigorously in this Chamber, the part that makes all the headlines, most of that, or about half of that, is in defense, and then the rest of it is nondefense discretionary spending.

There are five areas—just five areas—that over two-thirds of everything spent in this country go to. As we saw on the previous chart, by 2026 those five areas will make up over three-fourths, will make up 78 percent of every dollar spent by the Federal Government. Those five areas are: Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, interest on the debt, and kind of a lump category of other mandatory spending.

Right now Social Security is the largest expenditure of the Federal Government at $882 billion per year. If we look at Social Security and Medicare, these are programs that working Americans have invested in that are very important but are headed to insolvency. We have to fix them to preserve them for all of us who have contributed to them.

The people who project the numbers show that by 2030, on the course we are on, Medicare will be insolvent. By 2034, Social Security will be insolvent. Mr.

Speaker, the young people in our country should be alarmed at this. By 2034 and 2030, these programs that we have all contributed to are projected to be insolvent if we don't change course.

If we look at Medicaid, it grew by double-digit percentage points last year, a lot of that because of the Affordable Care Act. If we look at other mandatory spending, these are our social welfare programs. These were programs that were put in place with good intentions but are getting poor results.

Finally, the one that probably should concern us all the most is our interest on the debt. The Congressional Budget Office tells us that by 2025, if we don't change course, interest on the debt will be a larger expenditure than Social Security.

As our debt continues to balloon and grow, the interest that we must pay on that debt will also balloon and grow, and that is why mandatory spending will become such a large part of all the spending and really make our discretionary spending somewhat minuscule compared to the gargantuan size of mandatory spending.

I want to talk about just a couple of these areas. Some of my colleagues will talk about other areas as we move forward. If we look at some of our social welfare programs and our Medicaid program, again, these programs were put in place for people who were truly in need. They were put in place for a hand up instead of a handout, but oftentimes they have become just the opposite of that. Some of these programs, instead of helping people out of poverty, they trap people in poverty.

Now, Medicaid is a unique issue because it was put in place for aged people, for disabled people, for blind people, people that we would all agree we need to help out and lend a helping hand, but now there are a lot of able-bodied, working-age adults—these are people 18–65 years old who are not disabled—who are receiving Medicaid benefits. We are seeing a lot of increase in cost there.

We are seeing a lot of increase in cost in social welfare programs, such as SNAP. One area where we can address our budget, where we can address this looming fiscal crisis, is in our social welfare programs. Let's look at what has happened just in the SNAP program.

Since 2000, increased enrollment in SNAP programs has grown 171 percent. To say that another way, for every new job added since 2000—and that is 4.3 million of them—30.4 million people have been added to food stamps. That is seven people being added to the Food Stamp program for every new job that has been created in this country since 2000.

Again, instead of lifting people out of poverty, many of our welfare programs are actually trapping people in poverty. If we look at some of the numbers on SNAP, 57 percent of able-bodied adult households have no earned income. These are people receiving the food stamp benefits. What is even maybe more alarming is 75 percent of the people receiving SNAP benefits, 75 percent of childless adult households have no earned income. That is 17.3 million people. That is a 252 percent increase since 2000 in this one demographic of childless adult households who have zero income who are receiving SNAP benefits. Only 50 percent of parent households have earned income.

So what happens? What happens if we change the scenario? What happens when you move people from welfare to work?

Well, Kansas tried a program. They tried a program to restore work requirements for able-bodied, childless adults in 2013, and they saw fantastic results from that. They saw a 50 percent immediate decline in enrollment when they enacted work requirements for able-bodied, working-age adults on this program. They saw a 68 percent long-term decline in enrollment, and they saw a 168 percent increase in work participation rates among the enrollees. They saw a 133 percent increase in average income of able-bodied, childless adult enrollees. They saw a 55 percent increase in average income of able-bodied, childless adult enrollees.

Mr. Speaker, a number that we can't ever forget is that only 2.9 percent of full-time workers live in poverty. If we want to pull people out of poverty, we need to create an environment where people can work, where they can pull themselves out of poverty.

We have also found that in these social welfare programs like the SNAP program and like Medicaid, where you have got able-bodied, working-age adults on those programs, that the populations overlap. So if you are able to get people back into the workforce and help the SNAP program, you are also going to cut costs out of the Medicaid program. You get a double bang for your buck when you get people back in the workforce. We need to train people. We need to assist people to get back to work. That is what these programs were originally put in place for. We have got to get back to that.

It has been said many times before, but I think it is worth reminding, that the best social program is still a job. Again, only 2.9 percent of full-time workers live in poverty in this country. If we implement work requirements for programs like SNAP, for people who are receiving Medicaid benefits, it will be on those who are able-bodied, working-age adults. We are not going to put this requirement on disabled people. We are not going to put this requirement on elderly people in nursing homes who are dependent on Medicaid. We are not going to put it on children or blind people. This is for able-bodied, working-age adults. We could save billions of dollars in the Medicaid program by doing this.

We can start to address these fiscal issues with one solution of requiring work for people who are receiving benefits that were put in place to help them get back to work. It worked in Kansas. It has worked in Maine. It has worked in other States. It can work all across our country.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BRAT), a very capable and well-meaning and well-serving individual.

Mr. BRAT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) for yielding to me and for setting up this special session.

It is the most important economic issue of our times. I have taught economics for 20 years or so, and I went to seminary before that. I ran on bringing economics and ethics to Congress, and that was usually kind of a joke in the stump speech, but most people catch it. It matters, linking economics and ethics together. There is no better issue from which to view this challenge as the issue before us today dealing with the monumental increase in mandatory spending.

Congress has been monumentally irresponsible. Promises were made that can't be kept. Politicians sold out the future in favor of immediate gratification, and that future is now.

We see headlines every day in the newspapers about promising more and making promises and not keeping them, but today the evidence is overwhelming. The major promise that has been made that has not been kept is balancing our budget. We promise program after program after program that we cannot pay for, and we have not kept our word. As we will show, the folks who will pay for this are the only folks who don't have a lobbyist in this city, and that is our kids and the next generation.

The U.S. Government has $19 trillion right now in total public debt outstanding. Debt per citizen currently stands at $60,000. That is separate from the chart here. We will get to that in a minute.

The gap between Federal revenue and Federal spending over the next 75 years is about $118 trillion, according to Harvard economics professor Jeffrey Miron. That number, $118 trillion, is roughly $368,000 per person in America today—$400,000, if you round up, per person in America today.

□ 1530

The deficit is increasing as far as the eye can see. Today is Super Tuesday, and many people from across the Nation are going to the polls. They are, rightly, upset with the fiscal mismanagement in this city over the last couple of decades.

What are they upset about? Here are a few numbers. The deficit is increasing as far as the eye can see. It was $439 billion in 2015, and it is up—by a $105 billion increase—to $544 billion in 2016. That is just the deficit. That is the amount we add to the debt each and every year.

By 2022, CBO, who are the folks who forecast the economic figures for the country—the deficit, the amount we

add to the debt in 1 year, will be $1 trillion. By 2026, it will be $1.3 trillion.

In total, by 2026—not that far off—10 years away and high school graduates this year will be 28 years old—the debt will reach nearly $30 trillion.

That is what we are handing to the next generation. We are having the pizza party and we are going to give the next generation the tab.

More important than the debt—or at least a bigger economic number—autopilot spending is exploding. This is complex. Not many folks know about this issue. Many terms are linked: autopilot spending, entitlement spending, mandatory spending.

Sometimes these terms can be used interchangeably. Sometimes they can. You have got to get down in the weeds. And we will do that today.

But, in general, autopilot spending is, as the gentleman before me just referred, net interest payments, Social Security payments, Federal health programs, Medicare, Medicaid, ObamaCare, Federal civilian military pensions, and welfare programs.

In 1966, these made up 33 percent of Federal spending and 5.6 percent of GDP, the economy. In 2027, these programs will make up 78 percent of Federal spending and 18 percent of GDP, as Congressman WESTERMAN's graph showed. That is assuming that we will be able to borrow in the future.

Another way to look at autopilot spending, on the graph right here, it shows that, in 1966, autopilot spending made up 33.9 percent of Federal revenue. But, by 2027, it will eat up 100 percent of Federal revenue.

So you see the Pac-Man here is getting hungrier by the minute. The autopilot spending is 34 percent in 1966, 68 percent in 2006. Autopilots will consume all Federal revenues in 2027. Again, it is not that far out.

Again, you can go to CBO—the Congressional Budget Office—and this is one of the primary graphs you will see in the first few pages at the Congressional Budget Office.

So, in restatement, in just 11 years—2027—1 year beyond the 10-year budget window—autopilot programs will consume all Federal revenue incoming.

If you are paying attention, what does that mean? That means there will be zero revenue left for law enforcement, medical research, national defense, education, transportation, or even intelligence. The government will have to borrow 100 percent to finance itself, starting in 2027. More and more autopilot spending will be debt that is financed as well.

Is this sustainable? Our friends on the other side are always talking about environmental sustainability. That is a great thing. But what about financial sustainability? What about the sustainability of our Nation? What about the sustainability of Western civilization?

For an answer to that, you may look at the cradle of Western civilization. You can look to Greece. How is Greece doing when it comes to fiscal responsibilities? What happens to your country when your debt load becomes too heavy? Significant problems emerge and it is very hard to return to a normal, functioning economy.

This is absolutely crucial to the sustainability of American civilization. It is critical that we address this problem for our children's sake. We cannot do this without reforming Federal programs and boosting growth by creating opportunities for people to support themselves.

We need to restore civil society. After all, we are not just physically bankrupt. The government also has a moral, ethical, and spiritual deficit.

Why is that? How can you see the ethical deficit? Many government policies weaken families, as Congressman WESTERMAN just showed you on a graph. We weaken communities, churches, and other faith organizations, clubs, associations, and even businesses. Small startups are not starting up. This is a tragedy.

The only hope for the young kids is to enter business. There is no other way to make money. And we are capping their futures. These critical institutions just don't provide resources and help our communities. They also foster responsibility, mutual accountability, fellowship, and a sense of purpose in our society.

How do you see the ethical deficit in other ways? It is pretty easy to see. The two major mandatory spending programs, Medicare and Social Security, will both be insolvent in 2034. That is about 18 years out. So our 18-year-olds will be 36 years old.

The major programs that seniors rely on today will be insolvent in 2024, and by the time our kids retire, nothing is certain. That is a deficit in ethics.

It is interesting that President Johnson's war on poverty hasn't really eliminated poverty, at least as the government measures it. It is striking that the massive increase in government spending tracks more closely with family breakdown and other concerning trends.

Before the war on poverty—and this is fairly well known—began in the 1960s, self-sufficiency was going up, up, up. The percentage of those in poverty was going down, down, down, down, down.

After the war on poverty begins and all the Federal programs go, that line flattens out and our progress on self-sufficiency comes to an end.

We need to expand opportunities for productive work and fix welfare so earning income always makes people better off.

We now spend half a trillion dollars on welfare programs. And what do we get? We get a flat line with no measurable progress toward self-sufficiency where people can be proud of their work product and the incomes they bring home and the progress of their kids.

Congress is managing too many programs. States need the flexibility so that they can take on these responsibilities. That is the way our Founders intended things to be set up.

All of human history was ruled from the top down until about 1800. All of human history was also marked by subsistence living. For all of human history, the average person made $500 per year to live on.

We need to break away from this top-down approach before it is too late. The free market system has lifted us up from $500 a year closer to $50,000 per person per year.

More recently, the Chinese and the Indians have moved their way out of top-down government toward free markets. Chinese incomes in the past 20 years have gone from $1,000 a year to $9,000 a year.

If you add up the Chinese population and the Indian population, we have 2.5 billion people on this planet that have seen the most massive increase in human welfare imaginable. That came about because they got rid of top-down, central government planning and they moved toward the free market system.

The free market system is not perfect because human beings are not perfect, but there is no debate in the economic textbooks about all of human history versus the move toward human freedom. We all know that human freedom is a great future and something we need to aim for.

Even more important in politics these days is to ask yourself this question: Does this city, Washington, D.C., serve the powerful or does Washington, D.C., truly serve the poor?

Look at the towers going up. Look at the consulting class. Look at the special interests. Look at the millions and millions of dollars that pour into this city. Does this city serve the powerful or the poor?

Tonight, in elections across the Nation, I think you are going to see a resounding answer to some of these questions.

Let's move government back to the people so that we can solve our significant debt problems, our mandatory spending problems, and give our kids hope for their own futures.

Mr. WESTERMAN. I thank the gentleman from Virginia for his thoughtful input, his training, and his expertise. This is the kind of expertise that we need to rely on here in this body.

Next, as Congressman BRAT talked about the laboratories of democracy being the States, I am pleased to yield to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. PALMER), who spent a career working with States all across this country and may possibly have a better understanding of more State policies in more regions of the country than anybody else, certainly, that I know.

Mr. PALMER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Arkansas for putting together this Special Order and for those excessively kind compliments.

The budget should present a vision to the American people and should reflect

how the American people approach their own finances. As of late, we simply have not governed according to the standards that the average American governs by.

While we have reduced deficit spending over the last few years, the fact is that we continue to spend more than we take in, adding billions more to our burgeoning debt.

This budget provides us with an opportunity not to repeat the mistakes of the past. Democrats and Republicans can find common ground to get our fiscal house in order.

I want to point out three commonsense solutions to the financial crisis that we face.

First, we can reform the Medicare payment system. Medicare currently uses more than a dozen different payment systems to set payment rates for medical items and services that the program covers for beneficiaries.

The location where someone receives a service determines which payment system applies. Republicans and the President believes this should be corrected. According to the President's own budget, a site-neutral system would save $10 billion over 10 years.

Second, the General Accountability Office has identified $125 billion in improper payments made in 2014. This is where the government sends a check to someone not entitled to it.

The GAO attributes about 65 percent of this to just three programs: Health and Human Services' Medicare fee-for-service, Medicaid, and the Treasury's earned income tax credit. Just three programs account for almost $81 billion per year in improper payments.

Combined, if we are averaging about $100 billion a year in improper payments over this 10-year window that we always talk about with the budget, that is $1 trillion.

Some of these payments are being sent to dead people. Certainly, no one should be opposed to correcting this problem. The GAO points out that interagency communication is not at its finest, but also that there are major errors within the Social Security Administration's death data. Some files show a person's death preceding their recorded birth date. Others show age of death between 115 and 195.

According to the ''Guinness World Records'' book, in the modern age, the oldest person ever lived to the age of 122. If Social Security's records are correct, they need to inform the Guinness World Records that someone outlived Ms. Jeanne Louise Calment by 73 years.

If we could eliminate these erroneous payments just based on what was paid out in 2014, as I pointed out, that is over $1 trillion in 10 years. I think we can all agree that that would be a great start toward getting our fiscal house in order.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I am not an advocate of more taxes, but we could do a better job of collecting those that are actually due. As of September 30, 2014, the Internal Revenue Service's total tax debt inventory was $380 billion, which is a 23 percent increase since 2009. This is $380 billion in uncollected taxes.

I think it is safe to assume that we would prefer not to have our hard-earned dollars taken from us, but I also think it is safe to assume that the average person would be disgusted to hear that, while they are paying taxes, others are failing to pay theirs.

One other thing that we could do in the area of tax reform, since I brought that up, is corporate income tax. It is estimated that there are more than $2 trillion in revenues that are being held offshore that could be repatriated to this country if we lowered our corporate income tax rate, which could, again, provide a substantial flow of revenue to help us address our deficits and pay down our budget.

□ 1545

All this is to say that we need to be more efficient in collecting what we owe and spending what we collect. The budget process is where we can begin to get our fiscal house in order.

Just in these examples, there are over $1 trillion in savings from eliminating waste, fraud and abuse, and making some sensible reforms. Not only can we balance the budget without increasing spending, we can have a surplus. Let's work together and use these commonsense solutions to restore our fiscal house.

Mr. WESTERMAN. I would again like to thank the gentleman from Alabama for his comments.

Mr. Speaker, you have heard from three freshmen Members today. Next I would like to yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL), a more seasoned member of the Budget Committee.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank him for his leadership on this issue.

Say what you want to about freshmen in this institution. I was elected with the vice chairman of the Budget Committee back in 2010, the largest freshman class in history, and it changed this place; changed this place. Largest freshmen class of Republicans and Democrats in history. You need new faces and new ideas. And what you all have done in terms of a Budget Committee at work has just been amazing.

What I have here to contribute is a chart of CBO's projections of GDP growth. And we have some of our Democratic colleagues here on the floor. I just want to say, and I hope folks hold me accountable to it, we can't cut our way into prosperity. We just can't do it. Cutting our way into prosperity isn't going to happen.

You cut budgets because there is bad spending in budgets. You don't cut budgets because cutting is an end in and of itself. You cut things that are bad. You plus up things that are good.

So much of the challenge that we have balancing this budget—we have done amazing things in terms of reducing wasteful spending in the 5 years that I have been in this body. But the economy keeps declining, the regulation nation that is the new United States of America, draining productivity.

When I arrived, the CBO projected we would be growing at about 3 percent a year as a nation. The next year they revised it down to 2.9; the next year, 2.5; the next year, 2.3; this year, 2.1 percent growth; 2.1 percent growth. That looks like a downward trend. But every 0.1 percent of economic growth that is lost translates into about $300 billion of economic activity.

If people don't have jobs, they don't pay taxes. If people don't have jobs, they can't contribute to the system. If people can't contribute to the system, revenues go down. If revenues go down, budgets don't balance.

We have to grow our way out of this. We have to grow our way out of this, and that is a bipartisan challenge.

There is not a man or woman in this room who doesn't want to see more American jobs in this country, not one. There is not a man or woman in this room who doesn't want to see our entrepreneurs be the most competitive on the planet, not one.

There is not a man or woman in this room who does not believe that America's best days are still going to be tomorrow.

We cannot balance budgets by cutting discretionary spending. In fact, if we zeroed out discretionary spending, zeroed out the courts, zeroed out the parks, zeroed out the military, zeroed out everything, environment, everything people think of as government, and we only paid our Medicare bills, our Medicaid bills, our interest on the national debt, our mandatory spending programs, Social Security programs, that would consume virtually the entire revenue stream of the United States of America.

We have to grow our way out of this, and that is a partnership issue that we can do together.

What Mr. WESTERMAN is doing with his leadership on the budget provides that foundation. If you don't know where you are going, you are not going to get there. We have to have folks who are providing that vision of where we are going. That is what our budget is.

It is our one opportunity as a Congress to come together and talk about our collective vision, not the Republican vision, not the Democratic vision, our vision, America's vision. Unless we are looking at unemployment slides, a downward slope is not our vision. Our vision is more growth, more jobs, more economic activity.

The kind of disciplined budget that Mr. WESTERMAN is talking about today will make all the difference in the world. I thank him for his leadership. I thank him for the time. It is a real honor to serve.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for his comments.

This is an American problem. It is not a Republican problem or a Democratic problem. It is a bipartisan debt that we all created, and it is going to take bipartisan solutions to fix this debt.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROKITA), the vice chair of the Budget Committee.

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, let me just say on the Record that I greatly appreciate the leadership of our newer members of the Budget Committee, especially the member from Arkansas. I think the people of Arkansas were right to send him to Congress. Not only does he come ready to identify the spending problems that this country has, but he comes ready with solutions, too. And I think that is, in essence, Mr. Speaker, the definition of leadership. I thank the gentleman.

I also thank the gentleman from Georgia who just spoke. He speaks so eloquently on so many subjects, a member of the Rules Committee. I am also very appreciative of his contribution to the Budget Committee. He, of course, as we all are today, and almost every day, unfortunately, was talking about the debt.

And let me just put it in a pictorial form. This is the new red menace, Mr. Speaker. Look at that trajectory. It goes nearly vertical.

So the question is: How do you turn that big ship, that Titanic, if you will, so, number one, it doesn't sink this entire country and, number two, it gets on a more meaningful, more productive course so that we can continue to be the world's best hope in a 21st century world?

Now, some, especially those on the other side of the aisle, will immediately turn to the fact that there are two ways to, in fact, solve this problem. One is to control spending. The other is to grow revenue.

Let me talk about the latter for just a second. The latter is a false choice because at 10,000 people a day retiring into unreformed social programs, that trajectory will not turn around, it will not plateau.

No matter how much property you confiscate from the American people, Mr. Speaker, no matter how much you take in the form of taxes, with 10,000 people a day retiring in unreformed programs, can you get that to go down.

So let's look at that more closely. This is what the Federal Government confiscates from the American people to run itself. In fiscal year 2015, it was $3.25 trillion, revenue we took in to run the operations of just the Federal Government.

Mr. Speaker, the American people know we don't have a revenue problem, we have a spending problem.

The question should be what can't you do? What can't you do, Mr. Speaker, with $3.25 trillion of property confiscated?

More revenue is not the answer. Thankfully, the majority here in the House of Representatives doesn't think it is the answer either. We know we can do better. We know we have to do better for the American people. We know we have to control the spending.

That is why I am very proud to be part of a committee, the Budget Committee, and part of a new crew that came, starting in 2011, that for every year we have put in a budget, a narrative, something that we don't legally have to do as part of the budget process, but we took the extra step to put a narrative in our budget to give the solutions that are needed to correct this debt problem, reforming Medicare, reforming Medicaid, putting us on a track that will reduce that red menace, that will plateau it, and start pointing it downward over the next generation.

We took the political risk to have that conversation with the American people, and we have done it every year since 2011. Some people called it the third rail of politics. Touch it and you will be politically electrocuted.

Well, we touched it, Mr. Speaker. And we touched the next year, and the next year, and the year after that. And my hope and my pledge is, on this House floor, that we will continue to have that conversation with the American people, backed up with votes that show, really, how to solve this problem.

Mr. Speaker, I will refer us to the spending that I am talking about. This chart was used before by the gentleman from Arkansas. I will refer to it again.

Here is what is on autopilot. Here is what needs to be reformed. And if you look at one piece of that pie there, Medicaid, a solution for that has been in our budget for the last 5 years.

In the remaining time I have, Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about that solution, a State flexibility grant, block grant, if you will. We have had that idea in our budget for the last 5 years.

It is the idea that we in the Federal Government, we are going to get out of the business of Medicaid. We are going to get out of the business of deciding who is poor in terms of health care, what the poor need in terms of health care, or how the poor get it, that health care service.

We are going to give it to the States, to individuals, to locally elected officials, people who know their communities better, in fact, than any Federal bureaucrat does; people who can determine, given a finite amount of money from us, their money back, in fact, what the poor need, who the poor really are, who the disabled really are, what they should get in terms of healthcare services, and how they should get it.

Maybe, like the gentleman from Arkansas alluded to earlier, maybe there ought to be a work requirement for the able-bodied ones of them. Maybe there ought to be other conditions, but let the States decide what that would be, pressured, in a good way, by the fact that there would only be a finite amount of money coming from our budget.

That would allow us to know exactly what we are in for, as a Federal Government, exactly what we are giving out, and not a cent more, and would naturally incentivize the States to innovate, to come up with better ways of service, to serve those who really need health care who can't get it any other way. And those who, in fact, are gaming the system will be naturally forced off.

The States are in the best position to provide that when they are properly incentivized with a finite amount of money that doesn't grow over time.

The Republican budget for the last 5 years, the one that has passed this House of Representatives, has done that very thing. We are on the right track. We need to continue these votes. We need to continue to have a budget. We need to continue to have standalone votes on these reforms to take this issue to the American people, especially in a Presidential election year when, frankly, the candidates, I haven't seen them talk enough about what is really on people's minds, and that is how they are going to leave their children and grandchildren with a better life than they have, when we are knowingly saddled with $19 trillion in debt, a very hard thing to do.

In fact, I think this is the first generation in American history, Mr. Speaker, that is poised to leave the next generation worse off. I refuse to let that happen on this Budget Committee's watch, and that is why we are here today, that is why we are providing the leadership.

I thank the gentleman very much for his leadership.

Mr. WESTERMAN. I thank the gentleman from Indiana for his remarks. I thank him also for his leadership on the Budget Committee. I thank him for his passion to see a better future for our kids and for our grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, having served in a State legislature before coming to Congress, I served in one where we had to balance our budget. And in our State legislature, our single largest expenditure was, by far, Medicaid.

Medicaid exceeded all the money that we spent on public education, higher education, and the Department of Corrections combined. We spent more money on this one Federal State program than we spent on all of education, and that we spent on our prison program.

Mr. Speaker, there is an inverse incentive for States to be good stewards of Medicaid money. In my State, we received $2.37 of Federal money for every $1 of State money that we spent.

What my colleague from Indiana is talking about is giving States incentives to manage these programs. If the States had incentives to manage the programs in a better way right now, their hands would be tied by CMS.

The Federal Government won't allow the States to create programs and manage their Medicaid population the way that the States could if they had the opportunity to do that.

□ 1600

If we give these laboratories of democracy across the country the ability to innovate and the ability to meet the needs of the people that they serve, then they will do that. Government has always been most effective when it is closest to the people. I served on a school board. I know that I had a lot more interaction with my constituents on the school board because I lived in the same community with them than I did as a State legislator or even as I do as a Member of Congress.

We have to be able to give States more flexibility. We have to let them innovate and let them learn from one another across the country to use ideas that work one place and adapt them for another place. That is how we bring fiscal stability back to our Federal budget, by allowing States to manage their State budgets better.

As we look at these mandatory spending programs, as the gentleman from Indiana mentioned, the large part of this mandatory spending—nearly half of it—is all associated with health care. That is Medicare, which is $634 billion in 2015; Medicaid, $350 billion in 2015; and then other programs that make up about $47 billion. Those, combined, are greater than the one single largest expenditure, which is Social Security, which we obviously need to reform, not to punish people but to make it sustainable, to make it last for those who really need the program, and to make it last for all Americans who have invested in that program. The same thing for Medicare.

If we refuse to make changes, if we continue to let the status quo be the current reality, then we will see all of these programs shrink and become insolvent over time, and at the same time we will see our Federal debt continue to bloom, and we will see the amount of interest we pay on the debt continue to grow.

Now is the time for us to take action. Now is the time for us to not only produce a budget that balances, but to enact that budget and to follow that budget.

Again, I would like to thank all the members of the Budget Committee who spoke on the issues today. We will be speaking on them more as we move forward.

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

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3716, ENSURING REMOVAL OF TERMINATED PROVIDERS FROM MEDICAID AND CHIP ACT

Mr. BURGESS (during the Special Order of Mr. WESTERMAN), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114–440) on the resolution (H. Res. 632) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3716) to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to provide to the Secretary of Health and Human Services certain information with respect to provider terminations, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

HUNGER IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ABRAHAM). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight our important Federal nutrition programs, and I rise today to remind my colleagues that we have a hunger problem in the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, there is not a single congressional district in this country that is hunger free. Every community—whether urban, suburban, or rural—faces hunger. One in seven Americans experience hunger, including 16 million children. We are the richest, most powerful country in the history of the world. It is shameful that even one child goes to bed hungry.

In every community across the country, there are dedicated, passionate local antihunger organizations that do incredible work to provide food assistance and support those struggling with hunger, from food banks to food pantries, to faith-based organizations, to community centers, to hospitals, and on and on and on. Charities do important, wonderful work, but they cannot do it alone. The demand is simply too high. Charities need a strong partner in the Federal Government if we are ever going to end hunger.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, which used to be known as food stamps, is our Nation's premier antihunger program. It is effective and it is efficient, with an error rate of less than 4 percent, which includes both overpayments and underpayments.

By the way, underpayments are when a recipient receives less than they are eligible for, and that happens often.

Find me a Pentagon spending program with such a low error rate. The fact of the matter is SNAP is one of the most successful—if not the most successful—Federal programs that we have.

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, or WIC, provides nutritious foods, counseling on healthy eating, and breastfeeding support to more than 8 million low-income women and children at nutritional risk. WIC gives infants and young children the healthy, nutritious start that they need for critical early development and lifelong learning. It is an incredibly vital program.

The National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs and the Summer Food Service Program provide nutritious foods for millions of children and teens in educational and community settings. These important programs ensure that our young people are ready to learn and that they can succeed.

The Meals on Wheels program provides home-delivered meals to millions of homebound seniors. Not only does Meals on Wheels improve senior nutrition, it also enables seniors to live independently longer while receiving daily check-in visits from volunteers.

These are just a few of the vital Federal antihunger programs that are the backbone of our fight to end hunger once and for all in this country. But, Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons why I am coming to this floor today is I am deeply worried that they are coming under attack by the Republican majority in this House.

Unfortunately, it is fashionable right now to demonize Americans living in poverty and to belittle their struggles. We hear that all too often on this House floor. We hear that all too often in this Presidential campaign that is going on. The fact of the matter is it is hard work to be poor in America. It is not easy. Yet millions of families are struggling, trying to raise their kids and living on a paycheck that doesn't provide enough to put food on the table.

Mr. Speaker, a couple of weeks ago, I spent a night at a homeless shelter in Worcester, Massachusetts, called the Interfaith Hospitality Network. It is a family homeless shelter. As you know, there are not enough shelters that accommodate entire families. Usually families get split up. But what I wasn't prepared for when I spent the night at this shelter was that every one of these families had at least one adult that was working. They were working in a job. They all had unique situations that put them in a very difficult situation. But the fact of the matter is they were working. They were earning just enough that a lot of their benefits were reduced, but they were not earning enough to be able to put a down payment on an apartment and afford rent.

These are parents that love their kids every bit as much as I love my kids and my colleagues love their kids. They want to be good parents, but they are struggling. They are looking for a hand up, not a handout. They are looking for a little bit of assistance so they can get back on their feet.

The bottom line is that their plight is not unique. I will tell my colleagues that their plight does not fall into a neat stereotype. Too often when people here in this Chamber talk about the homeless or the hungry, they talk about people who are addicted to drugs, or they talk about people who don't work or who don't want to work. That is not the reality. That is not the face of poverty in this country. It is much more complicated than that. And yet, to justify deep cuts in programs to actually help people get back on their feet, we hear the false narrative repeated over and over and over again, the demonization of these people who are struggling in poverty.

The rhetoric that we hear on the floor all too often is hurtful, and it is sometimes hateful. It is seeping into the discourse in this Congress, and it is seeping into some of the decision-making that is going on by the current leadership in this Congress.

It seems like just now Republican leaders are finally coming around to the idea that they need to talk about poverty. We heard the Speaker say that he wants a national conversation about poverty. But I have got to tell you I am a little worried, because while we need this conversation and while we need to come up with solutions, I have this sinking feeling that something else is going on, that this so-called conversation on poverty is really kind of a masquerade for cutting deeply into programs that will help put food and nutrition on people's tables and provide people the shelter that they need when they are struggling. I worry that this congressional task force that the Speaker announced, when I look at it, is made up of Members, all of whom have supported block-granting SNAP.

What block-granting means is that States can do almost whatever the heck they want to do with the SNAP benefit. They don't necessarily have to use it to provide people food. They can use it for other things; and, therefore, it puts that benefit at risk, especially during difficult economic times.

But every one of the people who is on this task force has voted for Republican budgets that support block-granting. Every one of the people on this so-called poverty task force voted to cut SNAP by $40 billion during the last farm bill—$40 billion.

Now, they would say: Oh, we are just trying to trim the program and make it more efficient. I would just say to my colleagues that the average SNAP benefit is $1.40 per person per meal per day—$1.40.

I bet most of my colleagues who are calling for deep cuts in SNAP have no idea what the benefit is. They have no idea how inadequate the benefit is. In fact, it is so inadequate that most families who are on SNAP end up having to rely on food banks, having to rely on churches, synagogues, and mosques at the end of the month to be able to put food on their table. It is $1.40 per person per meal per day. That is the average benefit. Yet my colleagues, those who are on this so-called poverty task force, almost unanimously, on the other side of the aisle, voted to cut the program by $40 billion.

I would ask my colleagues, what are you thinking? What are you thinking? We have an obligation to be there for the most vulnerable in this country. That is what government is supposed to be for. Donald Trump doesn't need government. He is a zillionaire. He doesn't have to worry about where his next meal is going to come from. Yet there are millions of people, millions of families in this country who do. They are looking for a little compassion. They are not looking for a handout. They are looking for a hand up so they can get their lives in order and they can progress.

Mr. Speaker, we need to do better.

I will just say one other thing, and then I am going to yield to my colleague from Virginia.

There is another kind of nasty discussion going on by my Republican colleagues. They have a new proposal to drug-test SNAP recipients. The fact of the matter is this proposal has no basis in reality. It is nothing more than a mean-spirited attack on poor people to fire up their rightwing base. It is insulting. It is insulting.

We have seen drug test laws in Florida and Georgia struck down as unconstitutional and end up wasting taxpayer dollars to identify very few drug users. In fact, those receiving public assistance test positive for illicit drugs at a lower rate than the general population—at a lower rate than the general population. It doesn't fit into the rightwing narrative of who comprises those who live in poverty in America, but it is the fact. It is the fact.

Why aren't Republicans in this bill calling for drug testing for wealthy CEOs and oil company executives who receive taxpayer subsidies? Why aren't they calling for Members of Congress to undergo drug tests? After all, our salaries are paid by the taxpayers in this country. Why don't you call for all Members of Congress to undergo drug tests? Maybe that might explain why we do some of the things we do here in this Congress.

But, instead, again, they only pick on one sector of the population—poor people. They are the ones who are being blamed for the economy. They are the ones who are being demonized, and they are the ones who are being belittled. It is beneath this Chamber and this House to engage in that kind of discussion.

We need to be making real, meaningful progress to end hunger and poverty in this country. First and foremost, we need to protect and strengthen our important Federal nutrition and antihunger programs. We need bold action that will help people rather than make hunger and poverty worse. That is why I continue to call for a White House conference on food, nutrition, and hunger to develop a holistic plan to end hunger in America, because I think we can do better. I think we need to get all of our Federal agencies and our State agencies to work better together and to connect the dots so that we can deal with this so-called cliff that so many people struggling to get out of poverty hit when they start to make a little bit of money.

□ 1615

We need to figure out a holistic plan with benchmarks that will actually end hunger. We have a lot of programs, quite frankly, that deal with different aspects of hunger, but I am not sure we have a plan that will actually end it.

Here is the deal. Hunger is a political condition. It is solvable. We have everything to solve it except the political will. One of the things we should be doing is developing that political will and not going down the road of demonizing some of the most vulnerable people in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT), the ranking member of the Education and the Workforce Committee.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Massachusetts not only for yielding, but also for his years of work fighting hunger. He is one of the strongest advocates we have in Congress in fighting the scourge of hunger. I want to thank him for all of those years of good work.

It is my privilege to be the ranking member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce. In that perspective, we played an integral role in the reduction of food insecurity and lowering the prevalence of debilitating health conditions, including obesity, diabetes, and others.

Our committee is tasked with making sure all children have an equal shot at success. One important way is to ensure that by providing healthy, nutritious meals.

There is a Federal role in ensuring that every child has access to a quality education, regardless of where they live or their family's income, and nutrition is a part of making sure they can get that education.

More than 60 years ago, when Congress enacted the first Federal child nutrition program—the National School Lunch Program—Congress acknowledged that feeding hungry children was not only a moral imperative, but also an imperative for the health and security of our Nation.

The National School Lunch Program was actually a response from the military community who were complaining that so many of our young military age youth were unprepared for military service because they were malnourished.

Regrettably today, we are faced with the same crisis that impacts our Nation's national security. Too many of our children are now obese, too obese to enlist in our Nation's military. One-third of the children in this country are overweight, and childhood obesity has tripled in the last 30 years.

While all segments of the population are affected, low-income families are especially vulnerable to obesity and other chronic diseases because they end up eating unhealthy food.

Unfortunately, the poorest among us have the least access to healthy foods, many times without a full-service grocery store or farmer's market in their community.

We still have a long way to go, but there have been positive signs of progress through the implementation of our child nutrition programs.

Thanks to the introduction of stronger standards brought about by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, enacted just a few years ago, students

across the country are experiencing healthy school environments with more nutritious meal options.

One area in dire need of increased access to child nutrition programs and nutritious meals they provide is Flint, Michigan. As everybody knows, the residents of Flint are struggling with the consequences of exposure to high levels of lead as a result of the city's contaminated municipal water supply.

Lead exposure is especially damaging to infants, toddlers, and expectant mothers and can cause behavioral and cognitive problems that last a lifetime.

Although there is no cure for lead poisoning, research shows that a healthy diet, including zinc, vitamin C, iron, and calcium, can mitigate some of the harmful effects.

Federal supplemental funding for nutrition programs, especially the WIC program, would allow access to healthier diets.

Funding for a nutrient-rich third meal, an extension of WIC benefits, to 10 years of age for all eligible children would go a long way to help the residents of Flint, Michigan, deal with lead poisoning.

Mr. Speaker, our committee is now working on a child nutrition reauthorization bill. With this reauthorization, we have a great opportunity to continue to improve the way that children eat, to expand access to nutritious meals, and to end the crisis of childhood hunger in this country.

These efforts do not end with the school year or even the school day. Whether in schools, childcare settings, or summer programs, our goal should be to provide high-quality and nutritious food to all of America's children.

We have a choice to make. We can put money into these important programs now and support healthy eating in our schools and other settings or we can cut corners and spend more money down the road on chronic diseases and other social services, putting the well-being of our children and our Nation's security at risk. Make no mistake. Either way, we will spend the money.

A few years ago medical expenditures to treat obesity in the United States were estimated to be $147 billion, 16.5 percent of all U.S. medical expenditures.

Investing in the front end, by maintaining strong nutrition standards and increasing access to healthy meals, is obviously a better choice for our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my fellow Members of Congress to continue to invest in our Nation's future by moving forward, not backward, on issues of food insecurity and child nutrition.

I want to thank the gentleman from Massachusetts again for his longtime advocacy, for his efforts to reduce hunger and to provide better nutrition for our Nation's children.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I thank the gentleman for his comments and for his leadership, and I thank him for pointing out the links between good nutrition and good health.

We actually will save money in the long run if we provide our people, our young people in particular, nutritious food. We can prevent diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure.

If people aren't moved by the human aspect of feeding the hungry and all they care about is the bottom line, they ought to join with us to make sure that these nutrition programs are adequately funded.

In addition, you can't learn in school if you are hungry. A breakfast and a lunch to a young child who is hungry is every bit as essential to that child's ability to learn as is a textbook.

We need to understand that. We need to stop nickel-and-diming these nutrition programs and understand that every dollar we invest, every penny we invest, pays us back in ways that can't even be quantified, quite frankly.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO), a leader on this issue, a woman who is on the Appropriations Committee, who, again, has been a champion for many, many years on this issue of combating hunger in America.

Ms. DELAURO. I thank the gentleman, and I thank my colleagues. I am so proud to join with you tonight

And to Congressman MCGOVERN, your unrelenting efforts to address the issue of ending hunger and doing it now, you have been singularly an individual who has never missed a beat in trying to address this issue and bring it to the floor and the public.

And to my colleague from Virginia, who has taken his platform of the Education and the Workforce Committee and have had a focus on how, in fact, we improve the opportunities for our children and whether it is their health or their education, he is at the forefront.

I see we have been joined by Congresswoman GWEN MOORE of Wisconsin, someone who can talk about her own deep personal experiences with hunger and with the food stamp program and what it means to be able to work your way out of these efforts. She has done it to a fare-thee-well.

Mr. Speaker, over 50 million people—nearly one in four—live in hunger in the United States. Don't ever let anybody use the terminology ''food security.'' It is plain and simple hunger.

Kids are hungry in the United States of America. Hunger exists in virtually every community in this country. Social safety net programs are vital tools for reducing the prevalence of poverty and hunger.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP—food stamps, yes—is one of the most powerful programs that we have for ending childhood hunger in the United States. It helps millions of hardworking American families every year.

SNAP works for those who need it most. It has been incredibly successful in alleviating hunger, lifting people out of poverty, and supporting our economy.

SNAP continues to do more than any other government assistance program to lift Americans out of poverty. The numbers speak for themselves.

In 2014 alone, the program lifted 4.7 million people out of poverty, including 2.1 million children. SNAP also lifted more than 1.3 million children out of deep poverty. What is deep poverty? It is 50 percent of what the poverty line is in this Nation.

The program impacts children well beyond their childhood years. Research shows that, among children who grow up in disadvantaged households with access to SNAP, there is an 18 percentage point increase in the likelihood of completing high school.

There has also been evidence of significant improvements in overall health and economic self-sufficiency among women.

SNAP is an extremely efficient program. More than half of all of the benefits go to households in deepest poverty, and over 70 percent of all benefits go to households with children.

Despite what some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle would say about fraud, waste, and abuse, the food stamp program has the lowest error rate of any Federal Government program, the lowest error rate.

Based on this anecdote that it is rife with fraud, waste, and abuse, they would deny children food. The data speaks loud and clear about the lowest error rate of any Federal program.

Of course, it is not just children. SNAP helps millions of seniors, people with disabilities, veterans, low-wage workers, and others.

However, Speaker RYAN and other Republican House Members say that we spend trillions of dollars on these programs and, yet, the poverty rate does not change. This is simply not true.

I talked about the statistics earlier on in my comments. Without these critical safety net programs, more Americans would go hungry. As we have said, SNAP kept about 4.8 million people out of poverty, including 2.1 million children.

The data belies what their conversation is and the stories they want to tell and, quite frankly, fabricate around the food stamp program.

The Republican proposals for SNAP include a push to enact block grants, which my colleague, Mr. MCGOVERN, mentioned before, an idea that Jared Bernstein, former chief economist to Vice President BIDEN called ''one of the most destructive ideas in poverty policy.''

Let me mention some of the statistics that have been compiled by Children's Health Watch in Boston, Massachusetts.

If the SNAP benefits were reduced either through block granting or some other mechanism to reduce food stamp benefits so as to create instability in these households, this is what they say would be likely to occur: 23 percent would be more likely to have households that are food insecure; 70 percent

more likely children would be food insecure; 36 percent more likely to be in poor health if this happens; 70 percent more likely to be at risk for developmental delays—this is about our kids, about our children—12 percent more likely to be hospitalized; children in kindergarten through third grade would be more likely to have measurably lower reading and math test scores; and reduced SNAP benefits would decrease the likelihood of mothers having a baby with a healthy weight and of a low-birth-weight baby surviving.

This is not JIM MCGOVERN or GWEN MOORE or BOBBY SCOTT or ROSA DELAURO making up these statistics. They come from an organization which tracks all of these measures.

□ 1630

My colleagues, it would include drug testing policies for SNAP recipients and prohibitions for certain food purchases.

What kind of priorities are these?

We can't continue to wage a war against food stamp recipients. Nobody is asking for any other recipients who get Federal subsidies to be drug tested. Let's start with the Crop Insurance people. Let's start with that. Let's take all of the programs at the U.S. Department of Agriculture where there is a subsidy and a recipient to that subsidy. Let's get them all drug tested.

We are going to continue to stand up against unconscionable attacks on America's poor working families. I urge my colleagues to stand with us in ensuring that the Federal budget does not harm working families and children by decimating the hunger programs in this Nation.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I thank the gentlewoman for her eloquent statement.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleague from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE).

Ms. MOORE. I thank the gentleman so much for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in praising Mr. MCGOVERN for his leadership on this issue.

Of the many people who are hungry, none of them have the money to lobby folks—the kids, the disabled people, the seniors, the elderly—but we have a champion in this House, JIM MCGOVERN.

With the few seconds remaining, I want to talk a little bit about our economy. We have a capitalist economy, and it is countercyclical. The SNAP program works to provide a safety net so that when we have a Hurricane Katrina or when we have a Hurricane Sandy, the food stamp rolls go up, and when there are jobs, the food stamp rolls go down. It ain't broke, you all, so let's not try to fix it.

I am very, very disturbed that when the Budget Committee meets next week, it will try to make structural changes to the SNAP program, to throw it into a reconciliation process where only 51 Members of the Senate have to vote for it, out of this body, in order to change the structure of it so that it is not responsive to people during economic distress.

I am concerned about the numbers of people who are going to ask for a waiver to limit the number of benefits, in a 36-month period, that those who are unemployed can receive. People who are unemployed don't have any control over our economy. When unemployment is up, the SNAP program, as it is currently structured, is responsive to unemployment, and we ought to stick to that.

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

END HUNGER NOW

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their eloquent statements here today. I think that they have reinforced the point that these nutrition programs work. SNAP works. It has one of the lowest error rates of any Federal program—less than a 4 percent error rate. That includes underpayments, which means that beneficiaries don't get what they are entitled to. It is a program that allows families to put food on the table.

We need to be supporting these programs. We need to be coming up with a holistic plan to end hunger. We need to raise the minimum wage so that people who work, like the majority of able-bodied people do who are on SNAP, don't have to live in poverty. We can do so much better.

I would just say to my Republican colleagues that, rather than doubling down on the cruelness with some of the proposals that have been brought forth before this House, you ought to work in a bipartisan way to actually lift people out of poverty so as to give people the hope and the ability to lead better lives.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to come together and find a way to end hunger now.

STOP ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. JOLLY) for 30 minutes.

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise this afternoon to talk about an issue that I started bringing up about 5 or 6 weeks ago and that I intend to talk about every week until we finally force action in this Chamber.

For over 20 years, I have had the opportunity to study this institution, an institution I believe very deeply in—in its ability to rise to some of our greatest national challenges and to solve some of the greatest problems we face. It was not until as a first-time candidate then elected to office that I had the opportunity to experience a few moments that are very unique to actually being in the Member's chair.

We have had a great debate over the decades about campaign finance reform, about the role of money in politics. It is a legitimate debate. It is a legitimate conversation with strongly felt views on both sides of the aisle, with solutions as diverse as the ideologies of our country—from greater transparency to greater limits, to fewer limits.

Yet, as we have talked about the campaign finance construct in this country and as we have talked about proposed solutions, we have actually ignored one of the greatest blights on this body, itself. It comes not in the form of our campaign finance laws, but it comes in the form of the amount of time that Members of this body are expected or are, in some cases, directed to spend in raising money.

You see, the first way we begin to address campaign finance reform is by addressing a needed congressional reform, a reform that touches not on the current laws of how campaigns are resourced, but on the current rules by which this body governs.

As they were directed a few years back by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle—by their leadership—the expectation as a new Member of Congress for a day in D.C. is to spend 4 hours a day on the phone, raising money. The number-one activity, as was suggested to new incoming Members, was to fundraise, not to legislate.

It is a very uncomfortable truth. As I said last week, it is very uncomfortable for me to talk about this amongst my colleagues, but we represent, each of us, 700,000 people back home who trust us. They trust us to serve, and in serving, we are to give voice to their priorities.

Dear folks, the priorities of our constituents is not fundraising. You see, there is a broad diversity of priorities—from border security, to immigration reform, to transportation, to tax reform. I listened to colleagues in the last hour talk about balancing the budget. Others talked about programs that are critical to ending hunger here in the United States, but we will never solve these problems on behalf of the people who sent us here if we spend more time on the phone, raising money, than we do in legislating, in tackling these very problems that we have tried to give voice to.

Last week I did share with this body the orientation card that was provided to some incoming Members a few years back. Today I have with me some quotes from retiring Members of Congress, from those on the way out the door or who have already left.

The first one, you will notice, is a confession from a colleague on my side of the aisle, upon his retirement, who said that fundraising is the main business of Congress.

The other one is from the retired Senate majority leader who said that a Senator has to raise $10,000 a day every day he is in office, every day for 6 years, simply to finance his reelection.

The last is from a colleague who, shortly after announcing his intention to retire, wrote a piece called ''Confessions of a Congressman,'' confessing to spending 4,200 hours on the phone, raising money—4,200 hours that could have been spent doing his job.

What do all of these quotes have in common? What do all of these individuals have in common?

They are either retired or they are retiring.

The cynic in me would suggest: Why do you wait until you have left this institution to publicly lament the failings of having served while you were here?

In fact, the cynic in me would suggest, in some cases, it is simply to sell a book—to ask the American people for more money, but this time for your own pocket, not for your campaign.

What do we do about it? Why don't we do something as sitting Members of Congress that has never been done before?

Let's address this issue that creates such a quiet anger amongst Members of Congress—this obligation to fundraise—but that resonates as a very loud anger with the American people. You see, no Member on this side of the aisle or the other needs a poll to know that the American people are frustrated with the amount of time Members of Congress spend in raising money instead of in doing their jobs.

Together, with six or eight colleagues here in this body—and I am grateful for their support of the legislation I have introduced—we have introduced something I call the STOP Act. It is very simple. It is merely three or four pages. Every Member of this body can read it before he votes on it.

The STOP Act, H.R. 4443, prohibits any Member of Congress from directly soliciting a contribution to his own campaign, to a PAC, or to his party. It leaves in place the campaign finance construct that has been approved by the Supreme Court. Whether you agree with it or not, it doesn't touch the current campaign finance system.

If an individual wishes to participate in an election, I believe that is political speech, and he is still able to participate by making phone calls, by waving signs, or by contributing. Campaign committees can still exist. It is simply the job of staff to ensure that campaigns have the resources necessary to run the campaign.

This law would only apply to sitting Members of Congress. It would not apply to challengers. It would not apply to first-time candidates. It would only apply to sitting Members of Congress. It would be a direct prohibition on any Member of Congress who is directly soliciting a contribution.

Why?

Because the message is very simple to Congress. You see, the STOP Act says: Get back to work. Do your job. It is why we were elected, to actually try to solve problems.

In State legislatures, including in the State legislature in the State of Florida, members are prohibited from directly soliciting contributions while they are in session. In Florida, where we elect judges, we have a prohibition on the direct solicitation of contributions, and 29 or 30 States across the country have that same prohibition.

The message is very simple: you are elected to do a job. Spend your hours working, not asking people for money.

I have heard a lot of responses since I introduced this bill. The contrast between comments from the American people is stark compared to comments from many elected officials, many in this town. See, the American people get it and they say ''thank you.''

Of course, Congress should be spending time doing its job, not spending time across the street, raising money. The American people get it. Folks in this town say, ''You are crazy.'' Some say, ''I like fundraising.'' One of the better comments—more intriguing—was that old habits are hard to break.

Let's break those habits. Let's have a Congress that gets to work because, you see, this is not the best we can do.

Do you want to know why we have not solved border security, gotten operational control of the border, why we have not solved immigration reform, why we have not reached consensus, finally, once and for all, on how to balance the budget and put us on a pathway to prosperity, why we have not had a healthy debate on issues like an authorization to use military force?

Where are we in terms of agreement or disagreement with the President's foreign policy? Why have we not been able to consider a national right to carry reciprocity, protecting the Second Amendment rights of any individual who travels between States? Why have we not solved the VA healthcare problem in giving every veteran the complete choice of where he receives his health care? Why have we not moved legislation on behalf of law enforcement officers to enhance penalties for those who do harm to law enforcement officers?

It is because we have a part-time Congress and a full-time world. There is no way to suggest to voters that it is somehow okay to have a political culture that prioritizes fundraising over legislating.

Tone is very important here. While this is a hard issue to talk about, this is not intended to judge or to criticize my colleagues.

□ 1645

In fact, colleagues in this body are operating lawfully under the system that has been set before us. But I am simply trying to change the system because the American people will never understand, as they work 40, 50, 60 hours a week, why, according to some estimations, we have a legislature that spends 15 hours a week legislating and 25 hours a week raising money. It does not make a bit of sense.

Now, I mentioned some of the comments that I have heard from others after I introduced this. There are two things you will hear from people who don't want to talk about this—actually, there are three.

The first response is silence and the hope that you don't make eye contact so you can avoid the question because there is no way to oppose the STOP Act.

The second is this issue of, well, it is First Amendment. I should be able to ask somebody for money. The United States Supreme Court recently considered that question in a case that dealt with a prohibition on judges directly soliciting contributions, and the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that it was a reasonable restriction on elected officials to protect the integrity of the bench.

Now, there was discussion about whether or not that could apply also to legislators, and there were questions about that. I would point you back to the fact that legislatures at the State level currently prohibit direct solicitation while they are in session.

So my STOP Act, I believe, meets constitutional muster based on Supreme Court rulings. But should there be any question, then we can simply make it apply to days that we are in session, hours that we are in session. Frankly, we could solve it most easily by simply passing a House rule, because, you see, a rule that this body imposes upon itself survives any constitutional scrutiny.

So I start by asking my colleagues to cosponsor the STOP Act, H.R. 4443. If we fail to move the STOP Act, let's have an honest conversation within this body about the current blight that fundraising imposes on our ability to do work, because this is not the best we can do.

Where are our solutions to the issues I mentioned of border security, of national security, of balanced budget, of tax reforms, of VA health care, of protecting law enforcement? Where are our solutions? They are not found at fundraisers. They are not found on the other end of a cold call that you make to ask for a contribution.

The answers are found among the community of stakeholders that sent us here, those on the front lines every day of these issues, communities like mine in Pinellas County who gave me the public trust. Every day my first responsibility and the responsibility of every Member of this Congress is to honor that public trust.

You see, the answers are not in fundraisers or on the other end of a fundraising phone call. The answers are in our community and in the voices of our community as represented by elected officials here in this well. But we are not here. It is 4:45, and we are done for the day but for fundraising and but for making phone calls.

Let's get off the phone with donors. Let's leave that to campaign organizations, and let's get on the phone with the constituents who have asked us to give voice to their concerns. Let's find

the answers where they lie, not across the street in call suites, not at fundraisers. We can do so much better, and we are fooling ourselves if we don't realize that.

If we take anything from the political landscape this year, it is that the American people are calling the bluff of folks who continue to mislead and misrepresent. It is misleading and it is misrepresenting when we promise that we are working on critical issues of the country when, in fact, we are not even in the office but we are across the street raising money.

I would love to take on broader campaign finance reform. We all have strong opinions. Mine start first with protecting the First Amendment rights of anyone to participate in an election.

We will never get to the bigger reforms if we ignore this very basic truth that many in this body, as a result of the pressure of campaigns, spend more time asking you for money than asking you for solutions, more time fundraising than legislating.

I didn't run to become a professional fundraiser. I ran to hopefully contribute to solutions that are desperately wanted by the American people, solutions that require consensus across the aisle, but solutions that first and foremost require a commitment to serve, a commitment to tackle the hardest issues among us.

I started by saying I believe deeply in this institution, and I do. This is the greatest legislative body the world has ever seen, but let's honor that history. Just as when we took the oath of office to well and faithfully execute the duties of this office, let's honor that, because we are not faithfully executing the duties of this office when the Chamber is empty at 4:45 but the call suites across the street are full.

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

COMMUNICATION FROM THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable NANCY PELOSI, Democratic Leader:

MARCH 1, 2016.

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

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN: Pursuant to section 4703(b) of the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Act (20 U.S.C. 4703), I am pleased to appoint the following Member to the Board of Trustees of the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation.

Rep. John B. Larson of Connecticut.

Best regards,

NANCY PELOSI,
Democratic Leader.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 52 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, March 2, 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:

4507. A letter from the Director, Transparency and Accountability Reporting Division, Office of the Chief Financial Officer, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (RIN: 0505-AA15) 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 Agriculture.

4508. A letter from the Director, Engineering and Environmental Staff, Water and Environmental Programs, Rural Utilities Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Environmental Policies and Procedures (RIN: 0575-AC56) 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 Agriculture.

4509. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's final rule — Prevailing Rate Systems; Definition of Hancock County, Mississippi, to a Nonappropriated Fund Federal Wage System Wage Area (RIN: 3206-AN20) 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 Oversight and Government Reform.

4510. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final and temporary regulations — PATH Act Changes to Section 1445 [TD 9751] (RIN: 1545-BN22) 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 Ways and Means.

4511. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Applicable Federal Rates — March 2016 (Rev. Rul. 2016-07) 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 Ways and Means.

4512. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Update for Weighted Average Interest Rates, Yield Curves, and Segment Rates [Notice 2016-18] 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 Ways and Means.

4513. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Mid-Year Changes to Safe Harbor Plans and Safe Harbor Notices [Notice 2016-16] 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 Ways and Means.

4514. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final regulations — Reporting of Specified Foreign Financial Assets [TD 9752] (RIN: 1545-BM54) 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 Ways and Means.

4515. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final and temporary regulations — Amendments to the Low-Income Housing Credit Compliance-Monitoring Regulations [TD 9753] (RIN: 1545-BL84) 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 Ways and Means.

4516. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Qualified Zone Academy Bond Allocations for 2015 and 2016 [Notice 2016-20] 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 Ways and Means.

4517. A letter from the Deputy Chief Counsel for Regulations and Security Standards, Transportation Security Administration, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Passenger Screening Using Advanced Imaging Technology [Docket No.: TSA-2013-0004] (RIN: 1652-AA67) 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 Homeland Security.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

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

Mr. BURGESS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 632. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3716) to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to provide to the Secretary of Health and Human Services certain information with respect to provider terminations, and for other purposes (Rept. 114–440). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York (for himself and Mr. HANNA):

H.R. 4654. A bill to direct the Attorney General to carry out a pilot program to provide grants to eligible entities for diversion programs to divert individuals with low-level drug offenses to drug treatment programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PALAZZO (for himself, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. BOST, Mr. OLSON, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. COLE, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. KIND, Mr. BARR, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, and Mr. MACARTHUR):

H.R. 4655. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for a minimum automatic extension of certain Federal tax deadlines in the case of Federally declared disasters; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. HUFFMAN (for himself, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. SERRANO, and Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia):

H.R. 4656. A bill to place a moratorium on the United States Postal Service's mail processing facility closure and consolidation and to maintain Postal Service delivery standards, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. KUSTER (for herself, Ms. STEFANIK, Ms. DELBENE, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. COLLINS of New York, and Mr. KIND):

H.R. 4657. A bill to ensure United States jurisdiction over offenses committed by United States personnel stationed in Canada in furtherance of border security initiatives; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. POLIQUIN:

H.R. 4658. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to decrease the distance away from home required for a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces to be eligible for the above-the-line deduction for travel expenses; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, 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. SMITH of New Jersey (for himself, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. PITTS, and Mr. ENGEL):

H. Con. Res. 121. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress condemning the gross violations of international law amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict in Syria, and asking the President to direct his Ambassador at the United Nations to promote the establishment of a war crimes tribunal where these crimes could be addressed; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. PAYNE (for himself, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. LANCE, and Mr. DENT):

H. Res. 630. A resolution supporting the designation of March 2016, as National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. COURTNEY (for himself, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. KILMER, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, and Mr. SMITH of Washington):

H. Res. 631. A resolution calling upon the United States Senate to give its advice and consent to the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. LOEBSACK (for himself, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. PETERS, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. ESTY, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. TAKAI, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. BOST, and Mr. DEUTCH):

H. Res. 633. A resolution recognizing the important work of Meals on Wheels America and senior nutrition programs throughout the Nation in addressing hunger and isolation and improving the health and quality of life for millions of our Nation's seniors each year; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

PRIVATE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

Ms. BORDALLO introduced A bill (H.R. 4659) for the relief of Myung Mok Bae and Kei Za Ryu Bae; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

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. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 4654.

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

Art. 1, Section 8

By Mr. PALAZZO:

H.R. 4655.

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

U.S. Const. Art. 1, Section 8:

''The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States; but all duties, imposts and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States . . .''

By Mr. HUFFMAN:

H.R. 4656.

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

Clause 7, of Section 8, Article I of the U.S. Constitution:

''To establish Post Offices and post Roads;''

By Ms. KUSTER:

H.R. 4657.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution, the Taxing and Spending Clause: ''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 . . . To regulate Commerce within foreign nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes. . . .''

By Mr. POLIQUIN:

H.R. 4658.

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

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution which grants Congress the ''power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises . . .''

By Ms. BORDALLO:

H.R. 4659.

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

Article I, Section 8

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

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

H.R. 295: Mr. SERRANO.
H.R. 379: Mr. HUDSON and Mr. RUIZ.
H.R. 381: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 465: Mr. RENACCI.
H.R. 542: Mr. ROHRABACHER.
H.R. 563: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD and Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 590: Mr. NORCROSS.
H.R. 664: Mr. GARAMENDI and Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 676: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN and Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.
H.R. 729: Mr. GRAYSON and Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 748: Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 815: Mr. WOODALL, Mr. ASHFORD, and Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
H.R. 915: Mr. NORCROSS.
H.R. 939: Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H.R. 953: Ms. MATSUI.
H.R. 969: Mr. WALDEN.
H.R. 997: Mr. KELLY of Mississippi.
H.R. 1148: Mr. JONES.
H.R. 1151: Mr. PAULSEN and Mr. TAKAI.
H.R. 1170: Mr. CRAMER, Mr. FORTENBERRY, and Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 1523: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.
H.R. 1550: Mr. CRENSHAW.
H.R. 1586: Mr. GRAYSON.
H.R. 1660: Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 1706: Mr. GRAYSON.
H.R. 1733: Mr. ROONEY of Florida.
H.R. 2053: Mr. COFFMAN.
H.R. 2087: Mr. COHEN and Mr. ENGEL.
H.R. 2096: Mr. NOLAN.
H.R. 2121: Mr. POSEY and Mr. BARR.
H.R. 2144: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 2257: Mr. TONKO.
H.R. 2404: Mr. ZINKE.
H.R. 2460: Mr. ENGEL and Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.
H.R. 2641: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 2766: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.
H.R. 2802: Mr. RENACCI.
H.R. 2827: Ms. KELLY of Illinois.
H.R. 2896: Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr.BOUSTANY, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. BOST, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 2901: Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. BILIRAKIS, and Mr. HULTGREN.
H.R. 2939: Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 2972: Mr. MOULTON.
H.R. 2992: Mr. GOODLATTE.
H.R. 3048: Mr. EMMER of Minnesota, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. CRAWFORD, and Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 3099: Mr. PETERS.
H.R. 3117: Ms. CLARKE of New York.
H.R. 3180: Mr. DIAZ-BALART.
H.R. 3226: Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 3308: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
H.R. 3326: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa and Mr. HUNTER.
H.R. 3365: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 3366: Ms. ADAMS and Mr. GRAYSON.
H.R. 3381: Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. KATKO, and Mr. TAKAI.
H.R. 3406: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
H.R. 3484: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 3515: Mr. HILL, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, and Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 3516: Mr. HUELSKAMP.
H.R. 3684: Mr. POE of Texas.
H.R. 3713: Mr. QUIGLEY.
H.R. 3742: Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. WHITFIELD, and Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
H.R. 3834: Mr. HONDA and Mr. PAYNE.
H.R. 3841: Ms. SPEIER.
H.R. 3870: Mr. NOLAN.
H.R. 3880: Mr. GUTHRIE and Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan.
H.R. 3988: Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H.R. 4019: Ms. TSONGAS and Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 4057: Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois.
H.R. 4073: Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. BENISHEK, and Mr. FORTENBERRY.
H.R. 4076: Ms. KUSTER.
H.R. 4087: Mr. YOHO.
H.R. 4160: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 4184: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 4229: Mr. EMMER of Minnesota.
H.R. 4230: Mr. TED LIEU of California.
H.R. 4262: Mr. RIBBLE and Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H.R. 4336: Mr. NOLAN.
H.R. 4352: Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. COLE, Mr. RATCLIFFE, and Mr. GOODLATTE.
H.R. 4385: Mr. MCDERMOTT.
H.R. 4415: Mr. RANGEL and Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 4430: Mr. DENT, Mr. KILMER, and Ms. JACKSON LEE.
H.R. 4433: Ms. JACKSON LEE.
H.R. 4471: Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 4483: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina and Mr. ZINKE.
H.R. 4486: Mr. GUINTA.
H.R. 4490: Mr. NOLAN.
H.R. 4534: Mrs. BLACKBURN.
H.R. 4540: Mr. ROUZER.
H.R. 4549: Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. HUELSKAMP.
H.R. 4554: Mr. RUSH.
H.R. 4562: Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 4570: Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 4585: Miss RICE of New York.
H.R. 4592: Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. PAYNE, and Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 4595: Mr. VISCLOSKY.
H.R. 4599: Mr. COURTNEY and Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia.
H.R. 4612: Mr. BRAT, Mr. LAMALFA, and Mr. CRAMER.
H.R. 4619: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 4622: Mr. ROGERS of Alabama.
H.R. 4633: Mr. LAMBORN and Mr. WEBER of Texas.
H.R. 4639: Mr. CUMMINGS.
H.R. 4652: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mr. TAKANO.
H.J. Res. 74: Mr. MCCAUL.
H. Con. Res. 51: Mr. PERRY.
H. Con. Res. 75: Mr. BYRNE, Mr. KIND, Mr. LOUDERMILK, and Mr. SHUSTER.
H. Con. Res. 89: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina, Mr. YODER, Mr. MCKINLEY, and Mr. BOUSTANY.
H. Res. 32: Ms. DUCKWORTH and Ms. SINEMA.
H. Res. 120: Ms. LEE, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, and Ms. CLARKE of New York.
H. Res. 207: Mr. STIVERS and Mr. CUELLAR.
H. Res. 227: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.
H. Res. 551: Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. BABIN, and Mr. SMITH of Washington.
H. Res. 561: Mr. WELCH.
H. Res. 608: Mr. BECERRA.
H. Res. 613: Mr. FORBES and Mrs. LOVE.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY MR. BUCSHON

The Manager's amendment to be offered to H.R. 3716, Ensuring Terminated Providers are Removed from Medicaid and CHIP Act, by Representative LARRY BUCSHON of Indiana, or a designee, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

46. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the Board of County Commissioners of Miami-Dade County, Florida, relative to Resolution No. R-70-16, urging the U.S. Congress and U.S. Department of Agriculture, as well as the Florida Legislature and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, to provide financial relief to farmers impacted by historic rainfalls in South Florida during December 2015; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture.

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Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 162 WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 2016 No. 33

Senate

The Senate met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TOM COTTON, a Senator from the State of Arkansas.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Wise Creator, the architect of destinies, on this Super Tuesday 2016, when a dozen States hold their Presidential nominating contests, we look to You. You are the potter, and we are the clay. So mold and make the destiny of this Nation conceived in liberty. Let Your will be done.

Lord, we acknowledge that Your thoughts are different from our thoughts and Your ways are far beyond anything we can imagine. For just as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, so are Your ways higher than our ways and Your thoughts higher than our thoughts. Give us the wisdom to not second-guess the unfolding of Your loving providence, but help us to remember that in everything You are working for the good of those who love You.

Today, as You desire, use our lawmakers and all those who love freedom as instruments of Your glory.

We pray in Your powerful 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, March 1, 2016.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable TOM COTTON, a Senator from the State of Arkansas, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. COTTON thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY AND COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Senator GRASSLEY, and I will meet with President Obama later this morning. We will reiterate that the American people will have a voice in the vacancy on the Supreme Court as they choose the next President, who in turn will nominate the next Supreme Court Justice.

In other words, we will observe the Biden rule. Americans have by now become well acquainted with that advice from the Vice President.

Americans also know what both the current and future Senate Democratic leaders have had to say about judicial nominees when a different party was in the White House. They have heard the admonishment of the Senator from Nevada, Mr. REID, that ''nowhere in [the Constitution] does it say the Senate has the duty to give presidential nominees a vote.'' They know the Senator from New York didn't even wait until the final year of President George W. Bush's term to declare that the Senate should ''not confirm a Supreme Court nominee except in extraordinary circumstances.''

So look, let's use this debate to discuss ways we can work together to make progress for our country, such as tackling a drug crisis that is tearing communities apart in all 50 States.

I was pleased to see colleagues join together to advance the bipartisan Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act just yesterday. I hope we will see that kind of cooperation continue. It is important for our country, and I look forward to discussing with the President how his administration can be helpful.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Republicans, in an effort to try to cloud the issue regarding selection of the Supreme Court replacement, usually don't provide a full quote. For example, they keep talking about Senator BIDEN, but they should give the whole statement of Senator BIDEN, where he ended it by saying that ''compromise is the responsible course, both for the White House and for the Senate. . . . [and] if the President consults and cooperates with the Senate . . . [on] his selections . . . then his nominees may enjoy my support, as did Justices Kennedy and Souter.''

Yesterday the Washington Post published an editorial by Barbara Perry, a professor at the University of Virginia and an expert on the Supreme Court. It is among the finest law schools in all the world. That is the University of Virginia.

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

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In her opinion piece, Dr. Perry pushed back against Republican claims that Presidents have not historically nominated Supreme Court Justices during an election year. According to her, ''14 Presidents have appointed 21 justices during presidential election years.'' That is 14 out of 44 Presidents have appointed Supreme Court Justices in Presidential election years. That is about one-third of all U.S. Presidents who have appointed nominees during an election year.

Amy Howe, an expert on the Supreme Court and editor at SCOTUSblog—Supreme Court of the United States blog—agrees that past Presidents and Senates have considered election-year nominees. She writes:

> The historical record does not reveal any instances since at least 1900 of the president failing to nominate and/or the Senate failing to confirm a nominee in a presidential election year because of the impending election.

Republicans are using one inappropriate statement or excuse after another to explain why they shouldn't have to do their jobs the taxpayers sent them here to Washington to do. Instead of making excuses, wouldn't it be easier just to do the right thing? The right thing would be to give President Obama's Supreme Court nominee a hearing—a meeting before that—and a vote. We are simply saying: They should be doing their jobs.

Some Republicans are already starting to see the light. Last week, the Republican Senator from Maine ripped the Republican leader for politicizing the current Supreme Court vacancy in the aftermath of Justice Scalia's death. Again, among other things, here is what the Republican Senator from Maine said:

> I thought it was a shame . . . that instead of honoring his life and legacy and extending our condolences, already we are embroiled in a political fight.

New Jersey Governor Chris Christie went a step further, urging the Senate Judiciary Committee to hold hearings. Governor Christie said:

> As I've always said, I believe that's absolutely the right thing to do. People can vote up or down however they choose, but hearings should be held. There is no reason for them to not take on this nomination.

Governor Christie is absolutely right. There is no reason for a Supreme Court nominee not to have a full hearing and a vote. There is no reason for Senate Republicans not to give a nominee to the Supreme Court a meeting, a hearing, and a vote. All we are saying is: Do your job.

Montana Republican Congressman RYAN Zinke published an editorial in the Missoulian, one of the largest newspapers in the entire State, urging the Republican leader to give President Obama's nominee all due consideration. Here is what he said:

> It is unfortunate that partisanship took over the conversation before the Justice even was laid to rest. The partisan bickering and demands to ignore the Constitution that unfolded after Scalia's death is an affront to his legacy. Scalia dedicated his life to serving the Constitution. It is time for the Senate to honor that service and carry out their constitutionally mandated duty to advise.
>
> The Constitution reigns supreme. . . . My colleagues in the Senate have an obligation to provide advice to the President on nominees.

So I urge others to look at what the Congressman from Montana said, what the senior Senator from Maine said, and what Governor Christie said. I agree with them that the Constitution reigns supreme. It simply is saying to do your job, among other things.

In this situation there is no question what the Constitution mandates in times of Supreme Court vacancies. Article II, section 2 of our Constitution clearly outlines the President's legal authority to nominate Justices to the Supreme Court. It also defines the Senate's role in the nomination, which is to provide advice and consent. By denying their constitutional mandate, Republicans are refusing to do their job.

Senate Republicans should give President Obama's Supreme Court nominee a meeting, a hearing, and a vote, because, as Governor Christie said, there is really no reason not to do so.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. REID. Mr. President, yesterday marked the end of Black History Month, which we honored here in the Senate by adopting a resolution sponsored by the junior Senator from New York, Mrs. GILLIBRAND.

The father of Black History Month was Dr. Carter G. Woodson. Now, I really didn't know who Carter Woodson was, but there was a wonderful piece on public radio yesterday that outlined in detail this man, who had been a garbage man, who did menial labor, and I just didn't realize how smart he was. His personal story is remarkable.

Carter Woodson was born in Virginia to former slaves. He attended the University of Chicago—not an easy school to get into, certainly in the early part of the last century, when you are an African American. He then went on to receive his Ph.D. from Harvard in 1912, making him the second African-American man to do so.

As a professor at Howard University here in Washington, DC, Dr. Woodson decided there was a need for Americans—Black and White—to better understand African-American history. In 1926, Dr. Woodson organized the first week devoted entirely to African-American history. He coordinated lectures, panels, and hosted children's plays that celebrated the lives of important figures in Black history.

He had a tough time. They couldn't find places to meet. They wouldn't allow Blacks in many meeting halls. But he found rooms at the YMCA, churches, and Black fraternity houses to meet and to celebrate African-American history. He was relentless. Over the years, the celebration of Black history grew and grew until President Ford decided to make it not a history week but a history month. He did that in 1976. So February is always recognized—since President Ford did that in 1976—as Black History Month.

In addition to adopting this resolution to honor Black History Month, I hope my colleagues will take a moment to think about this great man, Dr. Woodson, who did so much to help Americans embrace Black history and the many contributions of African-American leaders, such as Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, W.E.B. Du Bois, and many others.

But we must do more than just adopt a simple resolution honoring Black History Month. We should work together to address the issues faced by Black Americans and all Americans today and every month of the year. It is the right thing to do.

Mr. President, I see my friends on the floor. Would the Chair announce the business of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY ACT OF 2015—MOTION TO PROCEED

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 524, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative 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 ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise to speak in support of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, known as CARA, of which I am proud to be a cosponsor. I want to begin by commending Senators WHITEHOUSE and PORTMAN for crafting this vitally important bill and also to thank Chairman GRASSLEY and Ranking Member LEAHY for their leadership in the Judiciary Committee.

The heroin and opioid crisis in this country is devastating to far too many families, including those in my State of Maine. This epidemic can be seen in emergency rooms, local jails, on Main Streets, and in homes throughout our country.

In 2014, there were a record 208 overdose deaths in the State of Maine, including 57 caused by heroin, and the problem is only getting worse. Last year, in the city of Portland, ME, 14 people overdosed in just 1 day. Two of them died as a result of those overdoses.

This last weekend, the Bangor Daily News had a special segment of the

paper that chronicled the vivid and tragic story of a young man, Garrett Brown, whose spiral into addiction ultimately resulted in his death from a heroin overdose.

This epidemic is also having tragic effects on the most vulnerable in our society—the children and babies born to addicts. Last year in Maine nearly 1,000 babies were born drug-affected. That is about 8 percent of all births in our State. I have seen the videos of these babies in the neonatal intensive care unit. They are inconsolable. It is so tragic to watch them. Fortunately, the physicians and other health care providers in Maine have become very good at treating these babies, but I wonder what happens to them when they go back to their addicted mothers or fathers.

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act takes the kind of multifaceted approach needed to address this epidemic. I have said we need a three-pronged approach.

First, we need to focus on education and prevention. That is education of the public at large, particularly our school children, but it is also education of health care providers and of law enforcement as well. I remember vividly when I was a young student sitting through a presentation by a recovered heroin addict. I don't know if that is done anymore in our schools, but I can tell you it had a marked impact on all of us who listened to him. None of us ever would have wanted to be in the position in which he found himself as he struggled to recover from his addiction. I don't understand how heroin has lost its stigma, but it clearly has, and it is creating tragic results for our country. So education and prevention are critical.

Second is law enforcement. We need to do a better job of helping law enforcement. I have had so many sheriffs tell me we cannot arrest our way out of this epidemic. We need to connect people who voluntarily come into our jails, and we need to connect them to treatment. Unfortunately, there aren't enough treatment facilities or guidance counselors or substance abuse experts or physicians and nurses and others with this expertise in many rural areas of our country, particularly in States like Maine, and I suspect in urban areas like Chicago where the service providers are overwhelmed with the number of people who need help. There has been a tripling of people in Maine who need help.

Law enforcement has another critical role; that is, to work to interdict the heroin that is coming into the State of Maine—whether it originates in other States, or through ties to cities in Connecticut and Massachusetts, where inner-city gangs are bringing heroin into Maine and swapping it for guns. There is this trafficking that is going on where addicts with no records are being used as straw buyers, buying guns for the gang members who then exchange the heroin for these weapons. We need to have a greater effort to keep heroin out of our country when it is coming from those international cartels in Mexico as documented by the Portland Press Herald's excellent investigation into this matter.

Of course, the third prong is treatment. We need more treatment facilities. We need the ability of not just paramedics but law enforcement to administer the drug Narcan, which can reverse the effects of overdoses if it is administered in time.

The bill before us takes that kind of multifaceted approach. It includes strengthening treatment programs, supporting law enforcement, and increasing education and prevention efforts. It would encourage States and communities to expand these efforts and to increase evidence-based treatments for substance abuse disorders. It would authorize heroin and methamphetamine task forces to support safe law enforcement agencies, and it provides grants for communities facing drug crises. This crisis is by no means confined to the cities in our States. It is in the most rural areas imaginable in my State. It affects suburbia, and it affects neighborhoods throughout our country.

Part of the solution to this crisis includes examining pain management and prescribing practices. I have heard from Maine families, from physicians, and from law enforcement about a disturbing pattern of a significant percentage of individuals using heroin after abusing legal opioid medications. According to a recent report from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, prescription opioid abuse does indeed put individuals at a much higher risk of heroin use. In fact, nearly 80 percent of individuals using heroin reported that they began on their road to addiction by abusing prescription pain medications.

CARA would create a task force to review, modify, and update best practices for pain management and prescribing pain medication. It would also expand the disposal sites for unwanted prescriptions through drug take-back programs, which is an important way for individuals to safely and securely dispose of their unused prescription drugs. I have long been a supporter of drug take-back programs, which have prevented tons of unused, unneeded or expired drugs from falling into the hands of children or drug dealers. At Maine's most recent drug take-back day, authorities safely disposed of nearly 10 tons of unused drugs. Think about that. In a State of just 1.3 million people, in just one of these drug take-back days, 10 tons of unused drugs were collected and safely disposed of. The bill would also authorize grants for strengthening State prescription drug monitoring programs to help prevent doctor shopping.

I have great sympathy for our county sheriffs who have talked to me about this problem. They tell me their jails are overwhelmed by those who are struggling with addiction. Jails are not designed to take the place of treatment centers. Yet sheriffs and police chiefs must train their officers to look for signs of withdrawal and to monitor mental health status. CARA would establish a demonstration program to help identify addicted individuals who may benefit more from treatment than incarceration.

Funding would also be authorized to purchase and train first responders in the use of Narcan, a drug that as I mentioned can reverse the effects of an overdose if administered in time, and a portion of this funding is designated to support rural areas in our country.

There have been many discussions in this Chamber, in our committees, and in our caucuses about the heroin crisis. Last December, the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee on which I serve held a hearing to examine prescribing practices, expanding access to addiction treatment, reducing overdoses, and partnering with law enforcement.

Just last week, the Special Committee on Aging—which I have the privilege to chair—examined opiate use among seniors and other Medicare participants, the potential for diversion of powerful pain killers and Medicare reimbursement policies that may penalize physicians who, in their best medical judgment, decide not to prescribe powerful opiate pain killers and instead provide other kinds of pain relief for their patients. Yet because of the way the surveys are worded, under the Medicare patient satisfaction program, their hospitals can actually lose reimbursement if it is found that a patient was not satisfied enough with control of their pain. Clearly, pain does need to be managed, but these questions are so biased in the way they are asked that they invite overprescription and the prescription of powerful pain killers when they may not be needed. I am not talking about individuals with cancer or end-of-life conditions for whom opiate pain killers may be exactly what is needed to relieve their pain, but we know there are better alternatives for many people who do not need that kind of pain relief. I am working with Senator LANKFORD, Senator DONNELLY, Senator CASEY, and others to see if we can come up with an amendment to this bill on this issue.

It is clear we need to take a comprehensive approach to this epidemic, and the bill before us is a vital step forward. It recognizes opioid and heroin abuse for the public health crisis that it has become, and it offers meaningful and effective ways to support communities seeking to expand treatment prevention, law enforcement, and recovery efforts.

Again, I salute the sponsors of this legislation. I am pleased to be a cosponsor, and I urge all of our colleagues to come together to support this much needed bill.

My thanks to my colleague from Illinois for deferring to me.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The assistant Democratic leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, before I speak on a separate issue, I would like to address the issue raised by the Senator from Maine.

Her experience in Maine is exactly the same as my experience in Illinois. There is no town too small, no suburb too wealthy not to have been touched by heroin overdoses and deaths. It is interesting—the Senator may be encouraged to know that in one small town in downstate Illinois, when they were desperate when two or three teenagers died in 1 week in a small town, they heard about a program in Gloucester, MA, where the chief of police, reacting to what the Senator said earlier, realized that we just can't keep arresting addicts. It is not working.

He announced that if someone who was addicted came into the sheriff's office or the police department and reported their addiction, they wouldn't arrest them; they would take them to a treatment center immediately. The next day, 27 teenagers showed up in this small town in downstate Illinois. Then, of course, the challenge was where to take them. In rural areas, it is a long drive. Some of them were not in good shape for a drive. But they went into treatment.

What they told me after I visited the town was that something happened immediately: The jail was empty because the jail had been filled with petty criminals who had been stealing, burglarizing, trying to feed their habits. Now they were in rehab. So it made it a safer community and at least gave them a chance to straighten out their lives.

One of the amendments I am offering with your colleague from Maine is about treatment. We decided a number of years ago, for fear that we would be warehousing patients, to limit substance abuse treatment facilities under Medicaid to no more than 16 beds. Sixteen beds may work in a rural area; it certainly doesn't work in the city of Chicago. We are not expanding it dramatically, but we allow treatment facilities to have up to 40 beds for residential treatment for substance abuse. We don't want to go back into the bad old days of warehousing, but we certainly want to expand treatment because the problem you have seen and I have seen is growing.

As you noted, if we don't move quickly on treatment, we can't expect to turn it around. I thank the Senator for bringing this to our attention. The bill before us truly is a bipartisan bill, and it should be.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, 1 week ago the Republican majority leader made an announcement that stunned a lot of observers on Capitol Hill. Senator MCCONNELL said that the Senate Republicans would basically turn their backs on what I consider to be a constitutional responsibility and that they would refuse to consider the nomination to fill the vacancy of Justice Scalia, who recently passed away.

In article II, section 2 of the Constitution, the Founding Fathers established a very clear process for appointing Supreme Court Justices. Under the Constitution, the President ''shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint . . . Judges of the supreme Court.'' That is the language of the Constitution. It is explicit.

The President has a constitutional obligation to send a Supreme Court nominee to the Senate, and the Senate has a constitutional obligation to consider the nominee. But the majority leader for the Republicans said last week that he would not give any consideration to a nominee sent by President Obama—not a hearing, not a vote—and then he went so far as to say he will not even meet with that nominee. This is a stunning abdication of the Senate's constitutional responsibility. All of us, as Senators, walk down this aisle, stand over to the side, raise our right hands, and swear to support and defend the Constitution of the United States and to bear true faith and allegiance to it. It is an oath each of us takes very seriously.

The majority leader has tried to justify his decision by noting that this is an election year. Well, it turns out it doesn't take much constitutional study to realize that the Constitution applies to election years as well as every other year. There is nothing in the Constitution that directs the President or the Senate to ignore their responsibility when there is a political Presidential campaign underway. I have searched the Constitution. There is no reference whatsoever to a Presidential campaign year absolving either the President or the Senate from their constitutional obligations.

One of the great ironies of the decision by the Senate Republican leadership was the way they reached it. Shortly after Justice Scalia passed away, Majority Leader MCCONNELL issued a statement saying: ''The American people should have a voice in the selection of their next Supreme Court Justice.'' Then last Tuesday he summoned the Republican members of the Senate Judiciary Committee to his office, and there he decided with them that they would deprive the American people of a chance to view a hearing on President Obama's nominee to fill the Scalia vacancy. This is an unprecedented obstruction of a Supreme Court nominee, and this decision to obstruct certainly wasn't made by the American people. It was a unilateral, partisan decision made by a handful of Senators behind closed doors. The Republican Senators didn't bring their decision out into the open, not to a hearing of the Judiciary Committee, which they chair; they did it quietly behind closed doors.

But the American people heard what happened. Last Friday a letter was sent to the Republican members of the Judiciary Committee by the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights and Human Rights and 81 other national organizations.

I ask unanimous consent to have the letter printed in the RECORD.

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

FEBRUARY 26, 2016.

Hon. CHARLES GRASSLEY, *Chairman*,
Hon. ORRIN HATCH,
Hon. JEFF SESSIONS,
Hon. LINDSEY GRAHAM,
Hon. JOHN CORNYN,
Hon. MICHAEL LEE,
Hon. TED CRUZ,
Hon. JEFF FLAKE,
Hon. DAVID VITTER,
Hon. DAVID PERDUE,
Hon. THOM TILLIS,
Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS: We, the undersigned organizations, urge you to reconsider your unprecedented and destructive refusal to give fair consideration to any Supreme Court nomination until after the next President is sworn into office on January 20, 2017, as announced in your February 23rd letter to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell.

Your letter claims that your refusal to hold a hearing on—or to even meet with—any potential nominee is part and parcel to executing your ''constitutional authority to withhold consent on any nominee.'' This is a clear perversion of your constitutional duties as understood by almost every scholarly authority on the topic and by most Americans.

It is a dereliction of your constitutional duty to handcuff the Supreme Court for two terms. Your proposed course of action would cause a constitutional crisis that would shake the very foundation of our democracy.

We condemn this unprecedented overreach, and call on you to uphold the Constitution by giving fair consideration, including timely hearings and votes, to the next nominee to the Supreme Court.

Under Article II, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution, the President shall nominate a Justice to the Supreme Court ''by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate.'' This does not give a select few senators veto power over the President's role in selecting and nominating a candidate. The Senate's duty is to evaluate a nominee's fitness and qualifications, not to pick the President making the nomination.

Our legal system is based on the rule of law and requires stability and certainty. The course you have charted would mean that a new justice would not be confirmed until well into 2017 at the earliest. Shackling the court for two terms would undermine the rule of law, leave legal questions unresolved, and hamper the administration of justice across our nation.

Refusing to consider any nominee, without due evaluation of his or her merits, credentials, and experiences, is a direct repudiation of your constitutional duties.

We believe in upholding the Constitution. So should you.

Sincerely,

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights; Philip Randolph Institute; AFL–CIO; African American Ministers In Action; Alliance for Justice; American Association for Access, Equity and Diversity; American Association For Justice; American

Family Voices; American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees; American Federation of Teachers; American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee; Americans for Democratic Action (ADA); Americans United for Change; Andrew Goodman Foundation; Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum; Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF); Asian Americans Advancing Justice/AAJC; Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL–CIO (APALA); Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO); Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law.

Bend the Arc Jewish Action; Center for American Progress; Center for Community Change; Center for Pan Asian Community Services, Inc. (CPACS); Coalition on Human Needs; Common Cause; Communications Workers of America; Constitutional Accountability Center; Defenders of Wildlife; Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund; Earthjustice; Equal Justice Society; Feminist Majority Foundation; Human Rights Campaign; International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA); Iota Phi Lamda Sorority, Inc.; Japanese American Citizen League; Jewish Labor Committee; Korean American Resource & Cultural Center; Korean Resource Center.

Lambda Legal; Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law; League of Conservation Voters; League of United Latin American Citizens; MALDEF; Moveon.org Civic Action; NAACP; NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.; NAACP-National Voter Fund; NARAL Pro-Choice America; National Asian Pacific American Families Against Substance Abuse; National Association of Social Workers (NASW); National Black Justice Coalition; National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development; National Congress of American Indians; National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA); National Council of Jewish Women; National Education Association; National Employment Law Project; National Employment Lawyers Association.

National Fair Housing Alliance; National Korean American Service & Education Consortium; National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund; National Partnership for Women & Families; National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance; National Tongan American Society; National Urban League; National Women's Law Center; People For the American Way; Planned Parenthood Federation of America; PolicyLink; Project Vote; Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association; Service Employees International Union; Sierra Club; South Asian Bar Association of North America; Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC); Southern Poverty Law Center; TASH; Union for Reform Judaism; United Auto Workers (UAW); Workmen's Circle.

Mr. DURBIN. The letter described the Republicans' obstruction as ''a clear perversion of your constitutional duties as understood by almost every scholarly authority on the topic and by most Americans.'' The letter said that the Constitution ''does not give a select few Senators veto power over the President's role in selecting and nominating a candidate. The Senate's duty is to evaluate a nominee's fitness and qualifications, not to pick the President making the nomination.''

I agree with that statement. By unilaterally refusing to give any consideration to any nominee made by this President, Senate Republicans are trying to stop this President from fulfilling his constitutional responsibility to nominate and appoint Supreme Court Justices under article II, section 2. They did it in secret in a back room, behind closed doors. Why are they so afraid to give President Obama's nominee a fair hearing? Are they concerned that if the nominee is well qualified and they turn that person down, it will reflect poorly on the Senate Republicans?

The Senate Republican process of secrecy and obstruction is inconsistent with the Constitution. It does a disservice to the Supreme Court, to the President, and to the American people.

I raised a point last week which is worth returning to. The argument is made that the next President should pick the nominee to fill this vacancy. The argument is made that the American people, when they select the next President in November of this year—that we will be saying to the American people: You make the choice. You select the President. And then you will know the Supreme Court nominee.

Well, there may be some logic to that but for one thing: We have a President. He was elected in 2012 with a 5 million-vote majority. This is the fourth year of his Presidency.

When you listen to the Republicans argue, you would think, wait a minute, Barack Obama was not elected for 4 years, only for 3 years and 2 months. They argue at this point in time that this President does not have the constitutional authority or responsibility to fill the vacancy of Justice Scalia. The American people spoke. It wasn't all that close. By a margin of 5 million votes, they chose this President for 4 years, not for 3 years or 3 years and 2 months. He is the President, he has the authority of the Presidency, and he has that authority not given to him by God but by the American people. It is authority which should not be taken away by the Republican majority of the Senate.

Their argument, ''Wait for the next election''—do you know what that means? It means that if they have their way, if they fail to do their job, if they don't even have a hearing for President Obama's nominee, don't even bring it to a vote, and the vacancy continues on the Supreme Court, it will be historic. The last time we will have left a vacancy of this duration on the Supreme Court dates back to the Civil War. A nation at war with itself left a vacancy for more than a year on the Supreme Court. Now the Senate Republicans of 2016 want to leave a vacancy on the Supreme Court for over a year. There is no need for it, and the Constitution certainly makes it clear how this vacancy should be filled.

There is no secret that there is a political motive. The Senate Republicans hope Justice Scalia's seat will be filled by a person they choose. This is a political calculation they are willing to make, to take the heat for not following their constitutional responsibility in the hopes that a President Trump will pick someone to fill this vacancy or some other Republican President in the future. That is what they are counting on. That is political.

Politics shouldn't trump the Constitution. Nothing should trump the Constitution when it comes to governing the United States. Because it is an election year doesn't mean Senators can take a yearlong break and ignore their own oath of office.

It is time for the Senate Republicans to do their job. The President and the Senate must fulfill their constitutional responsibility in times of war, in economic depression, and even in an election year.

Last week Majority Leader MCCONNELL reportedly told a group of House Republicans that there isn't ''a snowball's chance in hell'' that he would back down from his plan of obstruction. Nevertheless, today President Obama has invited Majority Leader MCCONNELL to meet with him in the White House to discuss the Supreme Court vacancy. They have also invited the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Senator GRASSLEY; the ranking Democrat, Senator LEAHY; and the minority leader of the Senate, Senator REID.

Why did the President offer this meeting? Because that is what always happens. When a President is about to consider filling such a historic vacancy, he brings together the leaders of the Senate to discuss his thought process and perhaps to solicit names from them of potential nominees. Even when we have disagreed in the past and have Presidents and Senators from different political parties, they still extended that courtesy to one another. President Obama is extending the majority leader that courtesy even if the majority leader has made it clear and publicly stated repeatedly that he will not even meet with, let alone consider, the President's nominee.

The President is setting a good example of what should be done in this circumstance where the President follows tradition and the Constitution. I am glad the President is taking this seriously. I know he is in the midst of a careful, deliberative process to choose a nominee. The President should select an outstanding person who has the qualifications, a commitment to justice, a deep respect for the role of the judiciary, and life experience that points toward integrity and good judgment.

The President is doing his job as the Constitution requires. My Republican colleagues in the Senate should do their job as well. They should honor the process established in the Constitution and give the President's nominee fair consideration, a hearing, and a vote.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FLAKE). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, yesterday the Senate unanimously voted to advance consideration of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, commonly known as CARA, and that is because this legislation gets at a big problem. The abuse of heroin and prescription painkillers is devastating families and communities across the country, including Texas. The truth is, the problem is getting worse, not better. Deaths due to heroin and prescription drug overdoses have even surpassed car accidents as the No. 1 cause of injury-related deaths nationwide.

It is time for Congress to do something significant to address this disturbing trend. This bill is a good example of how Republicans and Democrats, working on a bipartisan basis, can zero in on a problem that is harming our Nation and work together to address it.

I am proud to cosponsor this legislation, and I look forward to continuing to work on this bill and to voting on amendments that will actually improve it. Speaking of amendments, while this bill touches on how to battle drug addiction in this country, we need to do more to cut these drugs off at the source and keep them from getting into our country in the first place.

The Senate Armed Services Committee recently heard about the supply side of this equation—this primarily goes to the heroin coming from Mexico—when they heard testimony from the Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper. In his testimony, Director Clapper talked about how Mexico has ramped up the production of heroin in response to this growing demand in the United States.

I know the Presiding Officer is also from a border State and has had frequent conversations with our Mexican counterparts. When we complain about the supply, they usually turn it on me and say: Well, what about the demand in the United States? The truth is, we have to get at both components—both the supply and demand.

In 2014, drug cartels smuggled more than a quarter of a million pounds of heroin across our borders. This was done by the same transnational criminal organizations that traffic human beings for sex or forced labor and who man the illegal immigration pipelines into our country. This is no longer a mom-and-pop operation. These are major criminal networks and organizations that will do anything for money and, of course, are happy to make money from the heroin that comes across our border.

If we are going to make significant strides in the fight against addiction and drug abuse, we need to take a critical look at where the drugs are coming from and consider the strategies we can employ to keep them from even coming onto our soil. Unfortunately, even while the production and demand of these illegal drugs have been growing, we have not done enough to combat it.

Earlier I mentioned that the U.S. Southern Command—that is the combatant command for the U.S. military that is south of Mexico and goes into Central and South America—has been given zero Navy ships to conduct counter-trafficking missions, and that is because our Navy fleet is simply too small and these resources have been diverted elsewhere to counter the growing threats around the world. It is irresponsible to ignore the transnational criminal threats in our own backyard. We need a strategy to interdict drug shipments and cut them off before they reach our shores, so I have submitted several amendments that would help focus our resources to interdict these shipments and to help stem the growing tide of illicit drugs entering the U.S. market.

One amendment would simply require the Defense Department, when it allocates funding to the States for the National Guard Counterdrug Program, to prioritize drug interdiction. More effectively using the National Guard's military capabilities to help interdict drug flows would provide a needed boost to law enforcement and counter-narcotics efforts, especially on our southern border. Too often, law enforcement agencies have been left with scant resources to handle this growing problem, so this amendment would allow the National Guard to play a bigger role in drug interdiction.

Another amendment I have submitted would require the President to create a plan—a strategy, really—to increase interdiction of illegal drugs that enter across the southwest border. It would require the interdiction goal of 90 percent of those drugs, which would be a great leap forward from the current levels.

Last year, General Kelly, then the commander of Southern Command, estimated that only 15 to 20 percent of drugs bound for the United States were interdicted, just 15 percent to 20 percent. General Kelly said that, due to a lack of resources in the Southern Command, basically many times they were relegated to being observers as illegal drugs would transit across their area of operation.

Given our shortfall here, it is pretty amazing that a comprehensive plan across all relevant agencies doesn't already exist. It is shocking really. This amendment would make sure that one is created to boost the amount of drugs that we successfully interdict. It would also require the President to submit this plan to Congress so we can have a conversation between the executive branch and the legislative branch and so the American people could review it, could hold us accountable, and to make sure we are making progress on this front.

Finally, I have submitted an amendment to strengthen the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Program. This would help Federal, State, and local law enforcement officials use task force funding to implement a multidisciplinary heroin response strategy. This has been tested in several high-intensity drug trafficking areas with great success. This amendment would help implement this strategy nationwide, giving law enforcement additional tools to combat the growing threat of heroin from both the supply and demand side.

Mr. President, I am glad we are making some progress on this legislation. I am optimistic that we will be able to complete it this week in a bipartisan fashion, which is the only way you get these done around here. We desperately need to target the opioid epidemic happening across the Nation, and we also need to cut off as much of the supply of the cheap heroin as we can. When people can't get access to prescription drugs, too often they turn to cheap heroin, and that is why the supply issue is so important. But we need both pieces in order to make real progress and restore our communities currently plagued by addiction and drug abuse.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I rise today to urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. This is a bill that we have been working on for 2 years—Senator PORTMAN, Senator WHITEHOUSE, and Senator KLOBUCHAR. I thank them for their partnership and leadership on this bill. This is something the four of us got together on because we saw in our own States the public health epidemic that was happening with our constituents: individuals struggling with addiction, people who were addicted to prescription drugs and overusing and misusing prescription drugs, and then with the price of heroin on our streets so low that people are turning to heroin and also a combination of heroin and a deadly drug called fentanyl.

I thank Senators PORTMAN, WHITEHOUSE, and KLOBUCHAR for the work we have been doing together over the last several years on this bill to see this bill come to this Senate floor. This is a very important piece of legislation and will help us address the public health epidemic facing my home State of New Hampshire and this country. This is something I have come to the floor about on several occasions before.

Traveling around my State, I can't tell you the number of stories I have heard from people in New Hampshire about what we are facing and the number of lives that are lost, the number of lives that are devastated by heroin and fentanyl and misuse of prescription drugs.

This is a life-or-death issue in my State. The number of drug overdose deaths has been staggering. Before I came to the Senate, I served as attorney general of our State, and so I

worked with law enforcement on these issues, whether it was methamphetamine, cocaine, or other illegal drugs, but I have never seen anything like this. As of last week, the chief medical examiner's office had recorded that there were 420 drug deaths in 2015, and that was a dramatic increase in New Hampshire from the year before. The year before, we had about 320 drug deaths. So this is more than one person dying a day in my State. Many more than die in traffic accidents are dying from drug overdoses, and it is a combination, again, the driver of this—heroin and Fentanyl. Fentanyl is 40 to 50 percent times more powerful than heroin, and when the drug dealers mix it up with the heroin, it is a killer.

As Eric Spofford told me—he is an incredible guy who is in recovery and has opened treatment facilities in our State. He got it right when he said fentanyl is a serial killer because that is what it is.

In the month of February alone, there were 14 suspected opioid overdose deaths just in the city of Manchester—14 in just one city in my State. That is a record high in Manchester, NH. These are not just numbers that we are talking about. Behind every statistic is a life, a life that is taken from us far too soon and has been tragically lost—a mother, a daughter, a son, a brother, a neighbor, a friend, a coworker. This hits all of us, and these are people who are being lost from this horrible epidemic.

Behind the statistics and behind the headlines we see every day in the news, there are family members, friends, and communities that have been deeply impacted by this public health crisis, such as the mother from Greenville, NH, who wrote to me. She spends her days actually doing incredibly important work, helping people who are struggling with addiction. She helps them, and yet she has been coming home to see her own son struggling with heroin. She told me, ''As I tried to comfort those who have been affected by this tragedy, I think that my son will be next.''

In Laconia, a man helps those struggling to get treatment, but he feels helpless when they are faced with a 5-month waiting period for a rehabilitation facility. He wrote, ''In 5 months, these individuals may be dead.''

A parent from Salem, NH, contacted me and told me her son is struggling with heroin addiction, and she needs help finding a treatment program for him since she could not afford to pay for treatment herself. Parents don't know where to go.

I have met many parents who want to get help for their kids, and they are having a hard time finding a place and knowing where to go. Another mother of three children had to revive her son from an overdose before the paramedics could arrive.

The Griffin family from Newton, whom I have gotten to know well, lost their beautiful 20-year-old daughter Courtney to an overdose. Now, Courtney's father Doug and Courtney's mother Pam have made it their mission to bring awareness to this issue and to make sure that others don't suffer from the same tragedy they have suffered in the lost life of a beautiful young woman named Courtney, who had so much of life before her and so much potential. Doug and Pam and so many other dedicated people in New Hampshire are working tirelessly to turn the tide against this epidemic.

Over the past 2 years, I made it a priority to travel the State and hear from our public safety community, treatment providers, addiction experts, families, and individuals in recovery about finding effective strategies to address this problem. On ride-alongs with the police and fire, I have been to overdoses. I have seen them bring people back to life, administering Narcan only to say that they face this every single day. If we don't focus on prevention and we don't focus on treatment, and the important work that our first responders are doing, then we are not going to get at this problem and make sure people who are struggling get out of this cycle of addiction.

Treatment facilities in New Hampshire are certainly working tirelessly, and individuals are stepping up to expand our capacity in New Hampshire to support individuals who need help, and they need more support. I want to take a moment to recognize some of their hard work. Among so many others, I am grateful that there are so many working hard together in New Hampshire: Hope for New Hampshire Recovery, Families in Transition Willows Program, the Farnum Center, Westbridge Community Services in Manchester, GateHouse Sober Community in Nashua, Hope on Haven Hill, Bonfire Recovery Services in Dover, The Granite House in Derry, and the New Freedom Academy in Canterbury. I have met many incredible people who are dedicating their lives to this.

I have had the opportunity to visit these facilities and hear directly from the dedicated professionals who work there. They do critically important work. You have average people coming together, whether to organize a 5K race or to gain resources and support for people who are on the frontlines. This is what those who are on the frontlines are saying: Tackling this epidemic and reversing the tide of addiction will take a comprehensive, thoughtful approach, and include strategies for treatment, prevention, education, support for individuals in recovery, and interdiction. That is why we have to pass CARA.

CARA is important because it embodies the comprehensive approach that so many in my State have told me they need. Here is what it looks like. It gives more support to first responders and law enforcement, expanding the availability of lifesaving drugs like Narcan, which our first responders are using every day. And because CARA will help make this happen, it has been endorsed by the National Fraternal Order of Police, National District Attorneys Association, and National Association of Attorneys General, including New Hampshire's own attorney general, Joe Foster.

It strengthens prescription drug monitoring programs to help prevent ''doctor shopping.'' This is something I have been advocating for since I was attorney general of our State so that our public health officials can have the tools—because we know from SAMHSA research that four out of five people started by misusing or overusing prescription drugs and transferred to heroin. So this is critical.

It increases access to treatment, including evidence-based medication assisted treatment, which can help people have more access. We need to turn the tide. Over 130 stakeholder groups have gotten behind this legislation, groups that are on the frontline of this issue. Just to name some of them, it has been endorsed by the National Council for Behavioral Health, American Psychological Association, American Society of Addiction Medicine, Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America, Harm Reduction Coalition, Faces and Voices of Recovery, Mental Health America, Young People in Recovery, National Association of State Alcohol and Substance Abuse Directors, among many others. I thank these groups for their feedback.

It would support additional resources to identify and treat incarcerated individuals suffering from substance abuse disorders and expand prevention. It is so important we address prevention.

It would establish a campaign to bring greater awareness to the association between the overuse and misuse of prescription drugs and what happens as people misuse prescription drugs and then go to heroin and deadly drugs like fentanyl.

This bill has overwhelming bipartisan support. It has 42 bipartisan cosponsors.

I see my colleague from New Hampshire on the floor. I want to thank her for her sponsorship of this legislation. This crisis does not discriminate. It doesn't care. Heroin, fentanyl—the devastating impact of this drug does not care whether you're a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, whatever your background.

This is something that affects all of us. A high school student from Manchester who wrote to me, sharing how concerned he is about the negative impact this epidemic is having on his city. When he walks home from school, he sometimes sees discarded needles on the sidewalk, and tragically he lost his best friend to a fentanyl overdose.

Abi, who lives in the Seacoast Region, struggled with an opioid use disorder through her pregnancy until she was finally able to receive help and treatment and enter recovery. I met Abi, and I am so inspired by her because she shows us we can make a difference and we can turn this around.

A woman in Londonderry, who spoke to me at a community forum, was terrified her brother would suffer a reoccurrence as soon as he was released from prison because he wasn't getting treatment. She was worried about his path to a successful life because he was still suffering from a substance abuse disorder.

Then there is Angela from Nashua, who has turned her story into a rallying cry for others. Angela lost her mother to a heroin overdose 17 years ago and has adopted the children of several of her aunts and cousins who have lost their battles with addiction. After all of this, Angela's son and his girlfriend have become addicted to opioids and his girlfriend overdosed in Angela's home. Her son is still battling with heroin addiction.

There are so many groups that are working to support these individuals and we need to give them our support. They cannot and should not have to do this alone.

I see my colleague, Senator SHAHEEN from New Hampshire on the floor. I really appreciate her leadership on this issue. I am a cosponsor of Senator SHAHEEN's standalone legislation which would provide emergency appropriations in order to combat the heroin and prescription opioid crisis facing our State. In fact, she and I have both written to Health and Human Services and asked them to designate this as a public health emergency. We have seen the impact on our State and we have seen the lives that are being lost and impacted by this. So I am going to be cosponsoring Senator SHAHEEN's amendment to CARA and supporting it on the floor. I very much support her getting a vote on this amendment, and I hope that happens.

In addition, I appreciate that the President has put in additional resources in his budget to address this issue. This is an issue that we all have to work together on.

At the end of the year, there was also important funding that was passed that CARA would provide a very important framework for. Last year during the appropriations process, Congress worked to increase by 284 percent funding for programs at CDC and SAMHSA related to combating opioid abuse. While this is a positive step forward, these dollars actually haven't been distributed yet. It is important we pass CARA to make sure that as we go forward with the dollars that have already been appropriated and as we go forward in the appropriations process this year, that we have the framework to properly redirect this funding for prevention, treatment, and first responders, to make sure we have the feedback of 130 stakeholder groups and law enforcement throughout the country and to ensure that these dollars are appropriately spent to address the epidemic we are facing.

I have been honored to work over the last several years, again, with Senators PORTMAN, WHITEHOUSE, and KLOBUCHAR in introducing this bill. In fact, I also thank the head of drug policy in the administration, Director Botticelli. He summed it up well when we asked him what he thought about CARA. He said in a hearing before the Judiciary Committee in January:

> There is clear evidence that a comprehensive response looking at multidimensional aspects of this that are embedded in the CARA Act are tremendously important. We know we need to do more, and I think that all of those components put forward in this bill are critically important to making headway in terms of this epidemic.

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act would be a significant step forward in a Federal response to this public health epidemic that is facing New Hampshire and so many other States in the country. I urge my colleagues to support this critical legislation, to listen to the people of New Hampshire and to the people of this country who are asking us to act.

This is what they are saying in New Hampshire.

In Center Barnstead: ''Please pass legislation to save my son's life.''

In Manchester: ''I wake up every morning with a fear that I will find my son dead. I am crying out for help.''

In Spofford: ''I want my voice to be heard so that no one else falls through the cracks.''

In Londonderry: ''Addiction can happen to anyone.''

In Tilton: ''We need action, and we need it right now.''

We have an opportunity on this floor right now, in this debate, with very thoughtful legislation, very bipartisan legislation—the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act—to take action now. We owe it to all those who have lost their lives, their families who have been impacted, and those who are struggling with addiction. We owe it to the first responders in our community and to the people who are working hard to turn this around in New Hampshire and across this country. To all, I thank them for the incredible work they are doing.

We need to pass this legislation. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting passage of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. This bill will make a difference, and I believe it will help save lives in New Hampshire and across the country.

There is no doubt that passing this bill will make a difference. We will all need to continue to do more. We will all need to continue to fight for more and more support through the appropriations process and any way we can. I intend to keep up this fight because I know lives are on the line. I know this issue is impacting my State. I know that as I talk to the mothers, the daughters, the fathers, the sons, the friends who are telling me the stories of the people they have lost, that we can turn this around. It is so important that we pass this legislation.

Again, I wish to thank my colleague from the State of New Hampshire for her work on this.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 30 minutes, and I wonder if the Chair will advise me when I have about 3 minutes remaining.

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

The Chair will so notify the Senator.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. I thank the Presiding Officer.

I am pleased to join my colleague from New Hampshire on the floor and the others who have spoken this morning so eloquently about the heroin and opioid epidemic that is ravaging families and communities in every one of our States.

As Senator AYOTTE said so well, we have seen in New Hampshire that we are at ground zero for this epidemic. In terms of the percentage of people affected in New Hampshire, we are losing a higher percentage than almost every State in the Nation. This is an issue we need to work together to address. I think we have to respond much more robustly than we have done at the Federal level because this epidemic is becoming a pandemic. It is affecting young and old, urban and rural, rich and poor, Whites and minorities.

As others have said, the Senate is now considering the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act or CARA. I want to congratulate the sponsors of the legislation because this is a good bipartisan bill. It is important as we look at what we need to do to address the epidemic we face.

In addition to the authorizations and the good work that is in the CARA legislation, we also need to provide the resources that law enforcement and health professionals who are on the frontlines of dealing with this crisis are going to need. Despite heroic efforts, law enforcement and treatment professionals are increasingly overwhelmed by the sheer scope and scale of the opioid and heroin crisis. Everywhere I go in New Hampshire, the lack of resources is abundantly clear. Our communities need additional funding—and they need it urgently.

So this is why I have submitted an amendment cosponsored by the author of CARA, Senator WHITEHOUSE, and I am pleased my colleague from New Hampshire has also joined in cosponsoring this amendment. This amendment would provide $600 million in emergency funding for critical programs that we know will help address this crisis.

I am on the floor to urge the majority leader and the leadership of the Senate to allow a vote on this legislation because this is a nationwide emergency of the first order, and it is time for us in Congress to treat it like a nationwide emergency.

In 2014, more than 47,000 Americans died from lethal drug overdoses—more fatalities than from car accidents. Each day 120 Americans die of drug

overdoses—2 deaths every hour. In our State of New Hampshire, where we have 1.3 million people, we are losing more than a person a day to drug overdose deaths.

Here we have a map of America that shows the increases in deaths from drug overdoses. We can see in 2003 the majority of the map is lighter colored, so it means it doesn't have the same number of deaths. In 2008 we can see this dark red color which shows the deaths from drug overdoses increasing. Here, in 2014, we see the impact of those 47,000 people lost.

The State of the Presiding Officer, like in New Hampshire, is at ground zero in the State of Arizona. In West Virginia, in Tennessee, and in Kentucky, they are seeing the same dramatic increase in the number of deaths from drug overdoses. This chart represents overdose deaths per 100,000 people. Again, it demonstrates how truly national in scope the crisis has become. No State is immune from the scourge.

Across the country, our communities are asking why this is happening. They are asking why so many of our family members and neighbors are overdosing on these drugs. Sadly, as we have heard from people who have spoken on the floor, one of the primary reasons is because so many people are becoming addicted to prescription opioid drugs, better known as painkillers. In 2012, 259 million prescriptions were written for these drugs—almost 1 for every American. That is more than enough to give every American adult their own bottle of pills. During a 3-month stretch in 2015 in New Hampshire, 13 million doses of schedule II painkillers were dispensed at New Hampshire pharmacies in just one 3-month period—13 million pills in 3 months for a State with a population of 1.3 million, and nearly 80 percent of these prescriptions were for heavy painkillers like oxycodone, morphine, and fentanyl.

If we look, we can see how this graph dramatically tracks the increase in drug prescribing and the number of deaths that resulted. The number of drug overdose deaths has risen as opioid prescriptions have increased. This orange line is the number of deaths. The green line is the number of prescriptions that are being written. We are missing the data for the year 2012, but there is no doubt that those deaths track the number of prescriptions for painkillers that are being written.

The National Institutes of Health have found that people who are addicted to opioid painkillers are 40 times more likely to be addicted to heroin. So when someone gets addicted to pain pills and can no longer get prescriptions, they turn to drugs like heroin and fentanyl.

What I heard from law enforcement in New Hampshire and from the medical community is that people turn to heroin because it is cheaper and easier to get than prescription drugs after they become addicted. Of course, we have seen that drug traffickers are taking advantage. They are flooding our streets with these drugs. In many of our communities, that bag of heroin is cheaper than a six-pack of beer. Of course the end result is a staggering increase in overdose deaths, which we can see on this chart.

Again, in 2014, nearly 21,000 people died from opioid abuse. There were more than 10,000 deaths from heroin. That is a 222-percent increase from 2009 levels.

So we can see that these are opioid deaths, these are deaths from cocaine, and these are deaths from heroin. We can see the red line and the green line have gone up dramatically.

A professor at Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, Brendan Saloner, describes opioid addiction as ''a chronic relapsing illness, just like diabetes.''

We know treatment is the only effective answer. Again, what I have heard from law enforcement in New Hampshire is that they know they can't put drug users in jail. That is not the answer to deal with this challenge. We need to put the bad guys in jail, but we need to provide treatment to the people who need it because that is the only effective answer. Unfortunately, it is a tragic reality that nationwide nearly 9 out of 10 people with substance use disorders don't receive treatment. They are being turned away and denied treatment due to a chronic lack of resources.

My colleague from New Hampshire spoke very eloquently about some of the people she heard from. We have heard from people in the same way in New Hampshire. Of the 1.3 million people in our State, it is estimated that 100,000 people—almost 10 percent—are currently seeking treatment for substance use disorders. We are able to offer services to only a small fraction of that total.

Over the last decade the number of people admitted to State treatment programs increased 90 percent for heroin use and 500 percent—500 percent—for prescription drug use, with the largest increases occurring in the past several years.

As we can see from this chart, lack of treatment is a national problem: the darker the green, the more people in that State who are not receiving treatment for addiction. Sadly, New Hampshire is a very dark green, as is Arizona, the Presiding Officer's State. You can see this dark green line coming down the east coast and going up the west coast.

In 2014, in Kentucky, 82,000 people needed addiction treatment but failed to get it—in Tennessee, 116,000 people; in Arizona, 157,000; in Nevada, 55,000; in North Carolina, 200,000 people. These are all people who needed treatment who didn't get it. When people don't get treatment, they are overdosing in overwhelming numbers.

Sadly, this map of the United States shows where the overdose death rates are the highest. Where the darkest colors are shown the death rates are greater than 19 per 100,000 of population. We can see many of the same States, such as New Hampshire, that have the most difficulty in people finding treatment. Those are the States where we are finding the highest death rates. In 2014 in Kentucky, 1,100 people died from a drug overdose; in Tennessee, 1,200 people; in Arizona, 1,200 overdose deaths; in Nevada, 500; and in North Carolina, 1,300.

In recent days I have had a chance to visit three treatment centers in my home State, Headrest in Lebanon, Serenity Place in Manchester, and Seacoast Youth Services in Seabrook. These treatment centers are staffed by skilled, dedicated professionals. They are saving lives every day, but they tell me that for every life they save, many more are being lost for lack of treatment capacity, lack of facilities, and lack of funding.

I had a chance on some of those visits to meet with some of the people in recovery. I can remember one young man up in Lebanon at Headrest who had been in and out of prison because of crimes committed when he was using. He said to me that it costs thousands of dollars to keep someone in prison. The figure he used was $35,000. He said: Don't you all know that it is cheaper to give somebody treatment? It is absolutely more cost effective for us to provide treatment for people who are in recovery, people who need help.

I heard from a young woman in Manchester who said that she had been arrested for drug use. She said: I am not a criminal. My problem is I need treatment to deal with these drugs.

Another young woman who was in her early twenties who had been in and out of the Manchester jail—the Valley Street jail—said: You know, they don't provide treatment in the Valley Street jail. I learned when I got picked up that I don't tell them that I have a drug problem or that I have mental health issues because if I do, they put me in the bubble where I get observed 24 hours a day, regardless of what I am doing. What I need is treatment. I don't need to be in the bubble.

Well, that is why this supplemental amendment would increase resources for treatment and recovery—because the answer is treatment. Our amendment includes $300 million for the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant Program. This program is the premier Federal initiative to boost State and local resources for prevention, treatment, and recovery support. In 21 States this block grant program represents at least 75 percent of the State agency's substance abuse prevention budget. In some States, sadly, it is the only funding for substance abuse prevention. If we are going to get a handle on this problem, we are going to have to provide some additional resources for the treatment that these programs need. This funding will result in an immediate increase in the number of addicted individuals who

will receive lifesaving treatment. It will also save taxpayer dollars in the future, just as I heard from that young man at Headrest, who said it is cheaper to provide treatment than to build prisons. He is absolutely right.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse estimates that for every dollar spent on substance use disorder treatment programs there is a $4 to $7 reduction in the cost of drug-related crime. An outpatient treatment program can result in savings that exceed costs by a factor of 12 to 1.

I live in Stratford County in New Hampshire. It has used the modest funding from this block grant program, the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant Program, to accomplish important things, including expanding the peer-based addiction recovery efforts and working at schools to engage at-risk students in the middle school years. If we can prevent addiction, that is obviously the best thing we can do.

Unfortunately, many prevention and treatment efforts in Stratford County remain chronically underfunded. I recently learned about one local woman, a mother and waitress, who overdosed in front of her 2-year-old child. Fortunately, she received inpatient treatment, and now she is doing well. Others have not been so lucky. Like cities and counties all across America, Stratford has a months-long waiting list for those needing treatment. When people with substance use disorders are turned away, they remain on the streets—desperate, often committing crimes to support their addiction, always at constant risk of a lethal overdose.

Vice News in New Hampshire recently profiled the opioid epidemic. The reporter interviewed one desperate user who said this:

> I tried to get help and stop, but at the treatment center they said I would have to wait 3 months. I had to go to the hospital and tell them I was going to kill myself just to get admitted.

That should not happen in America.

Another critical tool in the effort to stem the tide of this crisis is prescription drug monitoring programs. These State-run programs collect, monitor, and analyze electronically transmitted prescribing and dispensing data submitted by pharmacies and dispensing practitioners. We know that monitoring works. We have the data to show that it works, but only half of the 50 States are receiving Federal support.

The emergency supplemental amendment would include $50 million for the CDC to expand and bolster State drug monitoring programs. Our amendment also allocates $10 million to improve access in high-risk communities to medication-assisted treatment services for heroin and prescription opioids because numerous studies have shown the effectiveness in including medication in the treatment of some individuals with substance use disorders. Medications like methadone, buprenorphine, and naltrexone have been shown to reduce opioid use.

Our supplemental spending amendment would also speed emergency resources to law enforcement agencies. This Senator has heard from police in New Hampshire. They can't solve this problem by putting people in jail. They can help to solve it by putting traffickers in jail and by breaking up those networks that are supplying drugs.

In recent years, the opioid epidemic has spread to small towns and rural areas in every part of the country. If we went back to that first map of the United States, we could see just how much the spread has been to rural parts of this country. Heroin traffickers in New York expressly target New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine—all States with a large rural population. We don't have any real urban areas in our States, but we can see the spread of those drugs in northern New England.

This amendment will provide $230 million in emergency funding for Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grants, and $10 million for COPS Anti-Heroin Task Force Grants. The Byrne JAG Grant Program is the Nation's cornerstone crimefighting program. It has proved its effectiveness in each of our States, which is why it enjoys such strong bipartisan support. But the program has suffered cuts. In New Hampshire, we received $1.7 million in Byrne funding in 2007. Last year we received less than $1 million—almost a 50-percent reduction.

I had the chance to travel with Senator HOEVEN down to our southern border of Texas last spring because we both are on the Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security. We talked with some of our Customs and Border Patrol employees who were down on the border in Laredo and were interdicting drugs down on our southern border. One of the things they talked about is that drugs are coming across our southern border and they are going up the Interstate Highway System. They are going up Interstate 95 to northern New Hampshire. They are going up Interstate 35 through the middle of the country. We have to provide law enforcement with the funds they need to interdict those traffickers. We need an infusion of new funding to mobilize so that the programs are more aggressive for stopping opioid traffickers and dealers.

Our amendment requires that Byrne JAG funds be used directly to combat the opioid crisis for this emergency funding. That will allow for programs that emphasize treatment over incarceration, such as drug courts.

In New Hampshire we have seen what a difference it can make to have well-resourced, ambitious law enforcement initiatives. From May to December of last year, the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas Task Force, or the HIDTA Task Force, based in Bedford, NH, carried out Operation Trident. They draw on Federal, State, and local law enforcement resources in New Hampshire and Massachusetts. It makes sense because the more we cooperate, the more we can respond.

Operation Trident resulted in 240 arrests. They took down four major heroin fentanyl trafficking organizations. They dismantled three processing mills, and they seized more than $1.2 million in assets. What we have to do is continue to recreate these successes all across the country by moving aggressively to take down the gangs and other trafficking organizations that are feeding the opioid epidemic. To do that we have to provide the resources.

This emergency funding amendment doesn't create any new programs. Instead, we fund proven and effective initiatives like Byrne JAG and the substance abuse preventive and treatment block grants. These initiatives have earned bipartisan support because Senators have seen the good work it has done in each of our States. By allocating these emergency resources to these proven programs, this amendment will provide law enforcement and treatment professionals with the resources they need to go on the offensive to mobilize a real war on opioid trafficking and addiction.

Perhaps most importantly, our emergency supplemental funding amendment funds the programs that are included in the CARA bill. I want to thank Senator WHITEHOUSE and other drafters of CARA, who have made important statutory steps and programmatic changes to improve programs that help treat addiction.

But CARA, as important as it is, is an authorization bill that doesn't provide any funding. If we support making the changes in the law that are included in the CARA bill, then we should also support the funding needed to make these programs work.

This chart shows a quote from the National Governors Association. Recently, they came together and they endorsed emergency appropriations to address this crisis. They wrote:

> Governors applaud the introduction of legislation that would provide emergency assistance to states working on the front lines of the opioid crisis. . . . [I]nvestment is needed to help states mount an effective response to opioid addiction, from increasing prevention and education regarding the dangers of illicit drugs to strengthening state prescription drug monitoring programs, expanding access to addiction treatment and enhancing support for law enforcement.

The Fraternal Order of Police has endorsed this amendment, saying:

> This bill will help our State and local law enforcement officers by giving them the necessary funding and tools to battle their communities' heroin and opioid problems. Something needs to be done.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the support letter from the Fraternal Order of Police.

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

NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE,
Washington, DC, February 29, 2016.

Hon. JEANNE SHAHEEN,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR SHAHEEN: I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to advise you of our support for your bill S. 2423, the ''Opioid and Heroin Epidemic Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act.'' This legislation will make available $210 million to help law enforcement fight the heroin and opioid epidemic that is destroying our communities.

This bill will help our State and local law enforcement officers by giving them the necessary funding and tools to battle their communities' heroin and opioid problems. This funding will be used for expenses relating to drug treatment and enforcement programs, law enforcement programing, and drug addiction prevention and education programs. Something needs to be done and Congress is correct to provide law enforcement with the resources we need to combat this epidemic.

On behalf of more than 330,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I thank you for your continued leadership and support of law enforcement. I look forward to working with you and your staff to get this bill through Congress to put an end to the heroin and opioid epidemic. If I can be of any additional assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me or my Executive Director Jim Pasco at my Washington office.

Sincerely,

CHUCK CANTERBURY,
National President.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. We have also received support from groups such as the American Academy of Pain Management; the American Public Health Association; the American Society of Addiction Medicine; the Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses; the Partnership for Drug-Free Kids; the American College of Physicians; and the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the list of groups.

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

EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL FOR HEROIN AND OPIOID ABUSE SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

Fraternal Order of Police, American Academy of Pain Management, American College of Physicians, American College of Sports Medicine, American Osteopathic Association, American Public Health Association, American Society of Addiction Medicine, Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses, College on Problems of Drug Dependence, Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America.

Connecticut Certification Board, Friends of NIDA, IC & RC, Illinois Alcoholism and Drug Dependence Association, California Consortium of Addiction Programs and Professionals, National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors, Partnership for Drug-Free Kids, Physician Assistant Education Association, SAI, Trust for America's Health.

NATIONAL GOVERNOR'S ASSOCIATION STATEMENT

Provide emergency supplemental funding to help states and communities turn the tide on the opioid epidemic. Governors applaud the introduction of legislation that would provide emergency assistance to states working on the front lines of the opioid crisis. Congress has provided billions in emergency aid to address natural disasters, security threats and other crises, including more than $5 billion last year to combat Ebola at home and abroad. A similar investment is needed to help states mount an effective response to opioid addiction, from increasing prevention and education regarding the dangers of illicit drugs to strengthening state prescription drug monitoring programs (PDMPs), expanding access to addiction treatment and enhancing support for law enforcement.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. The question is, Why do we need emergency funding? Some of my colleagues have argued that additional funds are not needed because there was enough money for the opioid crisis in last year's omnibus. Yes, it is true there is additional funding for these programs in the omnibus. I sit on the Appropriations Committee; I was one of many on that committee who worked very hard to fight for those dollars. But with spending caps in place, these increases are modest at best.

The majority of my supplemental amendment appropriates resources to two programs: the substance abuse prevention and treatment block grant and the Byrne JAG Program. These programs have been critically underfunded in recent years. For example, the substance abuse prevention and treatment block grant received a small increase in the omnibus. That was good, but the reality is that over the last 10 years, funding for this program has not kept up with health care inflation. So we have a 26-percent decrease in the real value of funding despite the small increase we got in the appropriations process. In order to restore the block grant to its purchasing power from 10 years ago—10 years ago, before we had the explosion of the opioid and heroin crisis—just to get back to that level, Congress would need to allocate an additional $483 million for fiscal year 2017. My amendment provides $300 million for this program. It is a downpayment—only a downpayment—on where we need to be. The Byrne JAG Program has been flat-funded for the last 3 years.

Fifteen years ago—again, before the explosion of the heroin and opioid crisis—Congress provided more than $1 billion in support to State and local law enforcement through Byrne JAG and block grant funding. By 2015 that number had been reduced to $376 million. Right now, despite the explosion in this heroin and opioid crisis, we are providing only about one-third of the support we provided 15 years ago.

The reality is that criminal justice and prevention and treatment have been chronically underfunded and, as a result, deaths have continued to rise.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has consumed 27 minutes.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. President. I should be finished shortly.

We have talked to the Department of Justice and to Health and Human Services, and they are ready to get this funding out the door immediately because there is no time to wait. Law enforcement and health care providers on the frontlines need this money, and they need this money now.

In the past, Congress has risen to the challenge of epidemics. In 2009, Congress appropriated nearly $2 billion in emergency funding to fight swine flu, which claimed the lives of about 12,000 Americans. That emergency appropriations bill passed the Senate 86 to 3. Mr. President, 51 Senators who voted for that bill are still serving in this Chamber, including 23 Republican Senators and every Member of the Republican leadership. Last year, Congress approved $5.4 billion in funding to combat the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, an outbreak that killed only one American. Surely we can come together now, this year, in this session, to fight a raging epidemic here at home. We cannot avert our eyes from 47,000 Americans who are being killed by lethal overdoses each year. We cannot accept that 9 out of 10 Americans with substance abuse disorders go without treatment. We cannot avoid the fact that law enforcement officers in communities across this country are overwhelmed by aggressive drug traffickers and a rising tide of opioid-related crimes.

CARA will help fight the heroin and opioid epidemic in the longer term, but I urge my colleagues to also support this emergency supplemental funding amendment because it will provide urgent emergency funding to ramp up this fight in the months immediately ahead. This is a nationwide crisis, and it is time we mobilize a nationwide response that is equal to the challenge.

I urge my colleagues, I urge the majority leader to allow a vote on my amendment and to pass this out so we can give our local communities and States the resources they need.

I yield the floor.

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess as under the previous order.

RECESS

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:23 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY ACT OF 2015—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, you know more than just about anybody else here

that across the Nation there has been a dramatic increase in the incidence of opioid addiction, which is now at the point of being a full-blown crisis.

In my home State of North Carolina, we have seen this devastation firsthand, with 1,358 overdose deaths in 2014 alone fueled by the combination of abuse of opioid-based prescription painkillers and heroin. To put that figure into context, that is more than the number of North Carolinians who lost their lives in automobile accidents in 2014.

For far too long the conventional thinking was that drug addiction deserved the stigma it receives: a choice made by criminals who were intent on destroying the lives of themselves and others. It was a dark and painful embarrassment for their families. It is long overdue for us to come to grips with reality because we know the truth: Drug addiction doesn't discriminate based on one's gender, race, or socioeconomic status. Successful CEOs of major companies have succumbed to addiction. Straight-A students and valedictorians with once bright futures ahead of them have succumbed to addiction. PTA moms and dads, who were pillars of their communities, have succumbed to addiction. We know it because we have seen it in our inner cities, our suburbs, and our tight-knit rural areas.

Two weeks ago I picked up my hometown newspaper, the Charlotte Observer. On the front page was a report that highlighted the rising prescription overdose epidemic. It started off with a terrifying story of a North Carolina mother that encapsulates the kind of crisis we are dealing with.

The story began:

> The Charlotte woman didn't know her daughter was a drug addict until she heard a thud upstairs.
>
> Her daughter, a bright Myers Park High graduate, had returned from college for the weekend with a sack of dirty laundry. Her mother was folding clothes in the den when she heard the fall of her daughter's unconscious body.
>
> She sprinted upstairs. ''She's unconscious on the floor, blue, not breathing. No heartbeat,'' said the mother.

That is what the mother saw on the floor of her daughter's bedroom. Fortunately, in this case, the young woman survived the painkiller overdose. With the support of a loving family, she has an opportunity to get her life back on track and seize the chance to reach her full potential. But let's not kid ourselves. This near tragedy could have happened anywhere in America, and any parent could have experienced it.

It is important to reflect on how it got to this point, though. In 2012 the CDC completed a report that said that in North Carolina, there were 97 painkiller prescriptions written per 100 people. So what does that mean? It doesn't mean 97 percent of the people in North Carolina are getting painkillers; it means there is a group of people who are getting dozens and dozens, sometimes hundreds of prescriptions for opioids. In part, this is a result of a greater awareness of the importance of pain management. And many people do need pain medication, but the wider availability of these life-improving and lifesaving surgeries and treatments has actually contributed to the epidemic.

The medical community rightly recognized that managing patient pain was the compassionate thing to do and started holding providers accountable for doing so. However, the risk of the wider availability of these powerful medicines must be urgently and rigorously addressed. That is because for Americans from all walks of life, the nightmare of addiction begins with something as unassuming as a routine prescription for a painkiller such as OxyContin or Percocet. Due to the highly addictive nature of these drugs, a patient's body can become dependent and they experience debilitating withdrawal. Once the prescription runs out, the physical addiction unfortunately influences people to make really bad decisions that can be life-changing—seeking more pills on the black market when their doctor says ''no more'' or turning to cheaper or even more deadly opioid drugs, such as heroin.

Opioid addiction is a slippery slope, and it is a deadly slope. The CDC has concluded that people are 40 times more likely to be addicted to heroin if they are addicted to prescription painkillers.

Our country desperately needs coordination from Federal, State, and local law enforcement officials to develop comprehensive strategies to combat heroin trafficking and to prevent prescription drug diversion. Federal dollars and resources come with so much redtape and so many mandates that State and local experts cannot use funding for different initiatives, and that is what the CARA bill seeks to address. For example, there simply are not enough treatment slots for mothers with children, and there isn't enough assistance provided to pharmacists and doctors to teach them how to best manage their prescriptions and help the people with the highest risk of addiction.

It has been heartening to see Members of Congress set aside their partisan differences in order to take immediate action to address the current shortcomings. I am proud to be a cosponsor of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, which is the bipartisan legislation that brings together the experiences and recommendations of drug addiction experts, law enforcement, health care providers, first responders, and the patient community most affected by the opioid epidemic.

The legislation expands abuse prevention and education initiatives. It provides grants to substance abuse agencies, local governments, and nonprofit organizations in North Carolina and the rest of the Nation that are being hit hardest by the heroin and painkiller epidemic.

Local first responders will receive help through expanded availability of naloxone, a powerful antidote that is used to prevent overdose deaths. It has had amazing impacts on saving the lives of people, such as the young lady I talked about earlier.

The legislation also addresses the strain the addiction crisis places on our criminal justice system by providing more resources to identify and treat incarcerated Americans, helping put them on the path to recovery, which in turn could lower the Nation's recidivism and crime rates.

We can never forget that the solution to so many of America's problems can be found in our local communities—our schools, our churches, townhalls, and VFW halls. The Federal Government can help support these efforts through smart, commonsense approaches, such as the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, or CARA. However, we must be honest in recognizing that success will be neither quick nor easy. We are confronted with the reality that addiction is a vicious and devastating cycle of abuse and despair, with consequences that can result in the destruction of loving families and the end to once-promising lives. It affects us all, Mr. President. The fight against addiction is one we must wage together, and we cannot afford to lose.

Mr. President, I want to thank the Presiding Officer personally for his leadership on this issue.

I look forward to seeing the CARA bill come to the Senate and then on to the President's desk.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I also want to take a few moments today to discuss the devastation drugs are bringing to too many families and communities across our Nation and also to congratulate the Presiding Officer for his great work on this issue. The bill before us today is a collaborative effort of his and Senators AYOTTE, TOOMEY, and others who have worked very hard to address what has become an epidemic across our country. It is particularly hitting States hard, it is hitting communities hard and families hard, and it needs to be dealt with. The destructive effects of illegal drug use have been well documented, and anything we say about the problem is likely to have been said many times before, but it is still worth saying because we cannot afford to forget what is at stake in this effort.

In my home State of South Dakota, methamphetamine use has hit our Indian reservations very hard over the past few years. Numerous individuals have become trapped in a cycle of meth abuse, their plans and dreams for their futures erased as their world shrinks to nothing more than their next dose. Of course, drug abuse doesn't just affect the individual using drugs; it ripples out into families and communities. Since meth abuse spiked on our reservations, there has been a significant

increase in the number of babies born addicted to meth, and that is about as heartbreaking as it gets, Mr. President—a newborn baby screaming in agony as her body suffers withdrawal.

The meth epidemic on our reservations has also caused a significant increase in the number of meth-related crimes, including sexual assaults, domestic violence, child neglect, car accidents, and gang violence.

The meth epidemic has worsened the housing shortage facing South Dakota tribes because meth has contaminated a number of homes across our reservations. Cleaning up a house that has tested positive for meth costs thousands of dollars.

Several South Dakota tribes have seen so much devastation from meth abuse that they have declared a State of public emergency to gain access to additional government resources to fight the problem.

Today we are considering legislation to address another drug epidemic that has caused similar devastation—the abuse of prescription painkillers and heroin.

Since 1999, drug overdose deaths from prescription opioids, such as oxycodone and hydrocodone, have quadrupled. Forty-four Americans die every single day after overdosing on prescription opioid painkillers, and the numbers on heroin abuse are similarly disturbing. Heroin abuse in the United States nearly doubled between 2002 and 2013, while overdose deaths related to heroin nearly quadrupled. Between 2013 and 2014 alone, heroin use in the United States increased nearly 35 percent. Behind those numbers are thousands of broken families, suffering children, and devastated communities.

Any response to a problem as deep and complex as drug abuse has to approach the problem from a number of different angles. It has to address education and prevention. It has to target the drug supply by going after those who trade in and produce drugs. And it has to ensure that individuals trying to escape the cycle of addiction have access to the resources they need to overcome their dependence. The bill before the Senate today, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, targets all these priorities. A substantial part of the bill is focused on funding programs that provide treatment and support for individuals trying to escape painkiller or heroin dependence. The bill also provides grants for education and prevention and for local communities' anti-drug efforts.

An important section of the bill focuses on developing best practices for prescribing pain medication. Right now, prescription painkillers are heavily prescribed in the United States. In fact, the United States consumes more opioids than any other country in the world. Our country accounts for almost 100 percent of hydrocodone used globally and 81 percent of oxycodone use. In 2012 doctors prescribed enough prescription opioids to give every adult in the United States a month's supply. Let me repeat that. In 2012 doctors prescribed enough prescription opioids to give every adult in the United States a month's supply.

It goes without saying that prescription painkillers can be a key part of medical treatment, but it is essential that we make sure these potentially addictive drugs are being carefully prescribed and that they are only being prescribed when they are really needed. Reviewing and updating prescribing practices will help us prevent attempts to use these drugs inappropriately.

One of the most important parts of preventing drug abuse is going after the people who prey upon the vulnerabilities of their fellow man by engaging in the drug trade. One significant reason for the recent spike in heroin abuse is the sharp increase in supply of affordable heroin here in the United States over the past several years. This increase has been driven by a major surge in heroin production in Mexico. Between 2013 and 2014 heroin production in Mexico increased a staggering 62 percent—62 percent, in 1 year. A large part of that production increase has ended up here in the United States. Any successful strategy to combat the heroin epidemic in the United States has to include efforts to check the flow of heroin coming across our borders. The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act addresses this priority by authorizing grants to State law enforcement agencies to investigate the illegal trafficking and distribution of heroin and prescription painkillers, and Republicans will continue to look for ways to support Federal, State, and local law enforcement as they seek to stem the flow of drugs into our communities.

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act is an important bill. It is supported by Senators of both parties and by a number of law enforcement and drug treatment associations. It takes the kind of comprehensive approach we need to address the abuse of heroin and prescription painkillers, but our efforts are not limited to this bill.

Last year we passed the Protecting Our Infants Act to help prevent and treat prescription painkiller abuse in pregnant women and provide care for newborns who suffer as a result of their mothers' abuse of opioids. We also increased funding for efforts to combat painkiller abuse and provided grants to States to help them prevent and treat drug abuse. As chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee, I worked with my colleagues last year to provide new resources to the Coast Guard, the leading Federal agency for combating the drug trade on the high seas. The Senate Finance Committee recently held a hearing on the Stopping Medication Abuse and Protecting Seniors Act, which establishes a Medicare Program to prevent painkiller abuse.

Too many lives across our country have been wrecked by drug abuse, too many children have lost a mother or a father to addiction, and too many communities are bleeding from the violence and brokenness that accompany the drug epidemic in this country.

Republicans remain committed to doing everything we can to support those fighting drug abuse, whether they serve in law enforcement agencies, emergency rooms or classrooms. We are committed to reaching a day when fewer lives are destroyed by the scourge of drugs.

The legislation before us today—which Senators PORTMAN, AYOTTE, TOOMEY, and others have been involved with—is an important step forward in helping to address something that has become a crisis in this country and which is impacting, in a harmful and negative way, way too many families and way too many individuals and ruining the hopes and aspirations of too many young people and children across the country.

Let's pass this legislation, let's get the House to pass a similar piece of legislation, and let's get something on the President's desk that can be signed into law that will bring the relief that is needed.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, no one appears to be seeking the floor right now, so I will take the opportunity to speak about our CARA legislation. Since the Senator from Ohio, who has been my partner in this, is now presiding, this is an opportune time to give some remarks.

I think like many States, just from the remarks we heard on the floor already, it is not unusual to have a terrible toll at home from opioid abuse and from overdoses. In 2014, 239 Rhode Islanders lost their lives to overdoses. That is more than were killed in automobile accidents, more than were killed in homicides, more than were killed by suicide. Indeed, that is more than all of those categories—automobile accidents, homicides, and suicides—combined.

In one small community, Burrillville, RI, the beginning of last year was marked by six opioid overdose deaths. Burrillville is a very small town in northern Rhode Island. There are probably 5,000 people who live there. In one quarter, the opening quarter of last year, to lose six people, to have six police calls to the scene, to have six wakes, six funerals in a community that small—that is sadly emblematic of what is going on all around the country.

Rhode Island is not alone. The addiction overdoses are claiming lives, creating tragedy, and destroying families

across the United States. Our emergency rooms in America treat almost 7,000 people every single day for the misuse or abuse of drugs. There are 7,000 people who come through the ER doors needing treatment, which, by the way, runs up costs to our health care system. More than 120 people die every day as a result of an overdose. The latest year for which we have figures is the year that Senator THUNE just mentioned, 2014—47,000 dead in 1 year.

If you leave this building and walk down to the Mall, you will find the Vietnam war memorial. The Vietnam war memorial has about 58,000 names on it. From the entire Vietnam conflict, there are 58,000 names on the Vietnam war memorial. From 1 year of opioid overdose, there are 47,000 deaths. I am afraid it probably went up in 2015. We don't have the figures in yet.

Behind this tragedy of death and sorrow lies a terrible failing, which is that, according to the most recent estimates, nearly 9 out of 10 people who need drug treatment don't get it. They just don't get it. When you think of that death toll, you think of the cost and you think of the sorrow. The idea that we are still letting 9 out of 10 people who need treatment not even get it, not have access to it, is a terrible failing.

The economic cost of all of this is something we always think about here in Congress. Whether it is from health care costs or criminal justice-related costs or loss of productivity at work, that has been estimated at as much as $70 billion per year.

One thing we have seen is that the ongoing substance abuse epidemic does not discriminate by race, by ethnicity, by gender, or by age. Overdose rates are up in both men and women, in non-Hispanic Whites and Blacks, and in adults of almost all ages. The dynamic nature of this epidemic demands that we respond in a comprehensive way—a way that brings together the public health, the public safety, the behavioral health care, the addiction recovery, and other communities.

It was out of this recognition, this realization that this pandemic, as some have aptly called it, requires an all-hands-on-deck approach that the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act was born. Starting in the spring of 2014, Senator PORTMAN of Ohio, Senator KLOBUCHAR of Minnesota, Senator AYOTTE of New Hampshire, and I hosted a series of bipartisan, bicameral congressional forums addressing various aspects of addiction—from the role of addiction in our criminal justice system, to the special challenges faced by women, by veterans, by young addicts, and the collateral consequences that we impose on people when they are in recovery. We hosted five forums, as the Presiding Officer will well recall, that brought together experts from these various fields to come here from all around the country. This was a national pilgrimage to Washington to highlight best practices and to share success stories from their States.

I have more remarks that I will be pleased to make as the day goes on, but I am here managing the floor, and so I will yield the floor to my colleague and fill in again when there is a gap in the proceedings.

I yield the floor, and I will pursue this later.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

GUANTANAMO DETAINEES

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, yesterday I joined Senators GARDNER and MORAN on a factfinding mission to Guantanamo Bay. Guantanamo Bay was a humble reminder of the services our military provides overseas to get these terrorists off the battlefield and ensure they don't end up in Americans' backyards.

President Obama has signed multiple pieces of legislation into law that explicitly prohibit the transfer of enemy combatants from Guantanamo Bay to our shores. Most recently, the 2016 National Defense Authorization Act signed by the President specifically prohibited funds to be utilized to transfer detainees from Guantanamo Bay to the United States.

Among those being held are detainees such as Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, who is the principal architect of the September 11, 2001, attacks in New York City, according to the ''9/11 Commission Report.'' Khalid Shaikh Mohammed is just part of the 9/11 five who are currently detained in Guantanamo Bay who allegedly masterminded and facilitated the 9/11 terror attacks on our country. In fact, other prisoners include Osama Bin Laden's bodyguard, who fought U.S. forces in Afghanistan.

We need to do the right thing for our country and keep them locked up in Guantanamo and not help President Obama fulfill a campaign promise and bring these terrorists to our communities.

I am exceedingly proud of our men and our women serving at Guantanamo Bay. They are impressive, they are professional, and I am honored to represent their interests in the U.S. Senate. I will continue working tirelessly to prohibit the transfer of these detainees to America.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I will continue my remarks.

We were discussing the forums that the Presiding Officer, Senator AYOTTE, Senator KLOBUCHAR, and I organized. Out of that developed a national working group of stakeholders from the public health community, from behavioral health folks, prevention, treatment, recovery, and law enforcement. The forums informed us and the working groups supported us as we worked to draft legislation that would promote effective, evidence-based policies and increase collaboration among what are too often siloed areas of activity and expertise.

The bill we developed would do a great number of things. They fall into four major categories:

First, it would expand prevention and educational efforts—particularly aimed at teens, parents, and other caretakers, and elderly folks, aging populations—to prevent the abuse of opioids and heroin and to promote treatment and recovery.

Second, it would expand the availability of naloxone to law enforcement agencies and other first responders to help in the reversal of overdoses and save lives.

Third, it would expand the resources to identify and treat incarcerated individuals suffering from addiction disorders promptly by collaborating with criminal justice stakeholders and by providing evidence-based treatment.

Fourth, it would strengthen prescription drug monitoring programs to help States monitor and track the diversion of prescribed drugs out of the proper and legitimate market and to help at-risk individuals get access to the services they need.

It does a number of other things, but I will not summarize them all now.

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act recognizes what we have learned from science and from experience, and it promotes those practices that we know work best to confront the multiple facets of this new epidemic. It sends the message that we in Congress understand that addiction is a disease, a public health crisis that requires more than the enactment of stiffer criminal penalties. We tried that road. We know it was not a success.

The bill we worked on and prepared has been endorsed by over 130 community and national organizations on the frontlines of this epidemic, including the National Council on Behavioral Health, Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America, the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation, the National District Attorneys Association, the National Association of Attorneys General, major county sheriffs, the American Correctional Association, and many others.

Here in the Senate, at the last count, we had 38 cosponsors and myself. I am sure that number is climbing.

As committed as I am to the principles in this legislation and to the need to encourage and support these policies, I recognize that this bill alone is not enough. Without adequate resources to fund the programs in the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, CARA, they will remain out of reach to too many of the individuals, communities, and first responders who most need them. Without adequate resources for prevention, treatment, and recovery, we will continue to spend billions of dollars elsewhere in economic and societal costs that would be avoidable if we got this right. Without adequate resources, too many people who desperately want to turn their lives around will be told to wait another day. Anybody who knows about addiction recovery knows what the consequences can be of being told to wait another day.

Senator SHAHEEN of New Hampshire has proposed an amendment which provides emergency appropriations to address this crisis. I am a cosponsor of that amendment because I agree with her that the opioid epidemic is an emergency, a public health emergency, and should be treated as one. Building on the strong commitment Congress made to funding addiction and recovery programs in the fiscal year 2016 omnibus, Senator SHAHEEN's bill would appropriate an additional $600 million to the Department of Justice, to SAMHSA, and the CDC, much of it going to programs authorized in CARA, the Comprehensive Reduction Recovery Act, or complementary to CARA's goals.

This would not be the first time the Congress has authorized emergency spending in response to a public health emergency. When the swine flu epidemic hit, and I believe took 11,000 lives, Congress appropriated $2 billion on an emergency basis with broad support on both sides of the aisle. Here, in the latest year for which we have the data, the body count is 47,000 deaths. We lost 11,000 lives to swine flu and 47,000 lives in 1 year to the opioid epidemic.

I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will join me and Senator SHAHEEN and vote, not only to support the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act but to also provide added resources to make those principles a reality in the lives of the people who are counting on us to come to their aid. Addiction is a tough illness and recovery from it is a hard but noble path. Men and women who walk that path deserve our support, encouragement, and admiration.

I thank my fellow sponsors, Senator PORTMAN, Senator KLOBUCHAR, and Senator AYOTTE, for their partnership over the past 2 years as we prepared this legislation. I thank Chairman GRASSLEY and my ranking member Senator LEAHY for their commitment to tackling this epidemic and for bringing this bill out of the Judiciary Committee without opposition and now to the floor where we hope we can bring it across the finish line.

Let me say that I anticipate we are going to have a disagreement about the funding of this bill. I will fight as hard as I can to make sure this bill is adequately funded, but I do not intend, nor do I know anyone who intends, to block the passage of CARA or to interfere with it going into law over the question of funding.

People will have to check in with their own consciences, check in with the desires of the addiction and recovery communities in their home States, and check in with their constituents as to the right way to vote on giving this adequate funding.

Finally, let me close by thanking the advocates, providers, police officers, rescue personnel, and of course the families who support and help the people in recovery through the tough nights and days. They do the hard work of saving lives every single day, and we would do well to honor them by passing this bill and seeing to it that it has adequate funding support.

I yield the floor to the Senator from Virginia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FLAKE). The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I have an inquiry. I believe there will be a series of speakers coming to the floor to address the issue of digital security. I don't know if my colleague, the Senator from Ohio, has a long statement.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask if my colleague would defer to me for just 2 minutes so I may address the CARA bill that Senator WHITEHOUSE has been talking about, and then I will yield to the Senator from Virginia.

First, I wish to thank Senator WHITEHOUSE for his partnership. As he said, we have been working on this issue for the last few years to ensure that we have a comprehensive approach to this horrible issue of drug addiction and specifically the increasing threat of addiction to prescription drugs and heroin which we see in all of our communities. It is the No. 1 cause of death in my home State of Ohio, and we have been told it is the No. 1 cause of accidental death in the country. It is far worse than that. It is tearing apart families and communities, and we need to address it.

I will say two things. One, this is not just a bill about principles, this is a bill about policy, and Senator WHITEHOUSE and I are supporting new policies to approach this issue more effectively, as to prevention and education, as to treatment and recovery, as to dealing with the unfortunate situation of too many overdoses of naloxone, as to training, as to getting prescription drug monitoring programs in place, as to helping these addicted babies and mothers who are pregnant and have an addiction. There are very specific policy changes here that direct the increase in appropriations which is provided for in the current fiscal year, for the next 7, 8 months. That funding will be there for this legislation.

If we were to pass this bill tomorrow and get it enacted into law, that funding would be there not just in principle but in specific ways to spend that money more effectively. I wanted to make that point clear.

Second, I do support additional resources, as does Senator WHITEHOUSE. I believe this is such a crisis that it requires resources over and above what we even provided in CARA. We have to get CARA done, and I agree with Senator WHITEHOUSE on that. This is priority No. 1 not just for us but for the 130 groups around the country that are the experts in prevention, education, treatment, and recovery. They have come together and given us their best counsel; that is, that this legislation will actually help to begin to reverse this terrible trend of addiction.

I am hopeful we can have a full debate on this legislation. I understand Senator SHAHEEN is going to offer an amendment. I have seen the revised version of her amendment, and I believe I will be able to support her amendment. I have just started to look it over, but I like it because it does provide additional funding. The funding is in addition to the funding we know will already be in there for CARA. It would be emergency funding. It is not usual for me to support funding that is not paid for through other offsets, but I believe we are in such a crisis in this country, including my State, that I will be able to support that. However, as Senator WHITEHOUSE said, we have to pass the underlying bill. I appreciate my colleague's commitment on that, and I appreciate the commitment of so many other great groups around the country that have supported us and said: Let's not get off track here. Let's get this legislation passed.

We have companion legislation in the House. It is bipartisan and identical to the legislation Senator WHITEHOUSE and I introduced. We worked together with the House on this legislation. This is bipartisan. They have over 88 cosponsors, Republicans and Democrats. We have very good signals from the White House that shows they are interested in working with us. Therefore, this can actually get done.

It is not just about funding for this year. Obviously, this would be a change in the way we spend money. It is an authorization to change it next year and the year after that and the year after that. In my experience that is what needs to be done.

I was the author of the Drug-Free Communities Act in the House for almost the past two decades. There has now been $1.3 billion under the auspices of the Drug-Free Communities Act that directs and targets that funding to what we know is effective prevention. Our legislation takes that to the next step with regard to heroin and prescription drugs and will help those communities that are particularly impacted.

I thank my colleague from Rhode Island. I also thank my colleague from Virginia for his indulgence. I am sorry to interrupt his colloquy with our colleagues.

I yield my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, first of all, I thank both of my colleagues for their very important work on the issue before the Senate today. I, like them, have a State where both opioid and heroin abuse is taking too many lives and destroying too many families. I look forward to successfully moving forward on this legislation.

DIGITAL SECURITY

Mr. President, I rise to join several of my colleagues in a conversation on digital security. Since last year, I have been working with the chairman of the

House Homeland Security Committee, Texas Republican MICHAEL MCCAUL, to set up a Commission of experts to study digital security and issues around encryption. These issues have been somewhat in the news, and we have seen court cases in both California and New York.

I say to my colleagues that this is one component the Commission is trying to address. We are at the beginning of a debate that is even broader than the current cases being litigated in California and New York, which will encompass the whole world with digital security. If you think the issues we face now are challenging, as our country and the world move more toward the Internet, such as having your refrigerator respond to your voice, this issue around digital security is only going to grow.

I have a background with the technology community and Chairman MCCAUL has a background with the law enforcement community. Unfortunately, over the last few months, we have seen folks from the tech community, the law enforcement community, and the privacy community talk past each other too often. We have seen this issue addressed without a common set of facts. We have now seen situations arise that have basically pitted law enforcement against technology. We think the approach we are taking—bipartisan legislation that was introduced on Monday—is the appropriate way to go.

I am joined by my partner in the Senate, Senator GARDNER. We have Senator COLLINS, Senator BENNET, and my good friend Senator KING.

Mr. President, regardless of where people fall in this debate, digital security tools are terribly important. Encryption is essential to protecting our personal information, our financial information, our intellectual capital, and our national security, and this is one issue in which the heads of law enforcement and the heads of the intelligence community as recently as 2 weeks ago—Senator KING and Senator COLLINS, who are on the Intelligence Committee—have said that encryption is here to stay and is extraordinarily important.

We have seen challenges around this technological innovation come very quickly. Think about this: Nearly 2,000 new applications are submitted to the App Store every day. That is how quickly this world is changing. The majority of these new applications that are added to that App Store are actually produced overseas. Two-thirds of these new apps use some level of encryption.

I follow this from a policy standpoint but also my personal background in the telecommunication industry for over 20 years. I can say that the networks we deal with today in terms of the Internet, the cloud, are infinitely more complicated than the distributed top-down network that existed in the 1990s when the Congress most recently addressed some of these issues. The Internet today is no longer top down. The fundamental architecture of the Internet is decentralized and resilient. We have seen on countless occasions in the past that telecom traffic shifts quickly from one area to another, and attempts by any government to channel that traffic in a certain way in fact often results in shifts that make it harder for government, law enforcement, and intelligence to stay abreast of the activity.

Obviously, Mr. President, many of these issues have been public since Edward Snowden's disclosure 3 years ago. I think that disclosure did great harm to our country. We have seen more recently, in the press, this debate crystallize after terrorist events and court activities in both California and New York.

What we are doing—these Members in the Senate and Members in the House—in a bipartisan way is saying: Let's sit down together and work through a common set of facts, a common collaborative approach, so that before more time elapses and positions harden any further, we bring something together now to sort through these complicated issues.

We all need to be working, as I said before, from the same set of facts. We need a framework for collaborative conversation. Too often I have heard from law enforcement and tech in recent months that we need to get into a room and try to sort these things through. Unfortunately, a static, American-only solution won't get us solving the problem. I believe it will simply drive the bad guys, the criminals and terrorists—at least the smart ones, anyway—off of American technology, away from American platforms, and move more and more criminals and terrorists to foreign-based hardware and software and at the end of the day actually make the safety and security of the United States far more out of reach.

I know at the outset some of my colleagues here questioned whether a commission is the right way, done too often. Congress has used commissions in the past to punt the solution. The model we have taken, working with great assistance from Senator COLLINS, is the 9/11 Commission.

In the event of a national tragedy, a congressionally mandated Commission came together on a series of policy recommendations, the overwhelming majority of which were implemented by the Congress. That is why the 16-member Commission, modelled after the 9/11 Commission, has been endorsed by a wide range of stakeholders, from the tech sector, to respected academic and legal experts and distinguished national security figures. As a matter of fact—and this doesn't happen that often—our Commission proposal has even been endorsed by the editorial boards of both the Wall Street Journal and the Washington Post. These validators agree with us: A bipartisan, bicameral Digital Security Commission is a productive path forward.

All these issues are not easy. What is great about America is that we are a country of innovators and of problem-solvers. I know that if we stop talking past each other and put the right people in a room, we can find the right solutions that protect us all, and then Congress can act.

Mr. President, I know we are going to hear from a number of my colleagues. I would like to now yield the floor to my friend and colleague on this issue, the Senator from Colorado, Mr. GARDNER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. GARDNER. Thank you, Mr. President.

I thank my colleague from Virginia for his work on this and his history in the telecom business and his understanding of the complicated issues set before us. There are no simple answers. There is no black-and-white way to proceed here. There is no yes or no that we can reach because of the complicated set of factors before us when it comes to balancing our security needs and balancing our privacy needs at the same time.

In fact, I am reminded of when I was in the State legislature and legislation we worked on several years ago. We were trying to figure out what to do when it came to criminal acts over the Internet. At the time this bill passed, most people were using BlackBerrys. I don't know if the iPhone had been invented yet. They described in the statute that the legislature was working on—it was dealing with the issue of Internet luring of a child, and when they wrote the language, they used technical language. And when presented with a case under the statute trying to charge somebody with Internet luring of a child, a judge actually said: Well, since the defendant, the perpetrator, was using a BlackBerry—we don't define the BlackBerry as a computer; therefore, this offense of Internet luring of a child won't apply in this particular case. That was because at the time, the legislature tried to describe in very definite terms a black-and-white answer to technology that had evolved or that everybody thought would be understood that this is a computer or this is the Internet. A judge said: No, that is not the case. So we had to address that issue in later years to try to overcome and understand the technology in ways that allow technology to evolve, that allow new technologies to emerge, but also make sure we are passing laws to provide protection to victims of crimes—in this case, an innocent child.

So when we are dealing with this issue of privacy and security and encryption, Congress ought to be the first body to admit there is no single person in here who can say: I have every answer. I have every solution. Choose me. Choose my bill. This is the way forward.

I applaud my colleague, Senator WARNER from Virginia, for the work he

is doing, along with Senator COLLINS, myself, and Chairman MCCAUL in the House of Representatives, to try to find that solution to a very nuanced issue. This challenge with encryption that we face today is significant.

Encryption, as we know, is a technology designed to prevent unauthorized access to data and information. It is a code or series of codes put in place to put a lock on valuable things and trivial things alike, as the case may be when it comes to encryption. No matter how you describe what it is or what it is protecting, there is no doubt that it has been an enabler of global commerce in an increasingly interconnected age. It is that blanket that keeps our credit card numbers safe and our bank account numbers safe. It is the underpinning of financial success for businesses such as eBay, Amazon, iTunes, and more. But it can also be used, as we have seen, perhaps to cover bad actors, to cover their actions, creating a safe harbor sometimes for people who don't deserve to have a safe harbor. It can be an impenetrable cage around crimes, a powerful tool that is used to thwart law enforcement and lawful investigations, a blockade that is too difficult to penetrate for law enforcement.

So this bill that you have put forward, this Digital Commission that will be comprised of experts around the country on issues of privacy, on security, on encryption, to try to find the right balance between what is it that we need in this country to protect our national security, to find bad actors who are trying to hide bad things with innocent technologies—this is to craft policies in an open manner that we can then turn to and look at to make sure we are protecting privacy, protecting encryption, that we are not offshoring the problem, allowing others to hide by technology made offshore, but that we have a solution here in Congress that takes into account evolving encryption techniques and technologies, respecting people's privacy rights as well. While there is a darker side to some users of innovations we have unleashed, we have great benefits from the innovations we have created that have enhanced our way of life and our quality of life.

So to Senator WARNER, my colleagues in the Senate, and the Chair, I would congratulate the Senator on his good work and the work so many of us have done to try to find this balance of security, privacy, and to make sure we are giving no quarter to people who wish to do this Nation harm.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, he stated that correctly. This is not an either/or circumstance. We have to protect Americans' privacy. We have to make sure we protect Americans' lives and liberty from criminals and terrorists. We also need to ensure that we continue to promote American innovation. And I believe there is a way through this, and I appreciate his good work as we move forward on this important piece of legislation.

Let me ask someone who has seen this process work before, a longtime member of the Senate Intelligence Committee and the Homeland Security Committee who helped shape this legislation, my friend and colleague from Maine.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, I rise today as a cosponsor of the Digital Security Commission Act, a bill that will establish a national bipartisan commission to examine digital security and privacy and the ''going dark'' problem that poses a real challenge for those responsible for our national security and for protecting the American public.

Let me commend the primary author of this bill, the Senator from Virginia, Mr. WARNER, for his expertise in putting together not only a well-balanced commission but also a broad array of cosponsors in support of this important legislation.

Senior administration officials—the FBI Director first among them—have been vocal in articulating the problem of terrorists and criminals going dark, with the result that our intelligence agencies and our law enforcement are going blind. Director Comey has testified repeatedly to the fact that there are terrorists who are using encrypted communications to plot attacks against our people, and we know that international criminal cartels are doing so as well.

There are many competing and difficult concerns that need to be worked out as we address this complex issue. Under our bill, a national and diverse commission will perform its review and then make recommendations that will protect the privacy rights of law-abiding individuals in an era in which terrorists and criminals increasingly use encrypted devices. The Digital Security Commission will have the opportunity to make a valuable contribution to this debate, and that is the opportunity our legislation creates.

The laws of the United States, unfortunately, have not kept pace with technology, which has obviously rapidly evolved during the past three decades. As a result, the issues of going dark and preserving personal privacy are ones that we simply must grapple with today and for the future. To resolve what often are competing concerns will undoubtedly require a new law.

Let me be clear that I personally don't believe that the absence of a new law in any way exempts a company or an individual from complying with a court order issued by a Federal judge. In the San Bernardino terrorism case, Apple has been ordered by a Federal judge to provide technical assistance to help the FBI access data on a cell phone that was used by one of the terrorists involved in killing 14 people and injuring 22 others.

Here is an important fact that has been overlooked in many of the reports on this crime. Given that this phone was owned by the county, which has given its permission for the data to be retrieved—and I bet that is a critical point here—and that the court order is narrowly tailored, I believe Apple should reconsider its position as it relates to this particular case.

In the long run, however, it is clear that we need a new law and a dialogue among the administration, Congress, Federal and State law enforcement, and the tech community in order to deal with this issue.

It is appalling to me that there have been no legislative proposals submitted by the White House or any other Federal agency to guide us on this issue. At a time when the administration has been notably absent in the offering of a legislative proposal to address these important and complex issues, the practical solutions that I believe would come from the Digital Security Commission would be most welcome by the Congress and would help us and guide us as we draft a new law.

To be sure, these are difficult issues to resolve. And I believe that if you surveyed the cosponsors of this bill, you would find all sorts of different views on the cases that are before us. Indeed, the courts have reached different opinions. While I do not expect that the Commissioners will see eye to eye on every recommendation, we can have confidence that the final report will reflect the consensus judgment of a supermajority of the Commissioners who are selected in equal numbers by Republicans and Democrats. The final report must be supported by at least three-quarters of the Commission to ensure that no recommendation represents the view of just a few stakeholders. When we had the 9/11 Commission's recommendations, one reason they were so powerful in enabling us to revamp the intelligence community was their unanimity.

Again, let me thank Senator WARNER for his leadership. I look forward to working with him and with my other colleagues, including the Senator from Maine, ANGUS KING, to make sure that we get this issue right for the challenges we face now and in the decades to come.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I thank Senator COLLINS from Maine for her comments today and for her good work on the Intelligence Committee and for her good work on the Homeland Security Committee and the fact that she has thought through these issues in a different framework—when our country was attacked—after 9/11. I would simply add that if some in Congress or elsewhere had come through with this kind of collaboration a few years back, we might not now be having two cases—one in New York and one in California—where, at least it appears

at first blush, the courts are coming at it from very different directions.

Let me reemphasize that in America the only solution here could simply drive criminals and terrorists to foreign-based technology, hardware, and software. In many ways, to get this right, if we are going to prevent a balkanization of the Internet, which is not in America's interests and not in most countries' interests, we need to at least think through this from an international perspective.

Let us hear now from a former Governor, like myself, and a great member of the Intelligence Committee. I thank him for joining in this effort. As Senator COLLINS said, we have a broad breadth of ideological viewpoints from these eight bipartisan original sponsors here in the Senate, and I think more will be joining us.

I would simply add that on a day where a lot of the Nation's focus is on Super Tuesday and on some of the activities that are taking place in the Presidential debates, it is great to see such responsible Members from both parties step forward in a bipartisan way to address a very serious issue, both today and in the future, for our country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, when I first entered this body in the winter of 2013, I was appointed to the Intelligence Committee. Every Tuesday and Thursday, we would meet for several hours talking about very difficult, very complex, and sometimes very scary issues.

After sitting through those meetings for several months, it suddenly came to me what our mission in that committee is. It really comes down to balancing two provisions of the Constitution. The Preamble to the Constitution, which establishes the basic premise for why we have a government and why the Constitution was established, uses two important phrases in conjunction with each other. The first is ''to ensure domestic Tranquility'' and the second is ''to provide for the common defence.'' There are other elements listed, but that is part of the essence of any government: to ensure domestic tranquility and provide for the common defense; in other words, to keep us safe. That is what government is all about.

But on the other hand, the Bill of Rights, and particularly the Fourth Amendment, makes it clear that there are limitations on government's power in whatever area. The Fourth Amendment says that ''the right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects shall not be violated'' and also: no unreasonable searches and seizures. Those two provisions are intentional, and they have been since the founding of the Republic. The role of the Intelligence Committee and this body, it seems to me, is to constantly recalibrate the balance between those two provisions based upon the threats our country faces and the developments of technology. That is really what this discussion is about. It has been brought into sharp focus in the last two weeks by the case involving Apple and San Bernardino, as well as other cases around the country.

The Apple case points out the complexity and the difficulty of these issues. It is not simple. It is easy to say it was a terrorist's phone; open it up and get the information. But then we learn that, No. 1, Apple is not being asked to simply throw a switch or plug in a wire. It is being asked to write new software that would compromise its own software protections built into its iPhones all over the world. So it is being asked to create something, not simply open the doors. No. 2, although there has been some discussion about it as ''just this phone,'' it is not just this phone. Apple is being asked to create a new piece of software that compromises its operating system in such a way that the phone can be hacked. Once that piece of software is created, there is no telling where it will go. It is referred to in the tech literature as the ''golden key'' or the ''God key.'' Sure, Apple could keep it, but it might—who knows, a disgruntled employee could let it out. Apple itself could be hacked. It could fall into the hands of our intelligence community. It could then be made public. Once it is out there, we can't undo it.

What I mean by raising these issues is not that I know what the answers are, but that it is very complicated. And what if Apple creates the key for the San Bernardino phone but it ends up in the hands of China or Russia or Iran or a criminal enterprise, then we have compromised the security of millions of our citizens, and perhaps of our country itself.

The real point here is this is an issue of immense significance and public policy importance that should not be decided by a single court in California or Iowa or New Jersey or anywhere else based upon a 220-year-old law. This is an issue of policy that should be decided here. Indeed, in the district court opinion that was written yesterday in New York, that was released yesterday—I stayed up late last night reading it—the heart of that opinion was: This is a job for Congress. This is a policy question. The judge said the people who wrote the All Writs Act in 1789, the Judiciary Act of 1789, many of them were the same people who wrote the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. He said he could not believe they meant to import to the judiciary the power to make this kind of policy. That was the fundamental promise of the opinion. I commend that opinion to my colleagues. I have been reading judicial opinions for about 50 years. It is one of the best I have ever read in terms of the research and the footnoting. It is a very, very strong argument, and it makes the case I think very straightforwardly that this decision should not stay in the hands of the court. The real issue here is who shall decide this complex and portentous issue.

Now, generally, I don't like commission bills. Typically, they are often the politicians' way of putting the problem off to someone else in the future and we will deal with it later and we will appoint a blue-ribbon commission. But I have seen them work. The Senator from Maine mentioned the September 11 Commission that I think did excellent work and provided the basis for a great deal of good policy. In Maine we had a commission years ago on workers' comp, which was a very difficult issue in our State, but the commission helped us to get a political solution that ultimately helped to solve that problem. I have seen commissions work, and I think this is exactly the right answer in this particular situation, because the issue is so complicated and because it involves technology, it involves law, it involves the First Amendment, the Fourth Amendment, the Fifth Amendment, and it involves national security. These are important considerations, and we have to understand the ramifications of these issues before taking action.

Now, we may want to and need to address the specific issues raised in the current Apple case on an interim basis. We may decide not to do that, but that is an option whereby we don't necessarily have to wait until the commission acts because the commission is talking about larger issues. Yes, it is talking about the encryption issue, or would talk about the encryption issue, but it is also dealing with broader issues of digital security. So we may want to make an interim decision while we wait for the work of the commission.

I think the important point is that the question before the Senate is, Where should this decision be made? I would join my colleague from Maine by saying that this problem—this so-called going dark—the encryption problem and its constraints upon law enforcement are not new this week. We have been hearing about it in the Intelligence Committee and in the Armed Services Committee and generally in the press for 1 year or 2 years, and I believe the law enforcement community or the administration should have come forward with a legislative proposal for us to act upon. Of course, I am not absolving myself. We could have brought forth our own proposal. But it was their continuing to raise this issue, and I think it was incumbent upon them to say: Here is how I think it should be solved.

Now, I know if Mr. Comey were here he would say: Well, we hoped we wouldn't have to bother you about this because we were trying to work this out with the technology companies. I understand that. But I wish, frankly, that we had put forth this bill 1 year ago or 2 years ago, and then we would be in the position of answering this question today instead of starting

down the path of handing this question to a commission that we hope will provide some answers and guidance to us that will help us to make policy.

I am delighted to be a cosponsor of this bill. I commend the Senator from Virginia for spearheading this effort. I think it is one that deserves quick attention here, and it is something that we can move so we can get to work on trying to understand all the ramifications of this decision. We don't want to compromise national security, but we also don't want to compromise personal security. And we don't want to create something that could redound against national security if it fell into the hands of some of our adversaries.

So I am delighted to be able to help with this effort. I look forward to working with the sponsor and the other cosponsors. Hopefully, this is something we can move on with alacrity so that we can bring this issue back to this Congress sooner rather than later. We will never answer the questions finally because by the time we get some answers, there will be new developments in technology and new questions. But we at least need to bring this debate into the 21st century and try to find a solution that will make sense, both in terms of national security and personal security for the citizens of this country.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I thank the Senator from Virginia as well.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, this is a great country. Regardless of what some people say, this is a great country, and the reason it is great is that people work. They get up and they produce for this country. They give their talents. They get paid. They help their families. Their kids get educated. We have that ethic of doing our job.

That is why it is so shocking to me that the Republicans who are in charge of this Senate refuse to do their job. They said that no matter who the President nominates, they are not even going to hold a hearing on that person. They say they want a Presidential election. Well, they had two, and their guys lost. I know it is not a happy experience. Believe me, I have lived through it. I have served with Republican Presidents and Democratic Presidents. But the world doesn't stop because you are not happy with who is President. The Constitution tells us what we have to do. Here is what article II, section 2, clause 2 says. And I know everyone here swears to uphold this Constitution. I would argue that when my Republican friends state that they are not going to do their job, they are not going to hold even a hearing on whomever the President nominates for the Supreme Court, which is now short one member, they are defying the Constitution. Maybe they will be sued by someone—an aggrieved party. The people of this country are aggrieved by this attitude.

Let's read article II, section 2, clause 2, for anyone who cares about the Constitution, and everybody says they do. It says the President ''shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, [and] Judges of the supreme Court.''

It doesn't say the President does it alone; it doesn't say the Senate does it alone; it says they do it together. That is article II, section 2, clause 2. This Senator advises her colleagues to read it, and if you don't follow it, you are not doing your job. We want them to do their job.

Now, who else says that it is important? I will tell you—some very incredibly respected people. This quote is from Ronald Reagan, one of the heroes of the Republican Party. I served when he was President, and he said: ''Every day that passes with a Supreme Court below full strength impairs the people's business in that crucially important body.''

That is Ronald Reagan.

Let's look at Sandra Day O'Connor, the first woman appointed to the Supreme Court, a Republican who is very beloved. What a wonderful woman. She made history because Ronald Reagan appointed her and we confirmed her. She said, ''I think we need somebody there''—meaning in the Court—''to do the job now, and let's get on with it.'' This is Sandra Day O'Connor.

So, my Republican friends, you have two extraordinary Republicans whom you love telling you to do your job.

It doesn't say in article II, section 2, clause 2: But you don't have to do your job if you don't like the President. It doesn't say that. It just lays it out pretty straightforwardly. This is article II, section 2, clause 2. It doesn't say: Don't do this if you don't like the President. It doesn't say: Don't do this in an election year.

As a matter of fact, we voted in an election year. Anthony Kennedy was nominated by Ronald Reagan with a Democratic Congress. And we voted in an election year. Do you think we wouldn't have been happier to wait and see if we were able to get that Presidency back as Democrats? No, we did what Ronald Reagan asked us to do. We acted responsibly, and we found Anthony Kennedy to be very qualified. He sits on the Court to this day, having been voted on in an election year.

It has happened 14 times in our history. The only time we had a problem was back in the Civil War, when our country was obviously under tremendous stress. Today, we are one Nation under God, and we should pull together on this.

There are some other things I wanted to read to you. This is what Michael Gerhardt, professor of law at the University of North Carolina, said about the Republican plan not to move on this vacancy:

> Refusing to hold a hearing on a Supreme Court nomination or refusing to take any action on a nomination before it has been made is simply unprecedented in our history. The refusal is not grounded in the Constitution. It is a willful abdication of authority. The Constitution does not seek to have effect at certain times of the year or the session.

One never knows when something horrible is going to happen. When this happened to Justice Scalia, this was a shock to his family, to the country. Regardless of whether you agreed with him or not, it was a shock. Nothing in the Constitution says if you are shocked about something that happens, you don't have to work with the President. It doesn't say that. Don't make it up, especially because this is the party that keeps saying they want a strict construction of it. If you want to construe the Constitution in a strict way, you need to act.

There is Jamal Greene, professor of law at Columbia. He says: ''The Senate has a constitutional duty to give due consideration to anyone nominated by the President to fill a Supreme Court vacancy.''

He goes on: ''In the modern history of the Nation, there is no precedent for the Senate deliberately refusing to vote on a nominee to a vacant Supreme Court seat, whether during an election year or at any other time.''

We have our differences here; we really do. People say: Senator, is that why you are not running again, because it is so hard to do things? No. I love it here. This is just my time to move on and do other things and have somebody else come in. I love it here. I love my colleagues. I have friends on both sides of the aisle and I get things done and so do they. You would think that we would agree on the meaning of the Constitution—it is simple—and that we wouldn't be arguing about it.

I am a little stunned at this failure to step up and do their job. I will tell you this. If you are an average American and you have a job and you call your boss and say: ''Hi, Boss. It is Monday morning, and I just don't feel like coming to work.''

''Are you sick?''

''No.''

''Do you have a problem with your family?''

''No.''

''Well, what should we do?''

''Well, I am not in the mood. I want to wait.''

You would be fired. You would be fired.

I am going to be here for the remainder of this year. I want to do my job. I want to do my due diligence. I want to have a chance to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle here on this issue.

Today at the White House, Senator MCCONNELL and Senator GRASSLEY reportedly told President Obama that they don't want to do their job. They don't want to do it. They don't care who he sends up. It is unreal. It is unbelievable. They want an election.

We had an election. President Obama didn't get elected for 3 years; he got

elected for 4 years. The next President, whatever party, is going to be there for 4 years until the next election. This person has to do their job for 4 years, and we have to do our job. They don't want to hold a vote, they don't want to hold a hearing, and many of them say they will not even meet with the nominee.

It is our job to be involved in this election. This election of the next Justice is such an important job. The Supreme Court has a job to do. This incredible attitude by my Republican colleagues means that the Supreme Court cannot really function the way it is meant to function. It is going to be divided 4 to 4. That is unfair to the people of this country. Whatever side they are on, this decision needs to be made. As Ronald Reagan said: ''Every day that passes with the Supreme Court below full strength impairs the people's business in that crucially important body.''

Here is one of the heroes of the Republicans saying that every day that passes with the Supreme Court below full strength, the people's business is, in fact, impaired.

Here is what that states. This isn't an argument that is happening in a vacuum in some fancy boardroom of some law firm, conservative or liberal. It is a serious argument that impacts the people. Every year the Court considers cases with profound consequences for our constituents. Again, it doesn't matter what your position is. We need a fully functioning Court.

I want to give an example, and I see my friend from the State of Washington. The Supreme Court is going to hear oral arguments in Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt, the most important women's health case in a generation. The case is about the unprecedented attacks we are seeing on women's health in Texas—which is what this case is about—but also across the Nation. This case is about extreme politicians and extreme groups trying to overturn 43 years of settled law.

The settled law is very simple. Women have a right to have reproductive health care. It is as simple as that. When a series of clinics throughout the State are shut down and women have to travel hours and hours and hours and maybe even days to get health care, they effectively don't have it. That is what has been happening in Texas. That is why this case is so important. There is a Texas law, HB2, that was designed to close health clinics that provide a full range of reproductive health care services, including annual exams, pap smears, STD tests, birth control, and, yes, safe and legal abortions—the full panoply of services for a woman. This law in Texas singles out women's health providers with burdensome requirements that have already forced more than half of the clinics in Texas to close.

I don't know who gets happy about that, but I don't get happy about that, and nobody who cares about a woman should get happy about that. It is a total outrage. Women are taking matters into their own hands because they have no access to doctors. The goal of this law—and it is working—is to shut down these clinics and deny to women these rights that they have earned. It would reduce the number of providers in practice from 40 to 10. If you are just unfortunate enough to live in an area where your clinic is shut down, Lord knows what you do. You may be a single mother, you may be part of a couple where you both work, you may have children, and you may not be able to take days to find health care.

The law is forcing women to travel for hours and some even to other States. Women who live in remote or rural areas may have to stay overnight or for multiple days to avoid making more than one trip. Think about the cost to families who may not be able to do it, who are just getting by. Many women simply can't afford to take off work, drive for hundreds of miles, or get on a plane every time they need health care.

They want to do their jobs. They want to be responsible. They step up to the plate every single day, but we can't do it here because politics is playing a part. People have decided they didn't like the fact that Barack Obama got elected twice. Well, too bad—he did, and it is your job to act.

I am sorry you don't like the President. Maybe you don't like the fact that he got us out of the worst recession since the Great Depression. Maybe you don't like the fact that he cut the deficit by two-thirds. Maybe you don't like the fact that he got us out of two wars. That is your choice, fine, but he has a right to nominate, and we have a responsibility to meet that nominee and to vote up or down on him or her.

These cases that are pending before the Court—and I am just highlighting this one, and I know Senator MURRAY will go into depth on it—these cases are critical. We need the full bench. I don't care how you feel about the issue. Maybe you support closing down clinics and going from 40 to 10, letting women suffer, taking matters into their own hands. If that is your position, I am sorry, it is not fair, but you have a right to your position—but the Court has a right to be at full strength.

I close with just a quote from a woman who has been hurt already by this Texas law which is going to be heard tomorrow in the Court.

Marni. Marni had to fly from Austin, TX, to Seattle when her appointment was cancelled the night before it was scheduled because the clinic was forced to immediately discontinue providing these services after the Texas law took effect. Marni said her first reaction was ''to feel like my rights were being taken away from me, to feel very disappointed that elected officials had the ability to make decisions about my and my fiance's life.''

That is Marni. The stakes could not be higher. This is just one of the cases.

Finally, the highest Court in our land should be fully functioning. The American people deserve nothing less. I am going to put up the Sandra Day O'Connor quote for the last time in this talk. She is a Republican woman, first woman to serve, and appointed by Ronald Reagan. She is looking at this Court. She knows what it is like to serve on the Court. She knows how hard the issues are. She understands how important it is. She is more important to this debate than anyone in the Senate, including yours truly. She knows. She didn't say: Wait until the next election to see if my party wins, no. She didn't say that. She said: ''I think we need somebody there now to do the job, and let's get on with it.''

I thank the Senator from Washington for her leadership on this issue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

WHOLE WOMAN'S HEALTH V. HELLERSTEDT

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, thank you to the Senator from California for her long advocacy on behalf of women across this country to be able to access the health care they choose.

Tomorrow the Supreme Court will hear oral arguments in the case of Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt. At its core, this is a case about whether extreme rightwing politicians will be allowed to block women from exercising their constitutionally protected health care rights, rights that have been affirmed by the Supreme Court for more than four decades.

For women across the country, for our daughters, and for our granddaughters, there is truly a lot at stake. I have been so inspired to see women of all ages from across the country standing up now to share their stories and to make sure the Supreme Court knows why politicians should not be able to make women's health care decisions.

In fact, 113 lawyers submitted an amicus brief to the Supreme Court explaining the difference that constitutionally protected reproductive rights have made in their own lives. The stories they tell are incredibly powerful. One partner at a major law firm wrote that after three miscarriages, ''my husband and I were delighted when I again became pregnant in December 1999 and safely made it past the 'danger zone' of the first trimester, passing an amnio with flying colors. [But] five weeks later, when I was heading into the sixth month of my pregnancy, I returned to the doctor for a routine ultrasound and the doctor immediately detected a problem.''

Her baby had a rare heart defect, so severe that he was already in congestive heart failure and would be born only to suffer if he survived at all.

After talking with her doctors and her husband, they made the decision to terminate her pregnancy. She wrote:

> As a woman, a mother and a lawyer, I know I did the right thing. I have shared my story with my children, and hope that should my daughter ever find herself in a position similar to mine, she will enjoy the same rights that were available to me.

It should go without saying, but politicians have absolutely no place in such a deeply personal, extraordinarily difficult decision. Unfortunately, the Texas clinic shutdown law being challenged in Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt—a law that has been driven by extreme rightwing politicians who want to undermine women's access to health care—would mean the exact opposite. This law and laws like the one that was allowed to stand in Louisiana just last week places burdens that health experts, such as the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, say are medically unnecessary on clinics in order to shut them down and make it harder for women to exercise their constitutionally protected reproductive rights.

If the Supreme Court fails to block this law, three-quarters of the clinics that provide abortion services, as well as other health care in Texas, would be forced to close, leaving 5.4 million women in Texas with just 10 clinics statewide. Hundreds of thousands of Texas women would have to drive 300 miles round trip just to get care they need.

If that is not an undue burden, I don't know what is. A ruling upholding the Texas shutdown law wouldn't just impact women in Texas, it would make it easier nationwide for politicians to interfere with women's health care and block them from exercising their constitutional right. That would be the wrong direction for women. It would be the wrong direction for families and for our country as a whole.

That is why tomorrow women and men from all over the country will be outside the Supreme Court standing up for women's health, rights, and opportunity. I will be very proud to be right there with them because we are going to be sending a very clear message. A right means nothing without the ability to exercise that right.

I hope the Justices listen, realizing how much this ruling means to women's lives. Ultimately, I hope they will rule in favor of ensuring women's health and rights continue to progress, rather than going backward. I know our country will be stronger for it.

Mr. President, I express my appreciation to Senator WHITEHOUSE and all of our colleagues who have worked very hard to bring this bill before us on the floor, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. It lays out key steps toward addressing the crisis of prescription drug abuse and heroin addiction, which is ruining and costing lives nationwide, including in my home State of Washington.

I hear about this epidemic from Washington State families and communities far too often. Parents ask me what we are doing in Congress to help families like theirs who are trying desperately to help their children who are struggling to escape addiction. I am told about mothers and fathers who developed opioid addictions after being prescribed pain medication, with devastating consequences for their families.

When I go to speak with local sheriffs and police chiefs, they say they are most often the ones responding to these crises and that our country needs to do better than allowing those struggling with addiction to cycle in and out of the criminal justice system. They tell me that heroin use is only becoming more widespread in our communities, especially amongst our young people.

Penny LeGate is a former news anchor from Seattle and she knows this all too well. Her daughter, Marah Williams, had a happy childhood, ballet lessons, softball, a close-knit family, but in middle school, as she began to struggle with ADHD, depression, and anxiety, she also started experimenting with drinking and drugs. For years her parents tried everything they could do. As Penny will tell you, Marah did too. She fought hard to break her addiction and to keep her life moving forward, but tragically, when Marah began using OxyContin and then heroin, the grip of addiction was just too much. Marah died of a heroin overdose in the basement of her family home when she was just 19 years old. This is a parent's worst nightmare. It is happening to parents across my State, across the country, and it has to stop.

I am pleased there is bipartisan momentum toward giving our communities the tools and resources they need to tackle this disease. The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, CARA, includes efforts to strengthening education, prevention, and treatment efforts around prescription drug abuse and heroin use. It will cut down on inappropriate use of pain medication that gets so many people addicted to opioids in the first place and would make it easier for people to safely dispose of pain medication so it doesn't get in the wrong hands. This legislation will also help police departments get access to naloxone, a drug that counteracts the effect of an overdose, which is something police chiefs I have spoken to make clear they need—and more.

The bill we are debating right now would be a good step in the right direction, but it can be even better. As many of my Democratic colleagues have made clear, a problem as serious and urgent as this epidemic deserves a serious, urgent response. So we should enact the policies in this bill and at the same time we should also make sure families and communities will see additional tools and resources as quickly as possible. That is why I strongly support the emergency investments proposed by the senior Senators from New Hampshire, West Virginia, the junior Senator from Massachusetts, and others. Their proposal will actually help our States and local governments, as well as families who are on the frontlines of this battle, by providing the resources to prevent opioid abuse and expand access to the treatment that so many families are seeking.

I am hopeful Republicans will work with us to move this alongside this important bill so families don't have to wait for Federal resources that this crisis desperately needs.

As I have laid out, the legislation we are debating today would go a long way toward tackling the epidemic of prescription drug abuse and heroin addiction, especially if it includes an emergency funding that can offer relief and support quickly, but given the strong belief on both sides of the aisle that far too many people are falling through the cracks in our mental health and substance abuse systems, I believe we can and should do more to build on this CARA legislation in the coming months.

We should pass this bill, but then I hope all of our colleagues will not just get up and walk away. We should build on this rare moment of bipartisan agreement, stay at the table, and keep working beyond this bill to strengthen mental health care and substance abuse treatment in our country.

So even while we are debating this very first step, I wish to lay out just a few of the goals that should guide us as we look past this, goals I believe that can be met if we work together and take this crisis seriously.

First, mental health is every bit as important as physical health, and we should make sure we work together to make sure they are both treated equally in our health care system; secondly, we should do more to break down the barriers that make it difficult to address patients' mental and physical health care needs at the same time; third, at a time when half of all U.S. counties lack access to a social worker, a psychologist or a psychiatrist, we need to strengthen our mental health care workforce so patients and families can get care when and where they need it, whether that is at a hospital or in their own community; fourth, we need to recognize that mental health care is important at every stage of life and ensure our system can address every patient's needs, whether that patient is a child or an adult; and, finally, continue taking steps to address the opioid abuse epidemic, I believe we can do more to expand access to medication-assisted treatment and offer our States more resources to respond to crisis situations, including by strengthening prescription drug monitoring programs.

My colleagues on the Judiciary Committee have worked very hard to improve prevention and treatment of opioid addiction, especially among individuals who pass through the criminal justice system. I believe we need to ensure these tools and resources are available to all Americans struggling with addiction and ensure that our health care system is equipped to address addiction as a disease.

I have been proud to work with the junior Senator from Connecticut and other members of the HELP Committee on both sides of the aisle, led by

Chairman ALEXANDER, the senior Senator from Tennessee, on a path toward meeting those goals. I am very hopeful we will be able to reach agreement on some additional steps that would make a difference for the many families and communities who are struggling to support loved ones in need.

Mr. President, it goes without saying that in this divided government we don't agree on much, but there is some important bipartisan agreement on the need to close the gaps in our mental health care system and tackle the crisis of opioid addiction. So I hope we can pass the legislation we are debating today, along with improvements that ensure it helps patients and families as quickly as possible, but we shouldn't stop there. We should seize this opportunity, work together, and continue making progress for the families and communities we serve.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I come to the floor to speak in favor of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. Senator WHITEHOUSE and I have been working on this together for years, along with Senator PORTMAN and Senator AYOTTE, so this bill has been bipartisan from the beginning. I thank my colleagues, and I also thank Senator GRASSLEY and Senator LEAHY for their leadership in bringing this to the floor and all members of our committee, including the Presiding Officer, who have contributed to this bill.

Our Nation is facing a serious problem with drug addiction, and I am glad to join my colleagues today to talk about how we can tackle this problem and work toward a solution by passing this bipartisan bill. Just last week I was out in Montevideo, MN, and we gathered together some people from the town. It is a town of a couple thousand people. Our goal was to just talk about this problem. I was shocked that early in the morning on a Saturday we had 50 people there. We had every doctor in the town there, to my knowledge. We had the sheriff there, the police chief there.

At one point a regular citizen who was there, who had suffered from some diseases and had been in the hospital, actually emptied out her purse and tons of medications and opioids came rolling out onto the table that she hadn't used. It was an image I will not forget and an image I bring to the Senate floor to remind us there are too many of these drugs out in our communities.

I heard stories of young children who had dealers—people who were trying to get the opioids—actually saying to them: Hey, I will give you a beer if you will go to your parents' medical cabinets and look for these drugs, and they would write them down for them. The kids would then go, get the drugs, and bring them back.

There was a story of one doctor who was treating someone, thought he was pretty normal. He had back pain, and the doctor had given him some painkillers for years. Then, all of a sudden, one day the Secret Service shows up because this man had actually made a threat on the life of the President. He had an entire nightlife that was different than his day life, and it was completely dictated by the fact he was addicted to prescription drugs.

Four out of five heroin users get their start these days from prescription drugs. I don't think anyone would have ever imagined that. When I was growing up, when we saw heroin addicts on the corner or when I was a prosecutor for years, we never had those kinds of statistics. People got hooked on heroin because they got hooked on heroin. They started with heroin and they, sadly, would end with heroin. In this case, we have 80 percent of people becoming addicted because they have a surgery because they have back pain. They then get too much of the drug or no one figures out that getting hooked on the drug is worse than the pain they had in the first place, and they get hooked on the drug.

We also have stories of overdoses of people who are not even taking the drugs for periods of time. So we have a crisis in this country, and when I met with those people in Montevideo, it hit home to me that it can happen at any time.

We didn't pick this town because they were having a big crisis or because they had a number of deaths. We just happened to be in that area of the State and decided we wanted to focus on the issue.

Before I was elected to the Senate, I spent 8 years serving as chief prosecutor in Hennepin County, which includes Minneapolis. Drug cases made up about one-third of our caseload, which meant we handled everything from trafficking and selling to production and manufacturing. From this position, I had an opportunity to see firsthand the devastating impact of drug addiction.

Mr. President, I see my colleague from Indiana has arrived. I am managing the bill for this hour, and if he wants to speak, I can go back and finish my remarks later. I will just finish up while he is getting back to his desk.

I was talking about my time as county attorney. Many of those people who were affected by addiction that we saw were hooked on opioids, including both heroin and we saw the start of this prescription painkiller epidemic.

We would be sadly mistaken if we think drug abuse only happens in our cities or the metropolitan areas of our States. As I saw this weekend—when I met with some of our people—Beltrami County, MN, received three emergency calls for heroin overdoses in 1 day. One of those individuals passed away. So this is happening every day.

Mr. President, I am going to turn it over now to Senator COATS of Indiana. I see he is here to support this bipartisan bill, but I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleague from Minnesota. I am here to talk about opioid abuse as well, although I am trying to combine two speeches. Since we are now talking about the opioids abuse and drug addiction, I am more than happy to listen to the Senator from Minnesota finish her speech. I thank her for the time, but I want to make sure I am not also unduly holding my colleague back as I flip through my weekly ''Waste of the Week'' because I can delay that, if necessary.

Mr. President, I am joining my colleagues here. I believe all of us are deeply concerned about the drug addiction epidemic that is sweeping through our Nation. It is an epidemic for people of all ages, but it is most tragically an epidemic for our young people who feel a sense of immortality when they are young and often fall prey to the ''just try it, it is harmless, don't worry about the addiction.'' Obviously, that is not the case. We are talking about highly addictive drugs and heroin that is coming into our country, and we are talking about serious consequences of this.

In our States, as in every other State, it is a major crisis, and we are trying to do everything we can to address that. In one county alone, we have had an unprecedented rural HIV outbreak as a result of the sharing of needles to inject opioids. These needles that are providing the kind of drug addiction we read about every day.

It is clear the legislation before us is a comprehensive approach, and that is needed. As I have said, I think we have to have an all-hands-on-deck effort here, whether it is prevention, whether it is law enforcement to keep the drugs from coming in or whether it is treatment. It is all three, and it requires not only those three components but communities and community organizations, whether Federal, State, local, or volunteer organizations, such as the various charities that are operating and their volunteers who are stepping up. All of us need to get involved in all aspects of dealing with this.

I am pleased to cosponsor the bill Senators PORTMAN and WHITEHOUSE have worked on, CARA, which has been talked about on the Senate floor. I am proud to be a cosponsor of this bipartisan legislation. The legislation includes a provision Senator BLUMENTHAL and I, on a bipartisan basis, have offered, which authorizes individuals who are authorized by the State to write prescriptions for controlled substances, such as physician assistants and nurse practitioners, to access State prescription drug monitoring programs—so-called PDMPs—to reduce drug abuse. I will not go into the details of that program, but it has been very successful in terms of providing the transparency and the information necessary so we can control prescriptions and the output of drugs

that are perhaps prescribed for legitimate purposes but are used for illegitimate reasons.

For all of that, I look forward to our being able to work through this legislation and to successfully pass this legislation and move it on through the Congress and to the President.

WASTEFUL SPENDING

Mr. President, if I could also, ask for the indulgence of my colleague from Minnesota, to talk briefly about my waste of the week. I think this is the 35th or 36th week. I have almost lost track of the number of weeks I have been down here. Every week the Senate has been in session I have been down, with maybe one or two exceptions, talking about the waste of the week.

Waste of the weeks are simply issues documented, through a nonpartisan process, of waste, fraud, and abuse that occur through the irresponsible spending and oversight of our bureaucracies here in Washington. Today I am highlighting two policies that have occurred within the State Department and the Federal Aviation Administration.

Frankly, I could be talking about every agency in the Federal Government that has fallen prey to a lack of oversight. We have come to the point where we have identified over these ''Waste of the Week'' speeches well over $150 billion of documented waste, fraud, and abuse.

These are issues that have been raised through inspections and analysis by the Government Accountability Office by the inspectors general of various agencies whose job it is to delve in and find out how the taxpayer money is being spent—is it being spent for the legitimate purpose of providing the service that is needed or is there a problem either in mismanagement or through waste or are criminals and others taking advantage of the program? I have now documented, as I said, 35 of those cases totaling well over $150 billion.

Today we want to look at two agencies as examples of this. I can go through every agency, but we will take two today. One is the State Department. Let me note it is estimated that changing the policies here could save the taxpayers an estimated $295.6 million. That is not small change. Just addressing these two agencies $295-plus million it will save.

Let me go into a little bit of detail. State Department employees located overseas—those serving in embassies or consulates—have access to what is called a purchase card. The concept is OK. The idea is that rather than go through all the paperwork and processing and sending back to the United States, employees can say: Look, we need some office supplies. We didn't order enough initially. We need to pick up 100 Scotch tape containers or pens or who knows what. A purchase card is given to those employees who are responsible for providing those supplies to make what is called simple transactions.

To prevent the wasteful use or fraudulent use of these purchase cards, Federal law and State Department guidelines require all transactions meet certain eligibility criteria and be continually monitored. We know from experience that mistakes are made. We know from experience that fraud is committed. One of those key eligibility criteria is that all of the purchase receipts have to be retained for a minimum of 3 years. That is so inspectors general can go back and look at what the purchase is, look at the receipt, make sure everything is up to speed and done within the law.

However, a recent report by the State Department inspector general has revealed that overseas employees have been told they do not have to send any purchase documentation to their supervisors in Washington for further review. All they need to do is keep the receipts of the purchases for a 3-year period of time so that if those assessments are evaluated, when someone comes back and says ''We heard there is a problem here,'' they will have the receipts to verify whether the purchases were legitimate or not. That is the ''trust but verify'' that I think is important for dealing with these kind of situations.

When the State Department inspector general tried to access the documentation for purchase card transactions as required by the law and by State Department regulation, he found that many of the overseas offices didn't keep their transaction records. As an example, in fiscal year 2014, the inspector general found that more than half of overseas offices either didn't perform reviews of purchase card transactions as they are required to do or didn't even respond to the inspector general's request to produce the documentation. The report determined that during 2013 and 2014, there were $53.6 million in unaccounted purchases. That is unacceptable.

If you take a job, you are told: Here is your card. If you need to buy something locally and don't want to go through all the rigmarole of purchasing and sending documentation overseas and so forth, you can use this purchase card. But you have to keep the documents if you do this because you are going to be reviewed. Someone is going to come over here and say: Prove it.

Yet the State Department has basically said: Don't worry about it. You don't have to keep those—probably thinking that they will never come over and follow up on this. So that $53.6 million in unaccounted-for purchases at this rate, over a 10-year period of time, amounts to about $263 million in unknown and unverified purchases just within the State Department's overseas offices. Who knows what is going on here?

Secondly, I want to talk about the Federal Aviation Administration because they have a similar situation that was inspected by their inspector general. He found that many employees do not comply with the guidelines, and the employees are not consistently held responsible for safeguarding their assigned equipment and supplies, such as digital cameras, laptops, and any other number items. As a result, the Federal Aviation Administration IG, the Inspector General, found that there are nearly 15,000 pieces of equipment and material that employees may not be able to locate. The combined value of that missing property is over $32.5 million.

To make matters worse, the IG report states that the FAA division that essentially lost $32.5 million worth of equipment doesn't even have the authority to hold employees accountable. Not a bad job, right? It is as if they are saying don't worry: If you mess up, if you do something illegal, fraudulent, or you are just sloppy you're not responsible, if you don't know where the equipment is, if you don't keep track of it, you will not have to be accountable for that lost equipment.

No American business could function this way and stay solvent. But walk back an employee there and say: ''What happened to the new laptop that we gave you 6 months ago?''

They would say: ''I don't know. I don't know where it is. I need another one.''

''That's fine. Don't worry. This happens all the time. We will give you a new one.''

On and on it goes. That division of the FAA essentially has lost $32.5 million worth of equipment, and, again, it doesn't even hold its employees accountable.

We have racked up nearly $19 trillion of debt in this country. No one can explain how large an amount of money that is. What we do know is that we are continuing to plunge into debt, and we are going to keep doing that. One of the ways we can be more accountable here is what I have just described.

I know my time is running out. With that, I am going to add this week to our accumulating waste $295.6 million for these unknown, unverified purchases, bringing our total now to $157.5 billion. It is time to put a stop to this. It is time to enforce these rules and regulations. It is time to be sensitive to the fact that we are wasting hard-earned taxpayers' dollars.

With that, keeping on schedule, I thank my colleague from Minnesota for the time which she has yielded, and I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. AYOTTE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I come to the floor today to speak in

favor of our bill, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. I thank Senator WHITEHOUSE, Senator PORTMAN, and the Presiding Officer for their leadership. We have worked together on a bipartisanship basis on this bill from the beginning. Our Nation, as we know, is facing a serious problem with drug addiction, and I am glad to join my colleagues to talk about how we can handle this problem and how we can do something about it.

Earlier in my speech today I referred to a group that I met with in Montevideo, MN, with only a few days' notice. All the doctors in the town showed up. The sheriff, the police chief, and regular constituents poured a bunch of medications on the table to show how much we are seeing in terms of overprescription and how this can so easily get in the wrong hands or turn people into addicts.

I came to this issue first as a prosecutor. I spent 8 years serving as the chief prosecutor in Hennepin County, which includes Minneapolis. Drug cases made up about one-third of our caseload, which meant we handled everything from trafficking and selling to production and manufacturing. From this position, I had an opportunity to see firsthand the devastating impacts of drug addiction. Many of those affected were hooked on opiates, including both heroin and prescription pain medication. But even when I left that office in 1998, I didn't see anything near what we are seeing today. We were starting to see the beginnings of the addiction on prescription drugs, but nothing like we are seeing today. In fact, four out of five heroin users are getting their start by misusing prescription drugs.

We would be sadly mistaken if we thought this was only an urban problem. We know it is a huge problem in our rural areas. In Beltrami County, MN, just this past weekend there were three emergency calls for overdoses. One of those people passed away. That is a rural county in our State on one weekend.

Many of those who have been affected by this epidemic are young people. Over just 6 months in 2013, three people died of opiate overdoses and another three were hospitalized for overdosing on heroin in one 7,000-person town in Minnesota. These statistics and stories are troubling, and they show why we must focus on both treatment and prevention.

Minnesota is home to Hazelden Betty Ford Addiction Treatment Center. We are proud of the work and the leadership our State shows when it comes to treatment—one of the reasons I got involved in this issue. Hazelden Betty Ford has had impressive success with its comprehensive opiate response program. Their program offers the best of both worlds: lifesaving medicine to help treat the medical causes of addiction, as well as counseling to help people get on the right path.

However, too many people have been unable to get the treatment they need. Almost 10 percent of Americans are estimated to need treatment for issues related to drug and alcohol, but only about 1 percent receives treatment at a specialty facility. That is why my colleagues and I have come together to introduce this bill.

Our bill covers strategies for prevention, evidence-based programs such as strengthening prescription drug monitoring programs—something I worked on with the Presiding Officer. These types of programs help States track data on controlled substances like opioids so that when they are dispensed, they can be a strong, effective tool in making sure that they are used for the right reasons.

This last week I was near the South Dakota border. There were doctors who knew patients were also going into South Dakota to get prescriptions. It was very difficult for them to trace what was going on—which pharmacy they would go to in rural areas. They could drive an hour and go to a different pharmacy, drive another hour and go to a different pharmacy—maybe see a different doctor in South Dakota and maybe check into an emergency room somewhere else. That is going on today in our country.

Another important provision in our bill will help make drugs less accessible by providing consumers with safe and responsible ways to dispose of unused prescription drugs. According to the DEA, more than 2,700 tons of expired, unwanted prescription medications have been collected through these programs since the drug take-back law that we passed in 2010 was put into place. That is a bill I worked on with Senator CORNYN, who is also on the Judiciary Committee with me. It is called the Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act. It took a long time for the DEA to get their act together to get the rules up. The rules came up, and guess what. Literally, a few months later, Walgreens has now said they will offer kiosks and places for people to return drugs on a nationwide basis. Right now, we have law enforcement doing it. Minnesota is at the front of the curve. We have some of our libraries taking these drugs into secure facilities. But the best would be that the places where people got the drugs would also be taking back the drugs. So we are glad that bill has finally helped in that way.

We believe this bill before us today will help even more. We also have in this bill increasing the availability of naloxone, which is used to save lives in emergency overdose situations and a number of things that are going to be helpful going forward. This bill is a framework, but it is an important step forward that the Federal Government is finally saying to the Congress and the Senate that we need to take steps here.

Our bill has the support of a broad range of stakeholders, including the National District Attorneys Association, the Fraternal Order of Police, the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors, Faces and Voices of Recovery, and the Major County Sheriffs' Association.

Finally, we must also recognize that combating this kind of drug abuse will require a serious investment of resources. It is for that reason that I have cosponsored Senator SHAHEEN's amendment to appropriate emergency funding to address the heroin and opioid drug abuse epidemic. I am hopeful that the Senate will come together to curb the problem of prescription drug abuse and save lives across our Nation. I am hopeful we will pass the amendment as well as our bill. I think there will be a number of other good amendments that are considered, including medical education and other things that need to be done here.

I see this bill as the beginning and not an end. I think more work is going to have to be done with funding. I think more work is going to have to be done with the prescription drug monitoring. We have a start here. But when people and addicts are crossing State lines, when we have a very difficult situation with trying to regulate where the drugs are and how many are going out—I figure that if a Target in my State can find a pair of shoes in Hawaii with a SKU number, we should be able to figure out if people are getting too many prescription drugs. We should be able to educate our doctors so they are not giving them out in quantities that are too big. These are some of the things I am going to continue working on.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, each of us has taken an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. President George Washington called the Constitution the guide that he would never abandon. The Constitution declares itself to be the supreme law of the land, and more than 90 percent of Americans say it is very important to them. Unfortunately, basic knowledge about the Constitution is dangerously inadequate. I say this is dangerous because, as James Madison put it, only a well-instructed people can be permanently a free people.

The current debate over when to fill the Supreme Court vacancy left by Justice Antonin Scalia's death only magnifies my concern. Ignorance of not only how the Constitution applies to this question but even what the Constitution says apparently extends far and wide.

Here is the text of the Constitution regarding the appointment of judges

and other public officials: The President ''shall have Power . . . [to] nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint . . . Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States, whose Appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by Law.''

I could hardly read that on the chart from this side here. I should have done it by memory.

The President ''shall have Power . . . [to] nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint . . . Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States, whose Appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by Law.''

This is what the Constitution actually says, right here for everyone to read. The Constitution gives power to nominate to the President and gives the power of advice and consent to the Senate. It says nothing about how the President and the Senate should exercise their separate powers. In fact, the judicial confirmation process has been conducted in different ways, at different times, and under different circumstances.

Our job is to determine how, under current circumstances, best to exercise our power of advice and consent. Several factors convince me that the best way to do so is to defer the confirmation process for filling this vacancy until the next President takes office.

First, this is only the third Supreme Court vacancy in nearly a century to occur after the American people had already started voting for the next President. In the previous two instances, 1956 and 1968, the Senate did not confirm a nominee until the year after the Presidential election.

Second, the only time the Senate has ever confirmed a nominee to fill a Supreme Court vacancy created after Presidential election voting had begun was 1916. That vacancy arose only because Justice Charles Evans Hughes resigned to run against President Woodrow Wilson, a completely different situation than we have before us today.

Third, the judicial confirmation process has become increasingly combative, especially for the Supreme Court. Attempting to conduct this process in the middle of an already divisive Presidential election campaign would be especially difficult.

Fourth, President Obama's judicial appointees and Justice Scalia represent two radically different kinds of judge. This offers the American people a unique opportunity to express, through the election, their view of the direction the judiciary should take by electing the President who will make judicial appointments in the next 4 years.

In June 1992, then-Judiciary Committee Chairman JOSEPH BIDEN, a friend of mine, made the very recommendation that we are following today based on some of the very same factors that I just mentioned. In particular, he noted that the appointment process would take place in divided Government during a Presidential election process that was already under way. He could have been describing 2016 instead of 1992.

The Constitution does not mandate a particular process to address this Supreme Court vacancy. We have to look all the way back to the 19th century to find a year in which the Senate confirmed a Supreme Court nominee of the other party in a Presidential election year. That, of course, was long before the courts became as powerful and the confirmation process as confrontational as they are today. Democrats can read the Constitution and understand the historical and political facts as well as anyone else. Why then are they making such bizarre claims?

Last week, for example, the minority whip said that the Constitution requires ''a fair hearing and a timely vote.'' He claimed that this conclusion comes from the plain text of the Constitution. Well, I have the plain text up here, and it clearly says nothing whatsoever about hearings or votes. As I said, the Constitution gives the power to nominate to the President and the power of advise and consent to the Senate and leaves to each the judgment about how to exercise their respective powers.

Last week the Senator from California, Mrs. BOXER, said that deferring the confirmation process would be an abomination. She said that the Constitution's standard for the Senate's advice and consent role does not change with the party of the President making nominations. Yet she voted 25 times to filibuster Republican judicial nominees, including to the Supreme Court. She voted not simply to defer the confirmation process, as we are doing today, but to prevent a confirmation vote from ever taking place. If the confirmation process should not change with the President's party, then she should have no problem with the decision we have made since it is less drastic than the blockade she promoted just a few years ago.

Also last week, an email solicitation signed by one of my Democratic colleagues asking for petition signatures claimed that the Senate has a ''fundamental duty to confirm nominees to the Supreme Court.'' I would like to think this is simply an egregious typographical error because it goes beyond even the false claim that the Constitution requires hearings and a vote. If the Senate has no choice but to confirm a President's nominees, what is the point of giving the Senate a role in the process at all?

I will say it again in the hope of clearing up what should not have been confused in the first place: The Constitution gives to the President the power to nominate and to the Senate the power of advice and consent. These are separate and independent powers, and the Constitution does not mandate any particular way for the President and the Senate to fulfill their responsibilities.

Because this fact is evident on the face of the Constitution, I cannot understand my colleagues who say that the President has a 4-year term. That observation has nothing at all to do with anything before the Senate. The Senate is not doing a single thing and cannot do a single thing to interfere with the President's power to nominate. He can exercise that power in any way he chooses, including sending nominees to the Senate up to his very last day in office. He can do that. Nobody that I know of disputes that. My dispute would be as to whether it is wise to do it right up to the very last day in office, but nobody really disputes that he can exercise that power in any way he chooses, including sending nominees to the Senate up to his very last day in office. What the President cannot do is dictate to the Senate how we exercise our separate power of advice and consent regarding those nominees.

Liberal allies of Senate Democrats are similarly confused. I received a letter signed by liberal groups, for example, claiming that the Constitution requires ''timely hearings and votes.'' It almost sounds like Democratic Senators and leftwing groups are sharing talking points—almost.

Let's look once more at the language of article II. I will refer to the chart. Tell me, where is the language about hearings and votes? I understand that Senate Democrats and their leftist allies want a timely hearing and confirmation vote this year to replace Justice Scalia, but wanting a particular confirmation process and saying the Constitution requires that process are two very different things.

Some of the groups signing that letter—in particular, I noticed the Leadership Conference, the Alliance for Justice, and People for the American Way—actively urged Senators to filibuster the Supreme Court nomination of Samuel Alito. In 2006 they opposed the very confirmation vote that today, just 10 years later, they say the Constitution requires. Democrats and their liberal allies must be reading the same made-up, shape-shifting Constitution that their favorite activist judges use because the real Constitution says no such thing.

Democrats' arguments contradict not only the plain words of the Constitution but also their own words and actions in considering nominees of a Republican President.

As to hearings, then-Chairman PAT LEAHY denied a hearing to nearly 60 judicial nominees in less than 4 years while George W. Bush was President.

As to confirmation votes, the minority leader said in May 2005 that claiming the Constitution requires a confirmation vote would be, in his words, rewriting the Constitution and reinventing reality. That was by the current minority leader. Here is what he said then:

The duties of the United States Senate are set forth in the Constitution of the United States. Nowhere in that document does it say that the Senate has a duty to give Presidential nominees a vote. It says that appointments shall be made with the advice and consent of the Senate. That's very different than saying that every nominee receives a vote.

That was the minority leader, who was then the majority leader. Well, think about that.

The duties of the United States Senate are set forth in the Constitution of the United States. Nowhere in that document does it say that the Senate has a duty to give Presidential nominees a vote. It says that appointments shall be made with the advice and consent of the Senate. That's very different than saying that every nominee receives a vote.

I mentioned one Democratic Senator who voted 25 times to prevent confirmation votes on judicial nominees, as did the minority leader, minority whip, Senator LEAHY, and Senator SCHUMER as well. In fact, Vice President BIDEN himself, when he served in this body, voted 29 times to filibuster Republican judicial nominees. While President Obama today says that the Constitution requires us to vote on a Supreme Court nominee, as a Senator, he, too, voted to prevent any confirmation vote for Supreme Court nominee Samuel Alito. In other words, these Senate Democrats voted over and over to deny the very confirmation vote that today they say the Constitution itself requires. They cannot have it both ways. Do we have multiple Constitutions, one to use for a President of your own party and another for the President of another party? Democrats today have no credibility whatsoever to dictate how the confirmation process should work for filling this Supreme Court vacancy.

The Constitution leaves to the President how to exercise his power to nominate and to the Senate how to exercise its power of advice and consent. Recent claims to the contrary are inconsistent with the plain text of the Constitution and with past words and actions of the very Senators and grassroots activists making those claims today.

The question is when, not whether, to fill the vacancy left by the untimely death of Justice Scalia. The best answer is to defer the confirmation process until after the next President takes office. Far from ignoring or shirking our responsibility, that conclusion tackles our responsibility head-on for the good of the judiciary, the Senate, and the country.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

HONORING DEPUTY DEREK GEER

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today to honor the life and work of Mesa County Sheriff's Deputy Derek Geer. On Monday, February 8, Deputy Geer was dispatched to a call about an armed individual in a local neighborhood. As members of our law enforcement do every day, Deputy Geer, with courage and care, responded to that call and through the senseless act of another, this son, husband, father, and friend, lost his life.

Deputy Geer served with the Mesa County Sheriff's Office for nearly 15 years. As a veteran of the Navy, his service to others began long before his role as a law enforcement officer. Service and duty to his country and his community exemplified Deputy Geer's selfless concern for others.

As a member of the Sheriff's Department, Deputy Geer served as a victim's advocate, providing support to those enduring some of life's worst difficulties. In every role he held, he always found ways to give even more.

This loss has been felt deeply across Colorado's Western Slope, the communities of the Western Slope, and our State, as we remember a man who exemplified the best of the western spirit—courage and selfless leadership.

The Grand Junction community has come together to support the Geer family and our men and women who nobly protect us each and every day. Members of law enforcement from around the State and around our Nation came to honor the life of Deputy Geer, filling the streets to pay their last respects.

Integrity, service, and community, the values of the Mesa County Sheriff's Department—values carried out since the inception of the organization in 1883—were embodied in the work of Deputy Geer.

The thin blue line represents the men and women in law enforcement protecting the public from those who seek to harm and cause destruction. Our officers do not waiver at the dangerous calls and unknown situations. They face them in this line of duty, and they do so out of a love and loyalty for their neighbors and community.

I am grateful for the work of those at St. Mary's Medical Center who cared for Deputy Geer, as his last act was perhaps the most selfless of all—to give his organs to others in need.

As Mesa County deputies shrouded their badges, we too shared in mourning the loss of Deputy Geer, and we will continue to honor his life and legacy.

My deepest sympathies and prayers go to Derek Geer's family, his two children and his wife Kate.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, I, too, would like to extend my condolences to the family in Colorado and to the Senators from Colorado for their loss.

RETURN FROM SPACE OF COMMANDER SCOTT KELLY

Madam President, I wish to call to the attention of the Senate that tonight, around midnight, we are expecting the return from space of Commander Scott Kelly, who has been in space for almost a year. He has been on the International Space Station for 340 days. It is an experiment regarding not only all of the things he has done in doing experiments—all kinds of physical things—but we are specifically doing a test to compare the effects of zero gravity on the human body for an extended period of time and, of all things, comparing him to his twin brother, an astronaut commander who was in command of the next-to-the-last space shuttle mission in 2011. In that case, it was Commander, now Navy, Retired, Captain Mark Kelly. So we will have an identical twin so NASA can then see the effects of the physical, emotional, and psychological effects, because as we prepare to go all the way to Mars in the decade of the 2030s, there is going to be a lot we are going to have to learn in long-duration space flight, and long duration in zero gravity is going to be one of the things we have to be able to adapt to.

This Senator was only in space for 6 days. The human body readapts when you get back to Earth fairly quickly. For the long duration, and in this case a year, there is going to be a significant readaptation, as we have seen by some of our Americans who have been up for months and months but nobody as long as a year.

In the old Soviet program, they put up cosmonauts for a year, and there are changes that occur, but in those intervening years we have become so much more aggressive in how we keep in a physical exercise activity on board the space station, which is what it would be on a Mars mission as well, trying to replicate through stress machines the fact that we don't have gravity, but replicating that, and trying to keep up the bone density and the muscle tone. We have to work at it, and the astronauts on board the space station do that.

Scott Kelly has been up there for a year, and we will compare that with his identical twin brother Mark Kelly, who has flown several times in the space shuttle.

I will report to the Senate tomorrow, since he is supposed to return in early morning to Kazakhstan. That is somewhere just before midnight here on eastern time, and I wanted to alert the Senate to this because we are right on the cusp of doing a whole number of things as we prepare to go to Mars. This is certainly one of the significant events, and we will see how Scott Kelly is doing.

In the meantime, we say Godspeed on his fiery reentry into the Earth's atmosphere. Our hopes and our prayers go with him as he and his crewmates return. I will be able to report to the Senate tomorrow.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am here to deliver my climate remarks, but I wish to thank the Senator from Florida for his description of what is happening up in space and what our fellow Americans have achieved. One of the unforgettable moments of my time in the Senate has been to hear Senator NELSON's description of the events that led up to his space flight, the experience of his space flight, and, frankly, the spiritual nature of the events and the effects on his life. It has been impressive, and I am honored to serve with Senator NELSON.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. President, as the Presiding Officer knows, this is my 129th ''Time to Wake Up'' speech to my colleagues about the serious threat of carbon pollution and our responsibility as Senators to heed that threat and to take steps to soften the blow of climate change. With each passing week, the evidence of climate change continues to mount and public understanding of the stakes of the climate crisis continues to grow.

Worldwide, 2015 was the hottest year since we began keeping records back in 1880, according to both NOAA and NASA. The last 5 years have been the warmest 5-year period on record since the World Meteorological Association. We know the amount of carbon in the Earth's atmosphere has risen to its highest level in at least 800,000 years—probably several millions of years but at least 800,000 years. Global sea levels are rising along our shores at their fastest rate in nearly 3,000 years. The current rate of change in ocean acidity is already faster than at any time in the past 50 million years. Our oceans are acidifying more rapidly than they have at any time in 50 million years. We measure that from the geologic record.

The American people get it. They understand that climate change is real. More than three out of every four Americans believe that climate change is occurring and that doing nothing to reduce future warming will cause a very or somewhat serious problem for the United States—three out of four. Even the majority of Republicans now acknowledge global warming, with 59 percent saying the climate is changing. When asked, do you think that the world's climate is undergoing a change that is causing more extreme weather patterns and the rise of sea levels, 70 percent said yes.

The American people have an extraordinarily diverse and qualified array of expertise supporting those convictions: virtually every major scientific society and agency, our American military and national security and intelligence officials, leading American companies, doctors, and faith leaders.

So the truth is winning out, right? The polluters' campaign of deception and misinformation has been thwarted, right? Well, wrong. They are still at it.

A network of fossil fuel-backed front organizations with innocent sounding names still propagates counterfeit science in an attempt to cast doubt on the actual American scientific consensus. This network of polluter-paid deceit and denial has been well documented by Dr. Robert Brulle at Drexel University, Dr. Justin Farrell at Yale University, Dr. Riley Dunlap at Oklahoma State University, and others. Dr. Brulle's follow-the-money analysis, for instance, diagrams the complex flow of cash to these front groups—a flow that the polluters persistently try to obscure. Dr. Farrell's quantitative analysis of words written by climate denial organizations revealed a complex climate denial apparatus that is ''overtly producing and promoting skepticism and doubt about scientific consensus on climate change.'' ''Doubt is their product'' is the famous phrase.

Dr. Constantine Boussalis at Trinity College and Dr. Travis Coan at the University of Exeter released a new study in December examining more than 16,000 documents from 19 conservative think tanks over the period 1998 to 2013 and found ''little support for the claim that the era of science denial is over—instead, discussion of climate science has generally increased over the sample period.''

Their study demonstrates that in spite of the broken global heat records over the last decade, rising sea levels, and accelerated melting of polar ice sheets, these conservative think tanks have, in recent years, actually increased their polluter-paid attacks on science.

The study explains these think tanks ''provide a multitude of services to the cause of climate change skepticism.'' These include: offering material support and lending credibility to contrarian scientists sponsoring pseudoscientific climate change conferences, directly communicating contrarian viewpoints to politicians—which is how we get infected here—and disseminating skeptic viewpoints out through the media.

It follows a playbook of fraudulent deception that we have seen before from industrial powers fighting to obscure the harms their products cause, tobacco being a fine example.

In 2002, the conservative strategist Frank Luntz summed up the scheme in a memo to the Republican Party, since leaked, titled ''Straight Talk.'' Here is what Mr. Luntz said:

> Should the public come to believe that the scientific issues are settled, their views about global warming will change accordingly. Therefore, you need to continue to make the lack of scientific certainty a primary issue in the debate . . . The scientific debate is closing [against us]—

He said back in 2002—

> but not yet closed. There is still a window of opportunity to challenge the science.

This is the climate science version of the infamous 1969 tobacco industry memo that declared that ''Doubt is our product.''

In her recent book ''Dark Money,'' Jane Mayer describes in-depth the means by which fossil fuel interests put their wealth to use exerting outsized influence on our American political process. First, she describes, they invest in intellectuals who come up with ideas friendly to the industry. Then they invest in think tanks to transform these ideas into ''marketable policies''—stuff they think they can sell. As one environmental lawyer explains, ''You take corporate money and give it to a neutral-sounding think tank'' which ''hires people with pedigrees and academic degrees who put out credible-seeming studies. But they all coincide perfectly with the economic interests of their funders.'' Ms. Mayor describes this as the ''think tank as disguised political weapon.''

Not surprisingly, think tanks in the climate denial scheme tend to be funded by fossil fuel interests like ExxonMobil and the Koch brothers or their fronts. The Kochs and their ilk use dark money channels to funnel money through a labyrinth of nonprofit groups that make the full extent of their meddling difficult, if not impossible, to fully determine. The Boussalis and Coan study identifies the Heartland Institute as a particularly important cog in the polluter-funded climate denial apparatus. According to their study:

> Heartland's shift towards science-related themes . . . dovetails with Luntz's famous ''Straight Talk'' memo. It is therefore not a surprise that for a decade it has organized the annual International Conference on Climate Change (also known as Denial-a-Palooza), which serves as a forum for climate science deniers, or that it [Heartland] made headlines in 2012 after launching a controversial ad campaign which equated climate scientists with Ted Kaczynski, the Unabomber.

Climate scientists, such as the ones who work at NASA and NOAA, are being equated with Ted Kaczynski, the Unabomber—very responsible behavior by Heartland, but Heartland gets big bucks from the fossil fuel industry and its front groups for this service.

Unfortunately, that is not all. Behind this well-paid conspiracy to fool the American public, which is failing, is a related political effort, which is not. The polluters are losing with the American public, but they still control Congress. Huge sums of dark money are spent on politics, particularly right here in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives.

As NYU law professor Burt Neuborne has written, ''rivers of money flowing from secret sources have turned our elections into silent auctions.''

How huge are these rivers of money? Each election sets new records. In the 2012 Presidential cycle, the nonpartisan Center for Responsible Politics reported that dark money groups spent over $300 million, with over 80 percent of it coming from Republican-leaning outfits.

The torrent of dark money flooded the 2014 midterm elections, making them the most expensive midterm elections in American history. According to the Washington Post, at least 31 percent of all independent spending in

that election came from groups not required to disclose their donors—dark money. That doesn't even count spending on so-called issue ads, which is also not reported.

In this 2016 election cycle, dark money spending has broken new records again. These dark money groups, according to the Center for Responsive Politics, ''are more integrated into campaigns than we've seen in the past.'' The Koch brothers' political network alone has vowed to spend $750 million this election cycle. They are through $400 million already and climbing. And the $750 million they have vowed to spend is more than the Bush and Kerry campaigns combined spent in 2004.

In our political debate, dark money dollars drown out the voices of average citizens with what has been aptly called ''a tsunami of slime.'' All that money is not spent for nothing. As one secret corporate donor exulted, ''We can fly under the radar screen. . . . There are no limits, no restrictions, and no disclosure.'' The result stinks, and it is polluting our public discourse.

The sad part is that it is working. Not one Republican Senator will stand up and address climate change in a meaningful way. I have a bill modeled on what conservative economists and the out-of-office Republican officials who are willing to address climate change all recommend as their solution. I did it their way—not a single cosponsor.

In the Presidential primary, it is even worse. One leading candidate has actually declared that ''the concept of global warming was created by and for the Chinese in order to make U.S. manufacturing noncompetitive.'' Tell that to NOAA, NASA, the U.S. Navy, and every single American National Laboratory. It is a preposterous statement offered by a person who presents himself as qualified to be President of the United States.

Another candidate—this one, I am sad to say, a Senate colleague—simply shrugs and says, ''Climate is always changing.'' No, not like this. And if you don't believe me, ask NOAA, NASA, the U.S. Navy, and every single American National Laboratory.

Yet another candidate who is also a Senator dismissed the solid American scientific consensus on climate change as ''partisan dogma and ideology.'' Tell that to the scientists at NOAA, NASA, the Navy, and every single one of our National Laboratories, that what they are doing is not legitimate science, but it is partisan dogma and ideology. Again, that is a preposterous remark, but they have to say those things because the big fossil fuel money is so powerful in that primary race that they don't dare cross them.

The powerful fossil fuel interests have created a beautiful situation. They no longer care which candidate wins the primary because they have schooled them all to climate denial. That is the achievement of dark money, and it is an achievement that is disgracing our democracy and will darken our reputation for decades. Its effect is that we do nothing—exactly what the big polluters want, exactly what the big polluters paid for. It is just sickening what these secretive special interests and their dirty dark money are doing to our American democracy.

It is time to wake up, Mr. President. I thank you.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

WHOLE WOMAN'S HEALTH V. HELLERSTEDT

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, tomorrow the Supreme Court will hear oral arguments in the case Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt. The central issue of this case is an attack by the State of Texas on women's health and the clinics that provide abortion services.

I wish to begin by stating clearly that in our country women have a constitutionally protected right to make their own choices about their bodies. That is the law of the land, as guaranteed to women in Oregon and nationwide by the Supreme Court in Roe v. Wade.

The 2013 Texas law at the heart of this case, HB2, is a thinly veiled attempt to block women's choice by setting unjustifiable and burdensome requirements on the doctors and clinics that offer abortion care. Despite what HB2 supporters say, it doesn't have anything to do with protecting women's health. And the reality is, complications from abortion procedures are exceedingly rare. In fact, the numbers show that abortion care is far safer than colonoscopies. Yet Texas law doesn't go out of its way to impose comparable requirements on facilities providing colonoscopies. HB2 unfairly targets women's health clinics.

To make this point directly, I wish to briefly quote from an amicus brief filed by the trusted experts on these matters at the American Medical Association and the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, among others. Their briefs said that the requirements imposed by the State of Texas ''are contrary to accepted medical practice and are not based on scientific evidence.'' The brief continued: ''They fail to enhance the quality or safety of abortion-related medical care and, in fact, impede women's access to such care by imposing unjustified and medically unnecessary burdens on abortion providers.''

HB2 tells clinics, ''comply with these new requirements, or close.'' So in the months since the law passed, the number of clinics that provides such services has, in fact, plummeted across the State. According to reports, if HB2 is upheld, the total will drop by more than three-quarters. Texas, obviously, is a big State, and under HB2 many women are going to have to travel for hours on end to exercise a right guaranteed to them by the U.S. Constitution. The fact is, a lot of working women don't have the luxury of taking a day off or cannot afford a long and expensive trip to a faraway clinic. In effect, women are going to be denied care.

You are going to hear people on both sides of the aisle say again and again how vital it is that Americans have access to medical treatment and advice from doctors they know and trust. But HB2 flatly denies many women that protection.

I personally find it very troubling that HB2 has become a blueprint for similar restrictive laws around the Nation, bills that masquerade as women's health safety measures. For example, the State of Louisiana now has a nearly identical law on its books.

In January, 162 of my congressional colleagues and I wrote the following in an amicus brief filed with the Supreme Court: ''A woman's right to decide whether to carry a pregnancy to term or to seek critical medical services, including abortion, should be insulated from the shifting political rhetoric and interest groups whose sole purpose is to erode the right to choose to bring a pregnancy to term afforded to women under Roe.''

So here is my bottom line: A limit on the exercise of a woman's right is a limit on the right itself. It is wrong and it is un-American to restrict a person's right because it conflicts with your own views. Texas HB2 should be struck down. The rights guaranteed to women following Roe v. Wade ought to be protected, just as all the others that are guaranteed by the Constitution. My hope is that this ongoing crusade against women's health care, which I have spoken about repeatedly on the floor of this Senate, ought to end here, and it ought to end now.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

INTERNATIONAL ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION, 2016—TAIWAN

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, on January 16, 2016, the people of Taiwan went to the polls and elected Dr. Tsai Ing-wen as the next President of Taiwan, with 56.2 percent of the vote. The 2016 Presidential election marked the sixth direct election of the President and Vice President of Taiwan, and the first time a woman has been elected as head of Taiwan's Government. Dr. Tsai's party, the Democratic Progressive Party, also won 68 seats of the 113-member Legislative Yuan for an outright majority in that body. I congratulate Dr. Tsai and her party for their victories and new responsibilities.

This election represents a significant change in Taiwan's political landscape, with important implications for the U.S.-Taiwan relationship. I urge the administration to express its clear support for Taiwan and its vibrant democracy.

As part of the 2016 Taiwan Presidential and legislative elections, an international election observation mission made up of 18 observers from 10 countries visited Taiwan at the invitation of the Taiwan Nation Alliance and the International Committee for a Democratic Taiwan. After the elections, the mission submitted its final report on the elections, concluding that they were free and fair. I ask unanimous consent that the summary of that report be printed in the RECORD.

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

OBSERVATIONS BY THE INTERNATIONAL ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION, 2016

1. INTRODUCTION

From January 12–17, 2016, a group of eighteen observers from 10 countries (see the attached list of members) visited Taiwan at the invitation of the Taiwan Nation Alliance (TNA) and the International Committee for a Democratic Taiwan (ICDT). They formed an International Election Observation Mission (IEOM) to observe the election campaign for the January 16th 2016 Presidential and Legislative elections in Taiwan.

At the completion of their mission on the day after the elections, the members of the IEOM expressed appreciation to the organizers of the visit, and encouraged them to continue in their efforts to strengthen Taiwan's democracy, so that it can be shared with other countries in the region and around the world. In addition, as the IEOM conducted their mission, it greatly appreciated the willingness of candidates, party representatives, and government representatives to meet with them.

During the IEOM, the group visited locations in Taipei, Kaohsiung, and Taichung, meeting with various representatives of the two main political parties: Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) and Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT), as well as of two smaller parties—the People's First Party (PFP) and New Power Party (NPP). They also observed political rallies, street campaigns, and activities at several polling stations and the Central Election Commission counting center on Election Day.

2. THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE IEOM WERE AS FOLLOWS:

It congratulated the people of Taiwan and its newly-elected president Dr. Tsai Ing-wen on the achievement of this major milestone in Taiwan's history, the consolidation of many decades of hard work and dedication by the Taiwanese people.

And it stated that:

a. The vibrancy of the sixth direct presidential election further confirms that Taiwan has left its authoritarian past behind it, and has grown into a fully democratic society featuring the institutionalization of fundamental freedoms, comprehensive electoral procedures, and sound democratic practices.

b. In our view, these elections were free and fair, though there were media reports of irregularities such as vote buying in locations such as Hsinchu, Chiayi and Taitung. However, these have not affected the overall outcome of the elections.

c. After such elections it is key that all sides of the political spectrum in the country respect the democratic choice of the people, and work together to make Taiwan a better place for all.

d. It is also essential that other nations respect the results of the elections as the free choice of the people of Taiwan, and work with the newly-elected leadership to establish a sustainable, long-term peace and stability in the region.

e. The impending third transfer of executive power, as well as the first parliamentary majority for the opposition, are opportunities for further deepening and consolidation of Taiwan's democracy.

MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION

Head of Mission: Frank Murkowski, former Senator and Governor of Alaska

UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Julian Baum, former correspondent for the Far Eastern Economic Review and the Christian Science Monitor

Stephen Bryen, former Deputy Undersecretary of Defense

June Teufel Dreyer, Professor of Political Science, University of Miami

William A. Stanton, former Director of the American Institute in Taiwan, Taipei

Stephen M. Young, former Director of the American Institute in Taiwan, Taipei

Charles Burton, Professor at Brock University, Canada

Michael Stainton, President, Taiwanese Human Rights Association of Canada

EUROPE

Stéphane Corcuff, Professor of Political Science, University of Lyon, France

Jens Damm, Professor of Political Science, University of Tubingen, Germany

Michael Danielsen, Chairman, Taiwan Corner, Denmark

Bruno Kauffman, President, Initiative and Referendum Institute, Europe

Vincent Rollet, French Centre for Research on Contemporary China, Taiwan

Gerrit van der Wees, editor, Taiwan Communiqué, the Netherlands

ASIA & AUSTRALIA

Bruce Jacobs, Retired Professor of Political Science, Monash University, Australia

Akihisa Nagashima, Member House of Representatives (Diet), Japan

Tadae Takubo, Vice President, Japan Institute for National Fundamentals, Japan

Sim Tze Tzin, Member of Parliament, Malaysia

NATIONAL EYE DONOR MONTH

Mr. KIRK. Mr. President, today I wish to honor March 2016 as National Eye Donor Month, an event first celebrated by President Reagan in 1983 and one I am proud to commemorate now.

For over 50 years, corneal transplants have restored the vision of those with corneal diseases. Today these procedures are overwhelmingly safe and successful and help reduce the impact of eye disorders on our economy. As a result of higher medical expenses and reduced workforce productivity, eye disorders are the fifth costliest disease type in the United States.

In total, over 70,000 people receive corneal transplants each year. The largest eye bank in the United States, Eversight, operates two locations in Illinois. These institutions, one in Chicago and one in Bloomington, facilitated over 3,000 transplants in 2015 and provided nearly 1,500 corneas for research and training purposes. Thanks to the 2,700 eye donors in Illinois in 2014 and the thousands of other donors across the country each year, scientists are closer to finding treatments and cures for corneal blindness and many patients no longer suffer from impairment or loss of vision.

On this special occasion, I commend the Eye Bank Association of America and the eye banks across this country for their great work, encourage my colleagues to promote eye donation, and urge all Americans to register to become eye donors.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 3:15 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. 1471. An act to reauthorize the programs and activities of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

H.R. 4084. An act 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.

H.R. 4238. An act to amend the Department of Energy Organization Act and the Local Public Works Capital Development and Investment Act of 1976 to modernize terms relating to minorities.

H.R. 4401. An act 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.R. 4444. An act 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.

H.R. 4583. An act to promote a 21st century energy and manufacturing workforce.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, each with an amendment, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

S. 1172. An act to improve the process of presidential transition.

S. 1580. An act to allow additional appointing authorities to select individuals from competitive service certificates.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 1471. An act to reauthorize the programs and activities of the Federal Emergency Management Agency; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2406. An act to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 4401. An act 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; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 4583. An act to promote a 21st century energy and manufacturing workforce; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, March 1, 2016, she had presented to the President of the United States 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.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–4524. A communication from the Director of the Budget and Program Management Staff, Agricultural Research Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Changes to Fees and Payment Methods'' (RIN0518–AA05) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 24, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4525. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Cotton and Tobacco Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Classification of Foreign-Growth Cotton'' (Docket No. AMS–CN–15–0051) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 24, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4526. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Uniform Procurement Identification'' ((RIN0750–AI54) (DFARS Case 2015–D011)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 23, 2016; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4527. A communication from the Secretary, Division of Trading and Markets, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Security-Based Swap Transactions Connected with a Non-U.S. Person's Dealing Activity That Are Arranged, Negotiated, or Executed by Personnel Located in a U.S. Branch or Office or in a U.S. Branch or Office of an Agent; Security-Based Swap Dealer De Minimis Exception'' (RIN3235–AL05) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 23, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4528. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Suspension of Community Eligibility'' ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA–2015–0001)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 24, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4529. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Brazos Island Harbor, Texas navigation project; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4530. A communication from the Acting Unified Listing Team Manager, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Interagency Cooperation—Endangered Species Act of 1973, as Amended; Definition of Destruction or Adverse Modification of Critical Habitat'' (RIN1018–AX88) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 23, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4531. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 15–086); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4532. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–315, ''Tip's Way Designation Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4533. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–316, ''LGBTQ Cultural Competency Continuing Education Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4534. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–317, ''Emery Heights Community Center Designation Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4535. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–318, ''Private Security Camera Incentive Program Temporary Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4536. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–319, ''Marijuana Possession Decriminalization Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4537. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–320, ''Certificate of Good Standing Filing Requirement Temporary Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4538. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–322, ''Wage Theft Prevention Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4539. A communication from the Chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Annual Performance Report for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4540. A communication from the Chairman of the Federal Maritime Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2015 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4541. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–321, ''Presidential Primary Ballot Access Temporary Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4542. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA) Quarterly Report to Congress; First Quarter of Fiscal Year 2016''; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs .

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. COATS, from the Joint Economic Committee:

Special Report entitled ''2016 Economic Report of the President'' (Rept. No. 114–218).

By Mr. ROBERTS, from the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, without amendment:

S. 2609. An original bill to amend the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 to require the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a national voluntary labeling standard for bioengineered foods, and for other purposes.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mrs. FISCHER (for herself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. BOOKER, and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 2607. A bill to ensure appropriate spectrum planning and interagency coordination to support the Internet of Things; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. KIRK (for himself and Mr. COONS):

S. 2608. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to place signage on Federal land along the trail known as the ''American Discovery Trail'', and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. ROBERTS:

S. 2609. An original bill to amend the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 to require the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a national voluntary labeling standard for bioengineered foods, and for other purposes;

from the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry; placed on the calendar.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Ms. CANTWELL, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 2610. A bill to approve an agreement between the United States and the Republic of Palau; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. UDALL:

S. 2611. A bill to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to replace the Federal Election Commission with the Federal Election Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. JOHNSON, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 2612. A bill to ensure United States jurisdiction over offenses committed by United States personnel stationed in Canada in furtherance of border security initiatives; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. HATCH, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 2613. A bill to reauthorize certain programs established by the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 2614. A bill to amend the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, to reauthorize the Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Alert Program, and to promote initiatives that will reduce the risk of injury and death relating to the wandering characteristics of some children with autism; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mrs. MCCASKILL):

S. 2615. A bill to increase competition in the pharmaceutical industry; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. COONS (for himself and Mr. KIRK):

S. Res. 381. A resolution honoring the memory and legacy of Michael James Riddering and condemning the terrorist attacks in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso on January 15, 2016; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself and Mrs. ERNST):

S. Res. 382. A resolution congratulating the community colleges of Iowa for 50 years of outstanding service to the State of Iowa, the United States, and the world; considered and agreed to.

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

S. Res. 383. A resolution recognizing the importance of the United States-Israel economic relationship and encouraging new areas of cooperation; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 297

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 297, a bill to revive and expand the Intermediate Care Technician Pilot Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 497

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 497, a bill to allow Americans to earn paid sick time so that they can address their own health needs and the health needs of their families.

S. 579

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

S. 700

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 700, a bill to amend the Asbestos Information Act of 1988 to establish a public database of asbestos-containing products, to require public disclosure of information pertaining to the manufacture, processing, distribution, and use of asbestos-containing products in the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 740

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 740, a bill to improve the coordination and use of geospatial data.

S. 901

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) were added as cosponsors of S. 901, a bill to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a national center for research on the diagnosis and treatment of health conditions of the descendants of veterans exposed to toxic substances during service in the Armed Forces that are related to that exposure, to establish an advisory board on such health conditions, and for other purposes.

S. 1440

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1440, a bill to amend the Federal Credit Union Act to exclude a loan secured by a non-owner occupied 1- to 4-family dwelling from the definition of a member business loan, and for other purposes.

S. 1479

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) were added as cosponsors of S. 1479, a bill to amend the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 to modify provisions relating to grants, and for other purposes.

S. 1865

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1865, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to eating disorders, and for other purposes.

S. 1911

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) and the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) were added as cosponsors of S. 1911, a bill to implement policies to end preventable maternal, newborn, and child deaths globally.

S. 1915

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1915, a bill to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to make anthrax vaccines and antimicrobials available to emergency response providers, and for other purposes.

S. 1982

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1982, a bill to authorize a Wall of Remembrance as part of the Korean War Veterans Memorial and to allow certain private contributions to fund the Wall of Remembrance.

S. 2213

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2213, a bill to prohibit firearms dealers from selling a firearm prior to the completion of a background check.

S. 2216

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2216, a bill to provide immunity from suit for certain individuals who disclose potential examples of financial exploitation of senior citizens, and for other purposes.

S. 2291

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2291, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish procedures within the Department of Veterans Affairs for the processing of whistleblower complaints, and for other purposes.

S. 2361

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2361, a bill to enhance airport security, and for other purposes.

S. 2424

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2424, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize a program for early detection, diagnosis, and treatment regarding deaf and hard-of-hearing newborns, infants, and young children.

S. 2426

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr.

MORAN) 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.

S. 2437

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2437, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the burial of the cremated remains of persons who served as Women's Air Forces Service Pilots in Arlington National Cemetery, and for other purposes.

S. 2452

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2452, a bill to prohibit the use of funds to make payments to Iran relating to the settlement of claims brought before the Iran-United States Claims Tribunal until Iran has paid certain compensatory damages awarded to United States persons by United States courts.

S. 2487

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) were added as cosponsors 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. 2521

At the request of Mrs. ERNST, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2521, a bill to amend the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 to improve the treatment at non-Department of Veterans Affairs facilities of veterans who are victims of military sexual assault, and for other purposes.

S. 2540

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2540, a bill to provide access to counsel for unaccompanied children and other vulnerable populations.

S. 2559

At the request of Mr. BURR, the names of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2559, a bill to prohibit the modification, termination, abandonment, or transfer of the lease by which the United States acquired the land and waters containing Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

S. 2566

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2566, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide sexual assault survivors with certain rights, and for other purposes.

S. 2576

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2576, a bill to permit the Attorney General to authorize a temporary transfer of funds from Department of Justice accounts in the amount necessary to restore Department of Justice Asset Forfeiture Program equitable sharing payments to participating law enforcement agencies.

S. 2579

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2579, a bill to provide additional support to ensure safe drinking water.

S. 2597

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2597, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for treatment of clinical psychologists as physicians for purposes of furnishing clinical psychologist services under the Medicare program.

S. CON. RES. 30

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 30, a concurrent resolution expressing concern over the disappearance of David Sneddon, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 349

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 349, a resolution congratulating the Farm Credit System on the celebration of its 100th anniversary.

S. RES. 368

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 368, a resolution supporting efforts by the Government of Colombia to pursue peace and the end of the country's enduring internal armed conflict and recognizing United States support for Colombia at the 15th anniversary of Plan Colombia.

S. RES. 378

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) were added as cosponsors of 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.

AMENDMENT NO. 3166

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3166 intended to be proposed to S. 2012, an original bill to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3323

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3323 intended to be proposed to H.R. 4470, a bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act with respect to the requirements related to lead in drinking water, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3345

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3345 intended to be proposed 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.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Ms. CANTWELL, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 2610. A bill to approve an agreement between the United States and the Republic of Palau; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I am pleased to join with Senator MARIA CANTWELL and Senator MAZIE HIRONO to introduce legislation to approve the 2010 Agreement between the Governments of the United States and the Republic of Palau following the Compact of Free Association Section 432 Review.

Palau's history with the United States dates back to the Battle of Peleliu, fought between United States and Japanese forces for over two months with the highest casualty rate of any battle in the Pacific Theater. Following World War II, Palau became a district of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands under the auspices of the United Nations, but administered by the United States. Palau was the last district of the Trust Territory to choose its political future, when in 1994, it became a self-governing, sovereign state and entered into a fifty-year Compact of Free Association with the United States similar to that of the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia.

Under the Compact, the United States, through the Department of the

Interior, provides economic and financial assistance, defends Palau's territorial integrity, and allows Palauan citizens the opportunity to enter the United States as non-immigrants. In return, the United States receives exclusive and unlimited access to Palau's land and waterways for strategic purposes. U.S. assistance is intended to help Palau develop its infrastructure and economy so that it has a sustainable government and economy capable of functioning without the United States' support. Section 432 of the Compact provides that after the fifteenth, thirtieth, and fortieth anniversaries of the Compact, the United States and Palau shall formally review the terms of the Compact and shall consider the overall nature and development of their relationship, including Palau's operating requirements and its progress in meeting development objectives.

The United States can count on Palau to vote with us on a broad range of issues, including some that are controversial and where we need reliable allies. On a number of important resolutions that have come before the United Nations' General Assembly, Palau stood by us and provided critical votes. For example, in 2014, Palau voted with the United States on 97 percent of votes before the U.N. General Assembly, and Palau voted with the U.S. 90 percent of the time in important votes. From 2011–2013, Palau voted with the United States 100 percent of the time in important votes. Palau has been a steadfast ally of the United States in international forums and we should be mindful of and grateful for their support.

It is also important to recognize that Palau has consistently demonstrated a commitment to the U.S.–Palau partnership under the Compact. Palauan nationals serve in U.S. coalition missions, participate in U.S.-led combat operations, and have given their lives for the safety of our nation. Approximately 500 Palauan men and women serve as volunteers in our military today, out of a population of about 21,000. Palau is indeed a strong partner who punches well above its weight. We are grateful for their sacrifices and dedication to promoting peace and fighting terrorism. After reviewing the progress achieved by Palau in the first 15 years of the Compact, and with the 13th anniversary coming upon us, the administration is recommending continued assistance, but at lower levels.

This agreement, reached in 2010, has been before Congress in prior years and the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee has held hearings on the matter. To the best of my knowledge, there is no objection within Congress on the policy of continuing to provide financial assistance to Palau under the Compact of Free Association. The hang-up has been finding a viable offset to pay for that assistance. I would note that since 2010 Congress has provided just over $13 million in annual discretionary funding to the Government of Palau in lieu of the Agreement's enactment—a total of over $90 million in that timeframe. At the same time, the administration has failed to identify an acceptable offset for a cost that is now just under $150 million over 10 years.

For such a steadfast ally, partner, and friend, whose citizens serve in our Armed Forces for the protection of our nation, and whose government supports the United States' position on critical issues in international forums, we should be able to come up with a viable funding solution. I call upon the administration to work with Congress on this matter, find an offset, and enact the 2010 Agreement between the United States and Palau.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a letter of support be printed in the RECORD.

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

FEBRUARY 22, 2016.

Hon. JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr.,
President of the Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: Enclosed is draft legislation to amend Title I of Public Law 99–658 (100 Stat 3672), regarding the Compact of Free Association between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Palau (Compact). This legislation would approve and implement the results of the mandated 15-year review of the Compact, as well as the Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Palau (Compact Review Agreement), signed on September 3, 2010. We strongly urge this draft bill be introduced, referred appropriately, and passed in Congress at the earliest opportunity.

The relationship between the United States and Palau, as embodied in the Compact, is grounded in shared history, friendship, and a strong partnership in national security, especially with respect to the Asia-Pacific region. In the Battle of Peleliu, in Palau, more than 1,500 American servicemen lost their lives, and more than 8,000 were wounded, resulting in one of the costliest battles in the Pacific in World War II. After the war, the United States assumed administrative authority over Palau as part of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and in 1994 Palau became a sovereign nation in free association with the United States under the Compact of Free Association. The Compact provides U.S. military forces full authority and responsibility for security and defense matters in or relating to Palau. Conversely, the United States has the extraordinary advantage of being able to deny other nations' military forces access to Palau, an important element of our Pacific strategy for defense of the U.S. homeland.

In addition to the important historical and security relationship, Palau has consistently demonstrated a commitment to the U.S.-Palau partnership under the Compact. Palauan nationals have served in U.S. coalition missions and participated in U.S. led combat operations. Palauan citizens volunteer in large numbers in the U.S. military. Since September 11, 2001, seven Palauans have lost their lives in combat. At the United Nations, Palau has voted with the United States more than 95 percent of the time, including on key foreign policy issues.

The Compact has seen the goal of self-governance and democracy in Palau realized. However, to bolster this progress and maintain stability in the region, we must now help to ensure Palau's financial independence. By approving the Compact Review Agreement, the pending legislation would extend U.S. assistance through 2024, helping to meet and achieve this critical goal. Under the agreement, Palau has committed to undertake economic, legislative, financial, and management reforms. Additionally, this agreement assures the United States can withhold economic assistance in the absence of significant further progress in implementing meaningful reforms.

The Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 requires that the cumulative effects of revenue and direct spending legislation in a congressional session meet a pay-as-you-go (PAYGO) requirement. In total, such legislation should not increase the on-budget deficit; if it does, it would produce a sequestration if it is not fully offset by the end of the congressional session. This draft bill would increase mandatory outlays and the on-budget deficit as shown below:

FISCAL YEARS
[Dollars in millions]

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Deficit Impact	46	26	20	17	15	14	6	5	149

This proposal would increase direct spending, and it is therefore subject to the Statutory PAYGO Act and should be considered in conjunction with all other proposals that are subject to the Act. Approving the results of the Agreement is important to the national security of the United States, stability in the Western Pacific region, our bilateral relationship with Palau, and to the United States' broader strategic interests in the Asia-Pacific region. We stand ready, as always, to provide you with any information and assistance necessary to help secure the passage of this legislation.

Sincerely,

SALLY JEWELL,
Secretary, Department of the Interior.
HEATHER HIGGINBOTTOM,
Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources, Department of State.
ROBERT O. WORK,
Deputy Secretary, Department of Defense.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. JOHNSON, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 2612. A bill to ensure United States jurisdiction over offenses committed by United States personnel stationed

in Canada in furtherance of border security initiatives; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, last year, I hailed the signing of a new agreement between the United States and Canada designed to improve cross-border travel, commerce and security between our two countries. Secretary Johnson of the Department of Homeland Security was joined in Washington by Canada's Minister of Public Safety, Steven Blaney, for the signing of that new preclearance agreement, which was negotiated under the Beyond the Border Action Plan.

Preclearance facilities allow travelers to pass through U.S. Customs and Border Protection, CBP, inspections in Canada, prior to traveling to the United States. Preclearance operations relieve congestion at U.S. destination airports, facilitate commerce, save money, and strengthen national security. The United States currently stations CBP officers in select locations in Canada to inspect passengers and cargo bound for the United States before departing Canada. The new agreement signed in March 2015 will lead to expanded U.S. preclearance facilities in Canada in the marine, land, air and rail sectors.

However, the Department of Homeland Security requires specific, narrowly tailored legislation to fully implement the new agreement. CBP Officers assigned to preclearance locations operate with law enforcement authorities and immunities as agreed upon by the United States and the host country's government. Under the new preclearance agreement with Canada, the United States secured the right to prosecute U.S. officials if they commit crimes on the job while stationed in Canada—and thereby preclude a prosecution by Canadian prosecutors. But in some cases, the United States may lack the legal authority to prosecute U.S. officials because many federal crimes do not have extraterritorial reach. The Promoting Travel, Commerce and National Security Act of 2016, which I am proud to introduce today with Senator MURKOWSKI, would ensure that the United States has the legal authority to hold our own officials accountable if they engage in wrongdoing abroad in Canada. This legislation will allow for full implementation of the expanded Canada preclearance agreement.

Enacting this legislation will promote two key national goals: enhancing our national security, and creating a more efficient flow of travelers and goods. By placing CBP personnel at the point of departure, screening occurs before a person boards a flight, increasing our ability to prevent those who should not be flying to the United States from doing so. In 2014, preclearance stopped more than 10,000 inadmissible travelers worldwide before they left foreign soil. As Secretary Johnson has said, ''We have to push our homeland security out beyond our borders so that we are not defending the homeland from the one-yard line.'' At the same time, preclearance facilitates travel and trade.

I am pleased that a bipartisan coalition in the House of Representatives, led by Representatives ELISE STEFANIK and ANN KUSTER, will also introduce companion legislation today as well. And I am grateful for the support of Senators SCHUMER, JOHNSON, HEITKAMP, SHAHEEN, CANTWELL, MURRAY and GILLIBRAND for this important legislation. I hope with this bipartisan, bicameral support, this simple, straightforward enabling legislation will be enacted this year.

In Vermont, we look to our Canadian neighbors as partners in trade and commerce, and as joint stewards of our shared communities. While both nations strive to ensure that the border is secure, the ties between Canada and Vermont run deep. We rely on each other for trade, commerce, and tourism. And many Vermont families have members on both sides of the border. This agreement has long been a dream for Vermonters who have fond memories of taking the train north to Montreal to enjoy all that this vibrant cultural hub offers. It is also a win for visitors from Canada's largest cities who love to come to Vermont to ski, shop and dine. I commend Secretary Johnson for his commitment to forging this agreement that will greatly benefit Vermont and the United States. I look forward to enacting this legislation into law so that these projects can move forward.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. HATCH, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 2613. A bill to reauthorize certain programs established by the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, we have all heard accounts of innocent children being victimized and abused by predators. Today I will introduce legislation to extend two of the key programs that Congress established under the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006. With today's legislation, I hope to send a strong message to all Americans about Congress' continued commitment to keeping our Nation's children safe.

Many of us here in the Senate worked very hard on the original version of the Adam Walsh Act, which is named for a six year-old who was tragically murdered in 1981. President George W. Bush signed that legislation on the 25th anniversary of Adam Walsh's abduction from a Florida shopping mall. I am pleased that Senators HATCH, SCHUMER, and FEINSTEIN—who cosponsored the Senate version of that legislation when it was first introduced in the 109th Congress—have joined me as original cosponsors of today's legislation.

John Walsh, the father of Adam Walsh, worked closely with us on the development of the 2006 Adam Walsh Act, and we worked with him on the development of today's legislation as well. Reauthorization of the Adam Walsh Act is a priority for him and has the support of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

The Adam Walsh Act was enacted in response to multiple, notorious cases involving children who had been targeted by adult criminals, many of them repeat sex offenders. Its passage became a national priority after Congress discovered that criminals were taking advantage of gaps and loopholes in some States' laws to circumvent sex offender registration requirements—with tragic results for some of the nation's children.

Who can forget Jetseta Gage—a beautiful 10-year-old girl from Cedar Rapids, Iowa who was sexually assaulted and murdered by a registered sex offender in 2005? As a cosponsor of the Senate version of the Adam Walsh Act, I championed the inclusion in the 2006 law of language imposing mandatory minimum penalties for those who murder, kidnap, or inflict serious bodily harm to children like Jetseta.

Of course, the centerpiece of the Adam Walsh Act is the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act, or SORNA. SORNA divides sex offenders into three categories, or tiers, depending on the seriousness of their crimes. It encourages States to set minimum criteria for the registration of sex offenders in each tier, with the aim of discouraging ''forum shopping'' by offenders who prey on children.

The Adam Walsh Act also established several programs that are key to its successful implementation. One such program, known as SOMA, or the Sex Offender Management Assistance Program, makes federal grant resources available to states to offset the costs of Walsh Act implementation. Today's legislation would extend the authorization for that program, which expired 8 years ago.

The federal government, through the U.S. Marshals Service, also supports States and localities in tracking down sex offenders who fail to register or reregister. Those fugitive apprehension activities were authorized under the 2006 Adam Walsh Act, and today's legislation would extend the authorization for those U.S. Marshals Service activities at $60 million annually for each of the next 2 years.

Nothing can bring back Adam Walsh, Jetseta Gage, Dru Sjodin, Megan Kanka, or the other innocents for whom the Adam Walsh Act was passed. But it is important that we continue to not only honor their memories but also protect America's future children from harm by extending the key programs that were authorized under the original Adam Walsh Act. The authorization for these programs expired at least 7 years ago.

According to the Justice Department's Bureau of Justice Statistics, there are about a hundred thousand

people convicted of sexual violence offenses in state prisons, and hundreds of thousands more who currently reside in neighborhoods across the United States. As a father of five and the grandfather of 9, I believe we should continue to make sex offender registration and notification a priority.

Mr. President, July 27 of this year will mark the 35th anniversary of Adam Walsh's abduction. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the passage of this important legislation before that date elapses.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 2614. A bill to amend the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, to reauthorize the Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Alert Program, and to promote initiatives that will reduce the risk of injury and death relating to the wandering characteristics of some children with autism; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today Senators SCHUMER, TILLIS and I will introduce legislation to help America's families locate missing loved ones who have Alzheimer's disease, autism or related conditions that may cause them to wander. Our bill would extend existing programs designed to assist in locating Alzheimer's disease and dementia patients. It also adds new support for people with autism.

We have named the legislation in honor of two boys with autism who perished because their condition caused them to wander. One of these children, nine-year-old Kevin Curtis Wills, slipped into Iowa's Raccoon River near a park and tragically drowned in 2008. The other, 14-year-old Avonte Oquendo, wandered away from his school and drowned in New York City's East River several years ago.

Theirs are not isolated cases. We have all read or heard the heartbreaking stories of families frantically trying to locate a missing loved one whose condition caused him or her to wander off.

We have also seen benefits of notification systems to locate missing children and bring relief to families through community assistance. Our bill will use similar concepts and other technology to help locate people with Alzheimer's disease or other forms of dementia as well as children with autism spectrum disorders who may be prone to wander away from their families or caregivers.

My home State of Iowa has the fifth highest Alzheimer's death rate in America, according to the Alzheimer's Association. As further noted by the Alzheimer's Association, which we consulted on this bill's development, as many as one in three seniors will die with a form of dementia. About 63,000 Iowans are living with Alzheimer's disease.

In 2014, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released information on the incidence of autism in this country. The CDC identified 1 in 68 children as having autism spectrum disorders. Experts tell us that, in Iowa alone, about 8,000 individuals have been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders, and we worked closely with the Autism Society of Iowa on the development of this bill.

Because police often are the first people to respond when a child goes missing, the bill also will make resources available to equip first responders and other community officials with the training necessary to better prevent and respond to these cases. With better information sharing, communities can play a central role in reuniting these children with their families.

Finally, the bill will ensure that grants from the U.S. Department of Justice also can be used by state and local law enforcement agencies and nonprofits for education and training programs to proactively prevent and locate missing individuals with these conditions. The grants will facilitate the development of training and emergency protocols for school personnel, supply first responders with additional information and resources, and make local tracking technology programs available for individuals who may wander from safety because of their condition. Grant funding may also be used to establish or enhance notification and communications systems for the recovery of missing children with autism.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 381—HONORING THE MEMORY AND LEGACY OF MICHAEL JAMES RIDDERING AND CONDEMNING THE TERRORIST ATTACKS IN OUAGADOUGOU, BURKINA FASO ON JANUARY 15, 2016

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

S. RES. 381

Whereas, on January 15, 2016, terrorists perpetrated heinous attacks at the Splendid Hotel, the Cappuccino Café, and the Yibi Hotel in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, killing 30 innocent civilians from 18 countries, including Burkina Faso, Canada, France, Libya, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Portugal, Ukraine, and the United States;

Whereas Michael James Riddering was the only citizen of the United States killed in the terrorist attacks on January 15, 2016;

Whereas first responders, including Burkinabe forces, and French and United States security personnel, including personnel of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security and of the United States Armed Forces, valiantly and quickly assisted with evacuating civilians trapped in the Splendid Hotel, transporting civilians to safe locations, and supporting the military of Burkina Faso in securing the area around the Splendid Hotel;

Whereas Michael James Riddering resided in Yako, Burkina Faso, was born in Chicago, Illinois, and was raised in Fort Lauderdale, Florida;

Whereas Michael James Riddering was a graduate of Fort Lauderdale Christian High School;

Whereas Michael James Riddering was a businessman, a boat builder, and a missionary who led an orphanage, a school, and a women's crisis center in Burkina Faso, and was a father, son, husband, brother, and friend;

Whereas Michael James Riddering and his wife, Amy, worked as a part of a team that cared for over 400 orphaned children and provided direct assistance to disenfranchised widows in Burkina Faso;

Whereas Michael James Riddering was in the capital, Ouagadougou, of Burkina Faso on January 15, 2016, to meet a group of missionaries who had arrived from Florida to volunteer for 10 days at the compound that he and his wife, Amy, ran in the city of Yako; and

Whereas the people of the United States stand united with the family, friends, and colleagues of Michael James Riddering to support the individuals touched by his life or affected by his death and to pray for healing, understanding, and peace: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) strongly condemns the terrorist attacks in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso on January 15, 2016;

(2) honors the memory of Michael James Riddering, the United States citizen who was killed in the terrorist attack on the Cappuccino Café on January 15, 2016, in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso;

(3) recognizes and honors the dedication of Michael James Riddering, who moved halfway across the world to work with orphans and widows in order to help them improve their lives and to contribute to their communities;

(4) extends sincere condolences and prayers to—

(A) the family, friends, and colleagues of Michael James Riddering, particularly his wife, Amy, and their children, Haley, Delaney, Biba, and Moise; and

(B) the individuals touched by the life of Michael James Riddering, including the dedicated aid workers, missionaries, and volunteers that continue to selflessly engage in important humanitarian and development efforts; and

(5) pledges to continue to work to counter violent extremism, including through education and community development, in the United States and abroad.

SENATE RESOLUTION 382—CONGRATULATING THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES OF IOWA FOR 50 YEARS OF OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO THE STATE OF IOWA, THE UNITED STATES, AND THE WORLD

Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself and Mrs. ERNST) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 382

Whereas Senate File 550 in the Iowa State Senate, which provided for the establishment and operation of area community colleges in Iowa, was signed into law by Governor Harold Hughes on June 7, 1965, creating a new community college system in Iowa;

Whereas each of the community colleges of Iowa was officially designated by the State Board of Education in 1966, including—

(1) Northeast Iowa Community College, North Iowa Area Community College, Northwest Iowa Community College, Iowa Central Community College, Southwestern Community College, and Indian Hills Community College on February 18, 1966;

(2) Hawkeye Community College, the Eastern Iowa Community Colleges, Kirkwood Community College, Des Moines Area Community College, and Iowa Western Community College on March 18, 1966;

(3) the Iowa Valley Community College District on April 29, 1966;

(4) Southeastern Community College on June 2, 1966;

(5) Western Iowa Tech Community College on August 19, 1966; and

(6) Iowa Lakes Community College on October 28, 1966;

Whereas, 50 years later, the community colleges of Iowa have grown to be the largest postsecondary institutions in the State, providing accessible and affordable education to a diverse range of students in Iowa and around the world;

Whereas, 50 years later, the community colleges of Iowa are leaders in delivering college parallel courses and career technical education programs to high schools students in Iowa;

Whereas, 50 years later, the community colleges of Iowa provide opportunities in adult literacy and basic education to low-skilled workers, immigrants, and refugees;

Whereas, 50 years later, the workforce of Iowa has nearly 25,000,000 credit hours and more than 138,000,000 contact hours of past and present community college training;

Whereas, 50 years later, the community colleges of Iowa lead the response to the specific workforce needs of communities in Iowa, including the ability for Iowa businesses to compete in global markets; and

Whereas, 50 years later, the community colleges of Iowa are the leaders in providing skills training for high-demand, high-paying, high-skilled occupations and career enhancement opportunities for Iowa workers: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates and commends the community colleges of Iowa for 50 years of—

(A) developing and sustaining accessible and quality higher education opportunities for all Iowans; and

(B) service to Iowa and the United States; and

(2) requests that the Secretary of the Senate transmit a copy of this resolution to—

(A) the Board Chair of the Iowa Association of Community College Trustees; and

(B) the Chair of the Iowa Association of Community College Presidents.

SENATE RESOLUTION 383—RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE UNITED STATES-ISRAEL ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP AND ENCOURAGING NEW AREAS OF COOPERATION

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

S. RES. 383

Whereas the deep bond between the United States and Israel is exemplified by its many facets, including the robust economic and commercial relationship;

Whereas, on April 22, 2015, the United States celebrated the 30th anniversary of its free trade agreement with Israel, which was the first free trade agreement entered into by the United States;

Whereas the United States-Israel Free Trade Agreement established the Joint Committee to facilitate the agreement and collaborate on efforts to increase bilateral cooperation and investment;

Whereas, since the signing of this agreement, two-way trade has multiplied tenfold to over $40,000,000,000 annually;

Whereas Israel is the third largest importer of United States goods in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region after Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, despite representing only 2 percent of the region's population;

Whereas nearly half of all investment in the United States from the MENA region comes from Israel;

Whereas Israel has more companies listed on the NASDAQ Stock Exchange than any other country except for the United States and China;

Whereas, in 1956, the United States-Israel Education Foundation was established to administer the Fulbright Program in Israel, and has facilitated the exchange of nearly 3,300 students between the United States and Israel since its inception;

Whereas, in 1972, the United States-Israel Binational Science Foundation (BSF) was established to promote scientific relations between the United States and Israel by supporting collaborative research projects in basic and applied scientific fields, and has generated investments of over $480,000,000 to over 4,000 projects since its inception;

Whereas Binational Science Foundation grant recipients have included 43 Nobel Laureates, 19 winners of the Albert Lasker Medical Research Award, and 38 recipients of the Wolf Prize;

Whereas, in 1977, the United States-Israel Binational Industrial Research and Development Foundation (BIRD) was established to stimulate, promote, and support non-defense industrial research and development of mutual benefit to both countries in agriculture, communications, life sciences, electronics, electro-optics, energy, healthcare information technology, homeland security, software, water, and other technologies, and has provided over $300,000,000 to over 700 joint projects since its inception;

Whereas recent successful BIRD projects include the ReWalk system that helps paraplegics walk, a medical teaching simulator for Laparoscopic Hysterectomies, and a new drug to treat chronic gout;

Whereas, in 1978, the United States-Israel Binational Agricultural Research and Development Fund was established as a competitive funding program for mutually beneficial, mission-oriented, strategic and applied research of agricultural problems conducted jointly by United States and Israeli scientists, and has provided over $250,000,000 to over 1,000 projects since its inception;

Whereas an independent review of the United States-Israel Binational Agricultural Research and Development Fund (BARD) estimated that the dollar benefits of just 10 of its projects through 2010 came to $440,000,000 in the United States and $300,000,000 in Israel, far exceeding total investment in the program;

Whereas, in 1984, the United States and Israel began convening the Joint Economic Development Group (JEDG) to regularly discuss economic conditions and identify new opportunities for collaboration;

Whereas, in 1994, the United States-Israel Science and Technology Foundation (USISTF) was established to promote the advancement of science and technology for mutual economic benefit and has developed joint research and development programs that reach 12 States;

Whereas the United States-Israel Innovation Index (USI3), which was developed by USISTF to track and benchmark innovation relationships, ranks the United States-Israel innovation relationship as top-tier;

Whereas, in 2007, the United States-Israel Binational Industrial Research and Development Foundation (BIRD) Energy program was established to provide support for joint United States-Israel research and development of renewable energy and energy efficiency, and has provided $18,000,000 to 20 joint projects since its founding;

Whereas, since 2011, the United States Department of Energy and the Israeli Ministry of National Infrastructures, Energy and Water Resources have led an annual United States-Israel Energy Meeting with participants across government agencies to facilitate bilateral cooperation in that sector;

Whereas, in 2012, Congress passed and President Barack Obama signed into law the United States-Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–150), which set United States policy to expand bilateral cooperation across the spectrum of civilian sectors, including high technology, agriculture, medicine, health, pharmaceuticals, and energy;

Whereas, in 2013, President Obama said in reference to Israel's contribution to the global economy, ''That innovation is just as important to the relationship between the United States and Israel as our security cooperation.'';

Whereas, in 2014, Secretary of the Treasury Jacob Lew said, ''As one of the most technologically-advanced and innovative economies in the world, Israel is an important economic partner to the United States.'';

Whereas the 2014 Global Venture Capital Confidence Survey ranked the United States and Israel as the two countries with the highest levels of investor confidence in the world;

Whereas, in 2014, Congress passed and President Obama signed into law the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–296), which deepened cooperation on energy, water, agriculture, trade, and defense, and expressed the sense of Congress that Israel is a major strategic partner of the United States; and

Whereas economic cooperation between the United States and Israel has also thrived at the State and local levels through both formal agreements and bilateral organizations in over 30 States that have encouraged new forms of cooperation in fields such as water conservation, cybersecurity, and alternative energy and farming technologies: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) affirms that the United States-Israel economic partnership has achieved great tangible and intangible benefits to both countries and is a foundational component of the strong alliance;

(2) recognizes that science and technology innovation present promising new frontiers for United States-Israel economic cooperation, particularly in light of widespread drought, cybersecurity attacks, and other major challenges impacting the United States;

(3) encourages the President to regularize and expand existing forums of economic dialogue with Israel and foster both public and private sector participation; and

(4) expresses support for the President to explore new agreements with Israel, including in the fields of energy, water, agriculture, medicine, neurotechnology, and cybersecurity.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3351. 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.

SA 3352. Mrs. CAPITO (for herself and Mr. KING) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3353. Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mrs. CAPITO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3354. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mrs. CAPITO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3355. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3356. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3357. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3358. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3359. Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. SANDERS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3360. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3361. Mr. CARDIN (for himself and 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 3362. Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3363. Ms. COLLINS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3364. Ms. COLLINS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3365. Ms. COLLINS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3366. Mr. LANKFORD (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.

SA 3367. Mr. TOOMEY (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3368. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3369. Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. ALEXANDER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3370. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3371. 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.

SA 3372. Mr. HEINRICH (for himself and Mr. ENZI) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3373. Mrs. ERNST submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3374. Mr. DONNELLY (for himself and Mrs. CAPITO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3375. Mr. REID (for Mrs. MCCASKILL (for herself and Mr. BLUNT)) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. REID, of NV to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3376. Mr. KAINE (for himself and Mrs. CAPITO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3377. 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 3378. Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, 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 3379. Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. MENENDEZ) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3380. Mr. TESTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3381. Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Mr. PAUL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3382. Mr. MARKEY (for himself and 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 3383. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3384. Mr. MARKEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3385. Mr. DAINES (for himself and Mr. PETERS) 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 3351. 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 48, line 19, insert after ''community organizations'' the following: '', and nonprofit organizations that demonstrate the capacity to provide recovery services to veterans,''.

SA 3352. Mrs. CAPITO (for herself and Mr. KING) 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 of title VII, add the following:

SEC. 705. MEDICAID PROVIDER PARTICIPATION CERTIFICATION FOR FACILITIES TREATING INFANTS UNDER 1 YEAR OF AGE WITH NEONATAL ABSTINENCE SYNDROME.

(a) GUIDELINES FOR CERTIFICATION FOR PARTICIPATION UNDER MEDICAID STATE PLANS OF CERTAIN FACILITIES TREATING INFANTS UNDER 1 YEAR OF AGE WITH NEONATAL ABSTINENCE SYNDROME.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall establish guidelines, in accordance with paragraph (2), for State agencies and recognized national listing or accrediting bodies to follow for purposes of certifying a residential pediatric recovery center as qualifying for a provider agreement for participation under a State plan under the Medicaid program under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.). Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a residential pediatric recovery center may satisfy the requirements set forth in such guidelines, in lieu of any comparable requirements otherwise applicable to such a center for purposes of certification for participation under such a State plan.

(2) GUIDELINES DESCRIBED.—The guidelines established under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) provide for physical environment requirements and other necessary requirements specifically applicable to treating individuals who are under 1 year of age with the diagnosis of neonatal abstinence syndrome without any other significant medical risk factors; and

(B) take into account that certain physical environment requirements, and any other requirements, needed for centers or facilities treating adults may not be necessary for centers or facilities treating individuals described in subparagraph (A).

(3) RESIDENTIAL PEDIATRIC RECOVERY CENTER.—For purposes of this section, the term ''residential pediatric recovery center'' means a center or facility that furnishes items and services to infants who are under 1 year of age with the diagnosis of neonatal abstinence syndrome without any other significant medical risk factors and mothers of such infants.

(b) STATE LAW LICENSURE OF CERTAIN FACILITIES SATISFIES CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in the case of a State that recognizes and licenses residential pediatric recovery centers (as defined in subsection (a)(3)), such a center that is licensed, in accordance with such State law, shall be treated as satisfying any comparable requirements otherwise applicable to such a center for purposes of certification for participation under the State plan under the Medicaid program under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.).

(c) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that residential pediatric recovery centers (as defined in subsection (a)(3)) should offer counseling and other services to mothers (and other appropriate family members and caretakers) of infants receiving treatment at such centers. Such services may include the following:

(1) Counseling or referrals for services.

(2) Activities to encourage mother-infant bonding.

(3) Training on caring for such infants.

(4) Activities to encourage transparency of relevant State mandatory reporting requirements.

SA 3353. Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mrs. CAPITO) 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 appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. PRESCRIPTIONS.

Section 309(a) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 829(a)) is amended—

(1) by inserting ''(1) IN GENERAL.—'' before ''Except''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) PARTIAL FILLING OF PRESCRIPTIONS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—A prescription for a controlled substance in schedule II may be partially filled if—

''(i) it is requested by—

''(I) the practitioner that wrote the prescription by making a notation on the face of the written prescription, in the written record of the emergency oral prescription, or in the electronic prescription record; or

''(II) the patient;

''(ii) the pharmacist partially filling the prescription makes a notation of the partial filling and records it in the same manner as a filling of the prescription, in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Attorney General;

''(iii) the pharmacist partially filling the prescription updates the record each time the prescription is partially filled;

''(iv) the total quantity dispensed in all partial fillings does not exceed the total quantity prescribed; and

''(v) the partial filling is not prohibited under the law of the State in which it occurs.

''(B) REMAINING PORTIONS.—Remaining portions of a partially filled prescription—

''(i) may be filled; and

''(ii) must be exhausted not later than 30 days after the date on which the prescription is issued, except in the case of a partially filled emergency prescription, the remaining portions of which must be exhausted not later than 72 hours after the prescription is issued.''.

SA 3354. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mrs. CAPITO) 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 appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. OPIOID PRESCRIPTION GUIDELINES.

Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, shall issue guidelines for the safe prescribing of opioids for the treatment of acute pain.

SA 3355. Mr. FLAKE 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. 705. COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES STUDY ON VETERANS TREATMENT COURTS AND VETERANS JUSTICE OUTREACH PROGRAM.

(a) STUDY AND REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) complete a study on the effectiveness of Veterans Treatment Courts and the Veterans Justice Outreach Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

(2) submit to Congress a report on the findings of the Comptroller General with respect to the study completed under paragraph (1).

(b) ELEMENTS.—As part of the study required by subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall assess the following:

(1) The extent to which Veterans Treatment Courts—

(A) provide a benefit to veterans with a mental illness or substance abuse problem; and

(B) provide timely access to services furnished by the Veterans Health Administration.

(2) The number of Veterans Treatment Courts in operation.

(3) The number of Veterans Treatment Courts in the process of being established.

(4) Whether there are sufficient numbers of Veterans Justice Outreach Specialists assigned, under the Veterans Justice Outreach Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to Veterans Treatment Courts.

(5) The number of veterans assigned to each Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist that is assigned to a Veterans Treatment Court.

(6) Whether having additional Veterans Justice Outreach Specialists will allow veterans to better access services furnished by the Veterans Health Administration and will allow for the establishment of additional Veterans Treatment Courts.

SA 3356. Mr. FLAKE 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. _____. STUDY ON DRUG TRAFFICKING.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study and submit a report to Congress on the impact that the trafficking of narcotics, specifically opioids and methamphetamine, through States that border Mexico has on substance abuse of narcotics by the residents of such States.

SA 3357. Mrs. SHAHEEN 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 appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE MONITORING PROGRAM.

(a) AMENDMENT TO NATIONAL ALL SCHEDULE PRESCRIPTION REPORTING ACT OF 2005.—Paragraph (1) of section 2 of the National All Schedules Prescription Electronic Reporting Act of 2005 (Public Law 109–60) is amended to read as follows:

''(1) foster the establishment of State-administered controlled substance monitoring systems in order to ensure that—

''(A) health care providers have access to the accurate, timely prescription history information that they may use as a tool for the early identification of patients at risk for addiction in order to initiate appropriate medical interventions and avert the tragic personal, family, and community consequences of untreated addiction; and

''(B) appropriate law enforcement, regulatory, and State professional licensing authorities have access to prescription history information for the purposes of investigating drug diversion and prescribing and dispensing practices of errant prescribers or pharmacists; and''.

(b) AMENDMENTS TO PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE ACT.—Section 399O of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280g–3) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''or'';

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

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(C) to maintain and operate an existing State-controlled substance monitoring program.'';

(2) by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

''(b) MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary shall maintain and, as appropriate, supplement or revise (after publishing proposed additions and revisions in the Federal Register and receiving public comments thereon) minimum requirements for criteria to be used by States for purposes of clauses (ii), (v), (vi), and (vii) of subsection (c)(1)(A).'';

(3) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(B)—

(i) in the matter preceding clause (i), by striking ''(a)(1)(B)'' and inserting ''(a)(1)(B) or (a)(1)(C)'';

(ii) in clause (i), by striking ''program to be improved'' and inserting ''program to be improved or maintained'';

(iii) by redesignating clauses (iii) and (iv) as clauses (iv) and (v), respectively;

(iv) by inserting after clause (ii), the following:

''(iii) a plan to apply the latest advances in health information technology in order to incorporate prescription drug monitoring program data directly into the workflow of prescribers and dispensers to ensure timely access to patients' controlled prescription drug history;'';

(v) in clause (iv) (as so redesignated), by inserting before the semicolon the following: ''and at least one health information technology system such as electronic health records, health information exchanges, and e-prescribing systems''; and

(vi) in clause (v) (as so redesignated), by striking ''public health'' and inserting ''public health or public safety'';

(B) in paragraph (3)—

(i) by striking ''If a State that submits'' and inserting the following:

''(A) IN GENERAL.—If a State that submits'';

(ii) by inserting before the period at the end ''and include timelines for full implementation of such interoperability. The State shall also describe the manner in which it will achieve interoperability between its monitoring program and health information technology systems, as allowable under State law, and include timelines for the implementation of such interoperability''; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

''(B) MONITORING OF EFFORTS.—The Secretary shall monitor State efforts to achieve interoperability, as described in subparagraph (A).''; and

(C) in paragraph (5)—

(i) by striking ''implement or improve'' and inserting ''establish, improve, or maintain''; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following: ''The Secretary shall redistribute any funds that are so returned among the remaining grantees under this section in accordance with the formula described in subsection (a)(2)(B).'';

(4) in subsection (d)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking ''In implementing or improving'' and all that follows through ''(a)(1)(B)'' and inserting ''In establishing, improving, or maintaining a controlled substance monitoring program under this section, a State shall comply, or with respect to a State that applies for a grant under subparagraph (B) or (C) of subsection (a)(1)''; and

(ii) by striking ''public health'' and inserting ''public health or public safety''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(5) The State shall report on interoperability with the controlled substance monitoring program of Federal agencies, where appropriate, interoperability with health information technology systems such as electronic health records, health information exchanges, and e-prescribing, where appropriate, and whether or not the State provides automatic, real-time or daily information about a patient when a practitioner (or the designee of a practitioner, where permitted) requests information about such patient.'';

(5) in subsections (e), (f)(1), and (g), by striking ''implementing or improving'' each place it appears and inserting ''establishing, improving, or maintaining'';

(6) in subsection (f)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(B) by striking ''misuse of a schedule II, III, or IV substance'' and inserting ''misuse of a controlled substance included in schedule II, III, or IV of section 202(c) of the Controlled Substances Act''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(3) EVALUATION AND REPORTING.—Subject to subsection (g), a State receiving a grant under subsection (a) shall provide the Secretary with aggregate data and other information determined by the Secretary to be necessary to enable the Secretary—

''(A) to evaluate the success of the State's program in achieving its purposes; or

''(B) to prepare and submit the report to Congress required by subsection (k)(2).

''(4) RESEARCH BY OTHER ENTITIES.—A department, program, or administration receiving nonidentifiable information under paragraph (1)(D) may make such information available to other entities for research purposes.'';

(7) by striking subsection (k);

(8) by redesignating subsections (h) through (j) as subsections (i) through (k), respectively;

(9) in subsections (c)(1)(A)(iv) and (d)(4), by striking ''subsection (h)'' each place it appears and inserting ''subsection (i)'';

(10) by inserting after subsection (g) the following:

''(h) EDUCATION AND ACCESS TO THE MONITORING SYSTEM.—A State receiving a grant under subsection (a) shall take steps to—

''(1) facilitate prescriber and dispenser use of the State's controlled substance monitoring system; and

''(2) educate prescribers and dispenser on the benefits of the system both to them and society.'';

(11) in subsection (k)(2)(A), as redesignated—

(A) in clause (ii), by striking ''or affected'' and inserting '', established or strengthened initiatives to ensure linkages to substance use disorder services, or affected''; and

(B) in clause (iii), by striking ''including an assessment'' and inserting ''between controlled substance monitoring programs and health information technology systems, and including an assessment'';

(12) in subsection (l)(1), by striking ''establishment, implementation, or improvement'' and inserting ''establishment, improvement, or maintenance'';

(13) in subsection (m)(8), by striking ''and the District of Columbia'' and inserting '', the District of Columbia, and any commonwealth or territory of the United States''; and

(14) by amending subsection (n), to read as follows:

''(n) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—To carry out this section, there are authorized to be appropriated $7,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020.''.

SA 3358. Mr. CARDIN 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 38, line 19, strike ''other clinically appropriate services,'' and insert ''other clinically appropriate services and through the establishment of treatment centers that operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to provide access to behavioral health treatment,''.

SA 3359. Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. SANDERS) 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. _____. GAO REPORT REGARDING NALOXONE.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report on—

(1) the increase in the price of naloxone over the 5 years preceding the date of enactment of this Act; and

(2) the impact of such price increase on the ability of States and local health departments to reduce the number of deaths due to opioid overdose.

SA 3360. Mr. CARDIN 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 ____—DEMOCRACY RESTORATION ACT

SEC. ____1. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Democracy Restoration Act of 2016''.

SEC. ____2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The right to vote is the most basic constitutive act of citizenship. Regaining the right to vote reintegrates individuals with criminal convictions into free society, helping to enhance public safety.

(2) Article I, section 4, of the Constitution grants Congress ultimate supervisory power over Federal elections, an authority which has repeatedly been upheld by the United States Supreme Court.

(3) Basic constitutional principles of fairness and equal protection require an equal opportunity for citizens of the United States to vote in Federal elections. The right to vote may not be abridged or denied by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, gender, or previous condition of servitude. The 13th, 14th, 15th, 19th, 24th, and 26th Amendments to the Constitution empower Congress to enact measures to protect the right to vote in Federal elections. The 8th Amendment to the Constitution provides for no excessive bail to be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

(4) There are 3 areas where discrepancies in State laws regarding criminal convictions lead to unfairness in Federal elections—

(A) the lack of a uniform standard for voting in Federal elections leads to an unfair disparity and unequal participation in Federal elections based solely on where a person lives;

(B) laws governing the restoration of voting rights after a criminal conviction vary throughout the country and persons in some States can easily regain their voting rights while in other States persons effectively lose their right to vote permanently; and

(C) State disenfranchisement laws disproportionately impact racial and ethnic minorities.

(5) Two States do not disenfranchise individuals with criminal convictions at all (Maine and Vermont), but 48 States and the District of Columbia have laws that deny convicted individuals the right to vote while they are in prison.

(6) In some States disenfranchisement results from varying State laws that restrict voting while individuals are under the supervision of the criminal justice system or after they have completed a criminal sentence. In 35 States, convicted individuals may not vote while they are on parole and 31 of those States disenfranchise individuals on felony probation as well. In 11 States, a conviction can result in lifetime disenfranchisement.

(7) Several States deny the right to vote to individuals convicted of certain misdemeanors.

(8) An estimated 5,850,000 citizens of the United States, or about 1 in 40 adults in the United States, currently cannot vote as a result of a felony conviction. Of the 5,850,000 citizens barred from voting, only 25 percent are in prison. By contrast, 75 percent of the disenfranchised reside in their communities while on probation or parole or after having completed their sentences. Approximately 2,600,000 citizens who have completed their sentences remain disenfranchised due to restrictive State laws. In 6 States—Alabama, Florida, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Virginia—more than 7 percent of the total population is disenfranchised.

(9) In those States that disenfranchise individuals post-sentence, the right to vote can be regained in theory, but in practice this possibility is often granted in a non-uniform and potentially discriminatory manner. Disenfranchised individuals must either obtain a pardon or an order from the Governor or an action by the parole or pardon board, depending on the offense and State. Individuals convicted of a Federal offense often have additional barriers to regaining voting rights.

(10) State disenfranchisement laws disproportionately impact racial and ethnic minorities. Eight percent of the African-American population, or 2,000,000 African-Americans, are disenfranchised. Given current rates of incarceration, approximately 1 in 3 of the next generation of African-American men will be disenfranchised at some point

during their lifetime. Currently, 1 of every 13 African-Americans are rendered unable to vote because of felony disenfranchisement, which is a rate 4 times greater than non African-Americans. 7.7 percent of African-Americans are disenfranchised whereas only 1.8 percent of non African-Americans are. In 3 States—Florida (23 percent), Kentucky (22 percent), and Virginia (20 percent)—more than 1 in 5 African-Americans are unable to vote because of prior convictions.

(11) Latino citizens are disproportionately disenfranchised based upon their disproportionate representation in the criminal justice system. If current incarceration trends hold, 17 percent of Latino men will be incarcerated during their lifetimes, in contrast to less than 6 percent of non-Latino White men. When analyzing the data across 10 States, Latinos generally have disproportionately higher rates of disenfranchisement compared to their presence in the voting age population. In 6 out of 10 States studied in 2003, Latinos constitute more than 10 percent of the total number of persons disenfranchised by State felony laws. In 4 States (California, 37 percent; New York, 34 percent; Texas, 30 percent; and Arizona, 27 percent), Latinos were disenfranchised by a rate of more than 25 percent.

(12) Disenfranchising citizens who have been convicted of a criminal offense and who are living and working in the community serves no compelling State interest and hinders their rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

(13) State disenfranchisement laws can suppress electoral participation among eligible voters by discouraging voting among family and community members of disenfranchised persons. Future electoral participation by the children of disenfranchised parents may be impacted as well.

(14) The United States is the only Western democracy that permits the permanent denial of voting rights for individuals with felony convictions.

SEC. ___3. RIGHTS OF CITIZENS.

The right of an individual who is a citizen of the United States to vote in any election for Federal office shall not be denied or abridged because that individual has been convicted of a criminal offense unless such individual is serving a felony sentence in a correctional institution or facility at the time of the election.

SEC. ___4. ENFORCEMENT.

(a) ATTORNEY GENERAL.—The Attorney General may, in a civil action, obtain such declaratory or injunctive relief as is necessary to remedy a violation of this title.

(b) PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A person who is aggrieved by a violation of this title may provide written notice of the violation to the chief election official of the State involved.

(2) RELIEF.—Except as provided in paragraph (3), if the violation is not corrected within 90 days after receipt of a notice under paragraph (1), or within 20 days after receipt of the notice if the violation occurred within 120 days before the date of an election for Federal office, the aggrieved person may, in a civil action, obtain declaratory or injunctive relief with respect to the violation.

(3) EXCEPTION.—If the violation occurred within 30 days before the date of an election for Federal office, the aggrieved person need not provide notice to the chief election official of the State under paragraph (1) before bringing a civil action to obtain declaratory or injunctive relief with respect to the violation.

SEC. ___5. NOTIFICATION OF RESTORATION OF VOTING RIGHTS.

(a) STATE NOTIFICATION.—

(1) NOTIFICATION.—On the date determined under paragraph (2), each State shall notify in writing any individual who has been convicted of a criminal offense under the law of that State that such individual has the right to vote in an election for Federal office pursuant to the Democracy Restoration Act of 2016 and may register to vote in any such election.

(2) DATE OF NOTIFICATION.—

(A) FELONY CONVICTION.—In the case of such an individual who has been convicted of a felony, the notification required under paragraph (1) shall be given on the date on which the individual—

(i) is sentenced to serve only a term of probation; or

(ii) is released from the custody of that State (other than to the custody of another State or the Federal Government to serve a term of imprisonment for a felony conviction).

(B) MISDEMEANOR CONVICTION.—In the case of such an individual who has been convicted of a misdemeanor, the notification required under paragraph (1) shall be given on the date on which such individual is sentenced by a State court.

(b) FEDERAL NOTIFICATION.—

(1) NOTIFICATION.—Any individual who has been convicted of a criminal offense under Federal law shall be notified in accordance with paragraph (2) that such individual has the right to vote in an election for Federal office pursuant to the Democracy Restoration Act of 2016 and may register to vote in any such election.

(2) DATE OF NOTIFICATION.—

(A) FELONY CONVICTION.—In the case of such an individual who has been convicted of a felony, the notification required under paragraph (1) shall be given—

(i) in the case of an individual who is sentenced to serve only a term of probation, by the Assistant Director for the Office of Probation and Pretrial Services of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts on the date on which the individual is sentenced; or

(ii) in the case of any individual committed to the custody of the Bureau of Prisons, by the Director of the Bureau of Prisons, during the period beginning on the date that is 6 months before such individual is released and ending on the date such individual is released from the custody of the Bureau of Prisons.

(B) MISDEMEANOR CONVICTION.—In the case of such an individual who has been convicted of a misdemeanor, the notification required under paragraph (1) shall be given on the date on which such individual is sentenced by a court established by an Act of Congress.

SEC. ___6. DEFINITIONS.

For purposes of this title:

(1) CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION OR FACILITY.—The term ''correctional institution or facility'' means any prison, penitentiary, jail, or other institution or facility for the confinement of individuals convicted of criminal offenses, whether publicly or privately operated, except that such term does not include any residential community treatment center (or similar public or private facility).

(2) ELECTION.—The term ''election'' means—

(A) a general, special, primary, or runoff election;

(B) a convention or caucus of a political party held to nominate a candidate;

(C) a primary election held for the selection of delegates to a national nominating convention of a political party; or

(D) a primary election held for the expression of a preference for the nomination of persons for election to the office of President.

(3) FEDERAL OFFICE.—The term ''Federal office'' means the office of President or Vice President of the United States, or of Senator or Representative in, or Delegate or Resident Commissioner to, the Congress of the United States.

(4) PROBATION.—The term ''probation'' means probation, imposed by a Federal, State, or local court, with or without a condition on the individual involved concerning—

(A) the individual's freedom of movement;

(B) the payment of damages by the individual;

(C) periodic reporting by the individual to an officer of the court; or

(D) supervision of the individual by an officer of the court.

SEC. ___7. RELATION TO OTHER LAWS.

(a) STATE LAWS RELATING TO VOTING RIGHTS.—Nothing in this title shall be construed to prohibit the States from enacting any State law which affords the right to vote in any election for Federal office on terms less restrictive than those established by this title.

(b) CERTAIN FEDERAL ACTS.—The rights and remedies established by this title are in addition to all other rights and remedies provided by law, and neither rights and remedies established by this title shall supersede, restrict, or limit the application of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 1973 et seq.) or the National Voter Registration Act (42 U.S.C. 1973–gg).

SEC. ___8. FEDERAL PRISON FUNDS.

No State, unit of local government, or other person may receive or use, to construct or otherwise improve a prison, jail, or other place of incarceration, any Federal funds unless that person has in effect a program under which each individual incarcerated in that person's jurisdiction who is a citizen of the United States is notified, upon release from such incarceration, of that individual's rights under section ___3.

SEC. ___9. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This title shall apply to citizens of the United States voting in any election for Federal office held after the date of the enactment of this title.

SA 3361. Mr. CARDIN (for himself and 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:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. MEDICARE PAYMENT FOR THERAPY SERVICES.

(a) REPEAL OF THERAPY CAP AND 1-YEAR EXTENSION OF THRESHOLD FOR MANUAL MEDICAL REVIEW.—Section 1833(g) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395l(g)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (4)—

(A) by striking ''This subsection'' and inserting ''Except as provided in paragraph (5)(C)(iii), this subsection''; and

(B) by inserting the following before the period at the end: ''or with respect to services furnished on or after the date of enactment of subsection (aa)''; and

(2) in paragraph (5)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), in the first sentence, by striking ''December 31, 2017'' and inserting ''the date of enactment of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016''; and

(B) in subparagraph (C), by adding at the end the following new clause:

''(iii) Beginning on the date of enactment of subsection (aa) and ending on the day before the date of the implementation of such subsection, the manual medical review process described in clause (i), subject to subparagraph (E), shall apply with respect to expenses incurred in a year for services described in paragraphs (1) and (3) (including services described in subsection (a)(8)(B)) that exceed the threshold described in clause (ii) for the year.''; and

(3) in paragraph (6)(A)—

(A) by striking ''December 31, 2017'' and inserting ''the date of enactment of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016''; and

(B) by striking ''2012 through 2017'' and inserting ''the period beginning on January 1, 2012, and ending on such date of enactment''.

(b) MEDICAL REVIEW OF OUTPATIENT THERAPY SERVICES.—

(1) MEDICAL REVIEW OF OUTPATIENT THERAPY SERVICES.—Section 1833 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395l) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(aa) MEDICAL REVIEW OF OUTPATIENT THERAPY SERVICES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—

''(A) PROCESS FOR MEDICAL REVIEW.—The Secretary shall implement a process for the medical review (as described in paragraph (2)) of outpatient therapy services (as defined in paragraph (10)) and, subject to paragraph (12), apply such process to such services furnished on or after the date that is 12 months after the date of enactment of this subsection, focusing on services identified under subparagraph (B).

''(B) IDENTIFICATION OF SERVICES FOR REVIEW.—Under the process, the Secretary shall identify services for medical review, using such factors as the Secretary determines appropriate, which may include the following:

''(i) Services furnished by a therapy provider (as defined in paragraph (10)) who, in a prior period, has had a high claims denial percentage or is less compliant with other applicable requirements under this title.

''(ii) Services furnished by a therapy provider whose pattern of billing is aberrant compared to peers or otherwise has questionable billing practices, such as billing medically unlikely units of services in a day.

''(iii) Services furnished by a therapy provider that is newly enrolled under this title or has not previously furnished therapy services under this part.

''(iv) Services furnished to treat a type of medical condition.

''(v) Services identified by use of the standardized data elements required to be reported under section 1834(t).

''(vi) Services furnished by a therapy provider who is part of a group that includes a therapy provider identified by factors described in this subparagraph.

''(vii) Other services as determined appropriate by the Secretary.

''(2) MEDICAL REVIEW.—

''(A) PRIOR AUTHORIZATION MEDICAL REVIEW.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the succeeding provisions of this subparagraph, the Secretary shall use prior authorization medical review for outpatient therapy services furnished to an individual above one or more thresholds established by the Secretary, such as a dollar threshold or a threshold based on other factors.

''(ii) ENDING APPLICATION OF PRIOR AUTHORIZATION FOR A THERAPY PROVIDER.—The Secretary shall end the application of prior authorization medical review to outpatient therapy services furnished by a therapy provider if the Secretary determines that the provider has a low denial rate under such prior authorization. The Secretary may subsequently reapply prior authorization medical review to such therapy provider if the Secretary determines it to be appropriate.

''(iii) PRIOR AUTHORIZATION OF MULTIPLE SERVICES.—The Secretary shall, where practicable, provide for prior authorization medical review for multiple services at a single time, such as services in a therapy plan of care described in section 1861(p)(2).

''(B) OTHER TYPES OF MEDICAL REVIEW.—The Secretary may use pre-payment review or post-payment review for services identified under paragraph (1)(B) that are not subject to prior authorization medical review under subparagraph (A).

''(C) RELATIONSHIP TO LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary may determine that medical review under this subsection does not apply in the case where potential fraud may be involved.

''(3) REVIEW CONTRACTORS.—The Secretary shall conduct prior authorization medical review of outpatient therapy services under this subsection using medicare administrative contractors (as described in section 1874A) or other review contractors (other than contractors under section 1893(h) or other contractors paid on a contingent basis).

''(4) NO PAYMENT WITHOUT PRIOR AUTHORIZATION.—With respect to an outpatient therapy service for which prior authorization medical review under this subsection applies, the following shall apply:

''(A) PRIOR AUTHORIZATION DETERMINATION.—The Secretary shall make a determination, prior to the service being furnished, of whether the service would or would not meet the applicable requirements of section 1862(a)(1)(A).

''(B) DENIAL OF PAYMENT.—Subject to paragraph (6), no payment shall be made under this part for the service unless the Secretary determines pursuant to subparagraph (A) that the service would meet the applicable requirements of such section.

''(5) SUBMISSION OF INFORMATION.—A therapy provider may submit the information necessary for medical review by fax, by mail, or by electronic means. The Secretary shall make available the electronic means described in the preceding sentence as soon as practicable, but not later than 24 months after the date of enactment of this subsection.

''(6) TIMELINESS.—If the Secretary does not make a prior authorization determination under paragraph (4)(A) within 10 business days of the date of the Secretary's receipt of medical documentation needed to make such determination, paragraph (4)(B) shall not apply.

''(7) CONSTRUCTION.—With respect to an outpatient therapy service that has been affirmed by medical review under this subsection, nothing in this subsection shall be construed to preclude the subsequent denial of a claim for such service that does not meet other applicable requirements under this Act or any other provision of law.

''(8) BENEFICIARY PROTECTIONS.—In the case where payment may not be made as a result of application of medical review under this subsection, section 1879 shall apply in the same manner as such section applies to a denial that is made by reason of section 1862(a)(1).

''(9) IMPLEMENTATION.—

''(A) AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may implement the provisions of this subsection by interim final rule with comment period.

''(B) ADMINISTRATION.—Chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code, shall not apply to medical review under this subsection.

''(C) LIMITATION.—There shall be no administrative or judicial review under section 1869, section 1878, or otherwise of the identification of services for medical review or the process for medical review under this subsection.

''(10) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this subsection:

''(A) OUTPATIENT THERAPY SERVICES.—The term 'outpatient therapy services' means the following services for which payment is made under section 1848, 1834(g), or 1834(k):

''(i) Physical therapy services of the type described in section 1861(p).

''(ii) Speech-language pathology services of the type described in such section though the application of section 1861(ll)(2).

''(iii) Occupational therapy services of the type described in section 1861(p) through the operation of section 1861(g).

''(B) THERAPY PROVIDER.—The term 'therapy provider' means a provider of services (as defined in section 1861(u)) or a supplier (as defined in section 1861(d)) who submits a claim for outpatient therapy services.

''(11) FUNDING.—For purposes of implementing this subsection, the Secretary shall provide for the transfer, from the Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund under section 1841, of $35,000,000 to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Program Management Account for each fiscal year (beginning with fiscal year 2016). Amounts transferred under this paragraph shall remain available until expended.

''(12) SCALING BACK.—

''(A) PERIODIC DETERMINATIONS.—Beginning with 2020, and every two years thereafter, the Secretary shall—

''(i) make a determination of the improper payment rate for outpatient therapy services for a 12-month period; and

''(ii) make such determination publicly available.

''(B) SCALING BACK.—If the improper payment rate for outpatient therapy services determined for a 12-month period under subparagraph (A) is 50 percent or less of the Medicare fee-for-service improper payment rate for such period, the Secretary shall—

''(i) reduce the amount and extent of medical review conducted for a prospective year under the process established in this subsection; and

''(ii) return an appropriate portion of the funding provided for such year under paragraph (11).''.

(2) GAO STUDY AND REPORT.—

(A) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study on the effectiveness of medical review of outpatient therapy services under section 1833(aa) of the Social Security Act, as added by paragraph (1). Such study shall include an analysis of—

(i) aggregate data on—

(I) the number of individuals, therapy providers, and claims subject to such review; and

(II) the number of reviews conducted under such section; and

(ii) the outcomes of such reviews.

(B) REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a report containing the results of the study under subparagraph (A), together with recommendations for such legislation and administrative action as the Comptroller General determines appropriate.

(c) COLLECTION OF STANDARDIZED DATA ELEMENTS FOR OUTPATIENT THERAPY SERVICES.—

(1) COLLECTION OF STANDARDIZED DATA ELEMENTS FOR OUTPATIENT THERAPY SERVICES.—Section 1834 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395m) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(t) COLLECTION OF STANDARDIZED DATA ELEMENTS FOR OUTPATIENT THERAPY SERVICES.—

''(1) STANDARDIZED DATA ELEMENTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall post on the Internet website of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services a draft list of standardized data elements for individuals receiving outpatient therapy services.

''(B) CATEGORIES.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Such standardized data elements shall include information with respect to the following categories, as determined appropriate by the Secretary:

''(I) Functional status.

''(II) Demographic information.

''(III) Diagnosis.

''(IV) Severity.

''(V) Affected body structures and functions.

''(VI) Limitations with activities of daily living and participation.

''(VII) Other categories determined to be appropriate by the Secretary.

''(ii) ALIGNMENT WITH CATEGORIES FOR REPORTING OF ASSESSMENT DATA UNDER IMPACT.—The Secretary shall, as appropriate, align the functional status category under subclause (I) of clause (i) and the other categories under subclauses (II) through (VII) of such clause with the categories described in clauses (i) through (vi) of section 1899B(b)(1)(B).

''(C) SOLICITATION OF INPUT.—The Secretary shall accept input from stakeholders through the date that is 60 days after the date the Secretary posts the draft list of standardized data elements pursuant to subparagraph (A). In seeking such input, the Secretary shall use one or more mechanisms to solicit input from stakeholders that may include use of open door forums, town hall meetings, requests for information, or other mechanisms determined appropriate by the Secretary.

''(D) OPERATIONAL LIST OF STANDARDIZED DATA ELEMENTS.—Not later than 120 days after the end of the period for accepting input described in subparagraph (C), the Secretary, taking into account such input, shall post on the Internet website of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services an operational list of standardized data elements.

''(E) SUBSEQUENT REVISIONS.—Subsequent revisions to the operational list of standardized data elements shall be made through rulemaking. Such revisions may be based on experience and input from stakeholders.

''(2) SYSTEM TO REPORT STANDARDIZED DATA ELEMENTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date the Secretary posts the operational list of standardized data elements pursuant to paragraph (1)(D), the Secretary shall develop and implement an electronic system (which may be a web portal) for therapy providers to report the standardized data elements for individuals with respect to outpatient therapy services.

''(B) STAKEHOLDER INPUT.—The Secretary shall seek input from stakeholders regarding the best way to report the standardized data elements under this subsection.

''(3) REPORTING.—

''(A) FREQUENCY OF REPORTING.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Subject to clauses (ii) and (iii), the Secretary shall specify the frequency of reporting standardized data elements under this subsection.

''(ii) STAKEHOLDER INPUT.—The Secretary shall seek input from stakeholders regarding the frequency of the reporting of such data elements.

''(iii) ALIGNMENT WITH FREQUENCY FOR REPORTING OF ASSESSMENT DATA UNDER IMPACT.—The Secretary shall, as appropriate, align the frequency of the reporting of such data elements with respect to an individual under this subsection with the frequency in which data is required to be submitted with respect to an individual under the second sentence of section 1899B(b)(1)(A).

''(B) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—Beginning on the date the system to report standardized data elements under this subsection is operational, no payment shall be made under this part for outpatient therapy services furnished to an individual unless a therapy provider reports the standardized data elements for such individual.

''(4) REPORT ON NEW PAYMENT SYSTEM FOR OUTPATIENT THERAPY SERVICES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 24 months after the date described in paragraph (3)(B), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the design of a new payment system for outpatient therapy services. The report shall include an analysis of the standardized data elements collected and other appropriate data and information.

''(B) FEATURES.—Such report shall consider—

''(i) appropriate adjustments to payment (such as case mix and outliers);

''(ii) payments on an episode of care basis; and

''(iii) reduced payment for multiple episodes.

''(C) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall consult with stakeholders regarding the design of such a new payment system.

''(5) IMPLEMENTATION.—

''(A) FUNDING.—For purposes of implementing this subsection, the Secretary shall provide for the transfer, from the Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund under section 1841, of $7,000,000 to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Program Management Account for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020. Amounts transferred under this subparagraph shall remain available until expended.

''(B) ADMINISTRATION.—Chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code, shall not apply to specification of the standardized data elements and implementation of the system to report such standardized data elements under this subsection.

''(C) LIMITATION.—There shall be no administrative or judicial review under section 1869, section 1878, or otherwise of the specification of standardized data elements required under this subsection or the system to report such standardized data elements.

''(D) DEFINITION OF OUTPATIENT THERAPY SERVICES AND THERAPY PROVIDER.—In this subsection, the terms 'outpatient therapy services' and 'therapy provider' have the meaning given those terms in section 1833(aa).''.

(2) SUNSET OF CURRENT CLAIMS-BASED COLLECTION OF THERAPY DATA.—Section 3005(g)(1) of the Middle Class Tax Extension and Job Creation Act of 2012 (42 U.S.C. 1395l note) is amended, in the first sentence, by inserting ''and ending on the date the system to report standardized data elements under section 1834(t) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395m(t)) is implemented,'' after ''January 1, 2013,''.

(d) REPORTING OF CERTAIN INFORMATION.—Section 1842(t) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395u(t)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(3) Each request for payment, or bill submitted, by a therapy provider (as defined in section 1833(aa)(10)) for an outpatient therapy service (as defined in such section) furnished by a therapy assistant on or after January 1, 2018, shall include (in a form and manner specified by the Secretary) an indication that the service was furnished by a therapy assistant.''.

SA 3362. Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mr. GRASSLEY) 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 ____—TRANSNATIONAL DRUG TRAFFICKING ACT

SEC. 01. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Transnational Drug Trafficking Act of 2015''.

SEC. __02. POSSESSION, MANUFACTURE OR DISTRIBUTION FOR PURPOSES OF UNLAWFUL IMPORTATIONS.

Section 1009 of the Controlled Substances Import and Export Act (21 U.S.C. 959) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (b) and (c) as subsections (c) and (d), respectively; and

(2) in subsection (a), by striking ''It shall'' and all that follows and inserting the following: ''It shall be unlawful for any person to manufacture or distribute a controlled substance in schedule I or II or flunitrazepam or a listed chemical intending, knowing, or having reasonable cause to believe that such substance or chemical will be unlawfully imported into the United States or into waters within a distance of 12 miles of the coast of the United States.

''(b) It shall be unlawful for any person to manufacture or distribute a listed chemical—

''(1) intending or knowing that the listed chemical will be used to manufacture a controlled substance; and

''(2) intending, knowing, or having reasonable cause to believe that the controlled substance will be unlawfully imported into the United States.''.

SEC. __03. TRAFFICKING IN COUNTERFEIT GOODS OR SERVICES.

Chapter 113 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in section 2318(b)(2), by striking ''section 2320(e)'' and inserting ''section 2320(f)''; and

(2) in section 2320—

(A) in subsection (a), by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the following:

''(4) traffics in a drug and knowingly uses a counterfeit mark on or in connection with such drug,'';

(B) in subsection (b)(3), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''counterfeit drug'' and inserting ''drug that uses a counterfeit mark on or in connection with the drug''; and

(C) in subsection (f), by striking paragraph (6) and inserting the following:

''(6) the term 'drug' means a drug, as defined in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321).''.

SA 3363. Ms. COLLINS 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:

SEC. _____. GUIDANCE REGARDING GENERIC DRUGS WITH ABUSE-DETERRENT PROPERTIES.

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, shall issue guidance regarding the development and testing of drugs that have abuse-deterrent properties and may be submitted for approval under section 505(j) of the Federal

Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355(j)).

SA 3364. Ms. COLLINS 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 appropriate place in title I, insert the following:

SEC. ___. SAFE STORAGE OF PRESCRIPTION MEDICINES.

(a) GUIDELINES.—The Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shall issue guidelines for health care providers regarding the safe storage of prescription medications in the home.

(b) STUDY AND REPORT.—

(1) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study on how individuals who seek treatment, through Federal programs, for opioid abuse or overdose obtain prescription medications.

(2) REPORT.—The Comptroller General shall submit a report containing the results of the study to Congress.

SA 3365. Ms. COLLINS 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:

In section 101, strike subsection (c)(5) and all that follows through the end of the section, and insert the following:

(5) representatives of hospitals;

(6) representatives of—

(A) pain management professional organizations;

(B) the mental health treatment community;

(C) the addiction treatment community;

(D) pain advocacy groups;

(E) groups with expertise around overdose reversal;

(F) State agencies that manage State prescription drug monitoring programs; and

(G) State agencies that administer grants under subpart II of part B of title XIX of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300x–21 et seq.); and

(7) other stakeholders, as the Secretary determines appropriate.

(d) DUTIES.—The task force shall—

(1) not later than 180 days after the date on which the task force is convened under subsection (b), review, modify, and update, as appropriate, best practices for pain management (including chronic and acute pain) and prescribing pain medication, taking into consideration—

(A) existing pain management research;

(B) recommendations from relevant conferences and existing relevant evidence-based guidelines;

(C) ongoing efforts at the State and local levels and by medical professional organizations to develop improved pain management strategies, including consideration of alternatives to opioids to reduce opioid monotherapy in appropriate cases;

(D) the management of high-risk populations, other than populations who suffer pain, who—

(i) may use or be prescribed benzodiazepines, alcohol, and diverted opioids; or

(ii) receive opioids in the course of medical care;

(E) whether the State prescription drug monitoring programs are sufficiently available, functional, and useful to be integrated into the process for prescribing pain medication; and

(F) the Proposed 2016 Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (80 Fed. Reg. 77351 (December 14, 2015)) and any final guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;

(2) solicit and take into consideration public comment on the practices developed under paragraph (1), amending such best practices if appropriate; and

(3) develop a strategy for disseminating information about the best practices to stakeholders, as appropriate.

(e) LIMITATION.—The task force shall not have rulemaking authority.

(f) REPORT.—Not later than 270 days after the date on which the task force is convened under subsection (b), the task force shall submit to Congress a report that includes—

(1) the strategy for disseminating best practices for pain management (including chronic and acute pain) and prescribing pain medication, as reviewed, modified, or updated under subsection (d);

(2) the results of a feasibility study on linking the best practices described in paragraph (1) to receiving and renewing registrations under section 303(f) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(f)); and

(3) recommendations for effectively applying the best practices described in paragraph (1) to improve prescribing practices at medical facilities, including medical facilities of the Veterans Health Administration.

(g) GAO REPORT ON STATE PRESCRIPTION DRUG MONITORING PROGRAMS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall prepare and submit to Congress a report examining the variations that exist across State prescription drug monitoring programs. In preparing the report, the Comptroller General shall determine best practices among State prescription drug monitoring programs, and examine State strategies to increase queries to such programs by health care providers. The Comptroller General shall include in the report recommendations about how the best practices may be replicated in other State prescription drug monitoring programs and whether there should be Federal minimum standards in place to facilitate access to, requests for data to, data transmission from, and information exchange among the programs.

SA 3366. Mr. LANKFORD (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:

On page 4, line 20, after the period insert the following: ''As such, in order to stem the tide of heroin coming into the United States, interdiction at the Mexican border must be a priority.''.

SA 3367. Mr. TOOMEY (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. PORTMAN) 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. ___. PROGRAMS TO PREVENT PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE UNDER THE MEDICARE PROGRAM.

(a) DRUG MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR AT-RISK BENEFICIARIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1860D–4(c) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–104(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(5) DRUG MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR AT-RISK BENEFICIARIES.—

''(A) AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH.—A PDP sponsor may establish a drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries under which, subject to subparagraph (B), the PDP sponsor may, in the case of an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse who is an enrollee in a prescription drug plan of such PDP sponsor, limit such beneficiary's access to coverage for frequently abused drugs under such plan to frequently abused drugs that are prescribed for such beneficiary by a prescriber (or prescribers) selected under subparagraph (D), and dispensed for such beneficiary by a pharmacy (or pharmacies) selected under such subparagraph.

''(B) REQUIREMENT FOR NOTICES.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—A PDP sponsor may not limit the access of an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse to coverage for frequently abused drugs under a prescription drug plan until such sponsor—

''(I) provides to the beneficiary an initial notice described in clause (ii) and a second notice described in clause (iii); and

''(II) verifies with the providers of the beneficiary that the beneficiary is an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse, as described in subparagraph (C)(iv).

''(ii) INITIAL NOTICE.—An initial written notice described in this clause is a notice that provides to the beneficiary—

''(I) notice that the PDP sponsor has identified the beneficiary as potentially being an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse;

''(II) information, when possible, describing State and Federal public health resources that are designed to address prescription drug abuse to which the beneficiary may have access, including substance use disorder treatment services, addiction treatment services, mental health services, and other counseling services;

''(III) a request for the beneficiary to submit to the PDP sponsor preferences for which prescribers and pharmacies the beneficiary would prefer the PDP sponsor to select under subparagraph (D) in the case that the beneficiary is identified as an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse as described in clause (iii)(I);

''(IV) an explanation of the meaning and consequences of the identification of the beneficiary as potentially being an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse, including an explanation of the drug management program established by the PDP sponsor pursuant to subparagraph (A);

''(V) clear instructions that explain how the beneficiary can contact the PDP sponsor in order to submit to the PDP sponsor the preferences described in subclause (IV) and any other communications relating to the drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries established by the PDP sponsor;

''(VI) contact information for other organizations that can provide the beneficiary with information regarding drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries (similar to the information provided by the Secretary in other standardized notices to part D eligible individuals enrolled in prescription drug plans under this part); and

''(VII) notice that the beneficiary has a right to an appeal pursuant to subparagraph (E).

''(iii) SECOND NOTICE.—A second written notice described in this clause is a notice that provides to the beneficiary notice—

''(I) that the PDP sponsor has identified the beneficiary as an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse;

''(II) that such beneficiary has been sent, or informed of, such identification in the initial notice and is now subject to the requirements of the drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries established by such PDP sponsor for such plan;

''(III) of the prescriber and pharmacy selected for such individual under subparagraph (D);

''(IV) of, and information about, the right of the beneficiary to a reconsideration and an appeal under subsection (h) of such identification and the prescribers and pharmacies selected;

''(V) that the beneficiary can, in the case that the beneficiary has not previously submitted to the PDP sponsor preferences for which prescribers and pharmacies the beneficiary would prefer the PDP sponsor select under subparagraph (D), submit such preferences to the PDP sponsor; and

''(VI) that includes clear instructions that explain how the beneficiary can contact the PDP sponsor in order to submit to the PDP sponsor the preferences described in subclause (V).

''(iv) TIMING OF NOTICES.—

''(I) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subclause (II), a second written notice described in clause (iii) shall be provided to the beneficiary on a date that is not less than 30 days after an initial notice described in clause (ii) is provided to the beneficiary.

''(II) EXCEPTION.—In the case that the PDP sponsor, in conjunction with the Secretary, determines that concerns identified through rulemaking by the Secretary regarding the health or safety of the beneficiary or regarding significant drug diversion activities require the PDP sponsor to provide a second notice described in clause (iii) to the beneficiary on a date that is earlier than the date described in subclause (II), the PDP sponsor may provide such second notice on such earlier date.

''(III) FORM OF NOTICE.—The written notices under clauses (ii) and (iii) shall be in a format determined appropriate by the Secretary, taking into account beneficiary preferences.

''(C) AT-RISK BENEFICIARY FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse' means a part D eligible individual who is not an exempted individual described in clause (ii) and—

''(I) who is identified through criteria developed by the Secretary in consultation with PDP sponsors and other stakeholders described in subsection section ____(g)(2)(A) of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016 based on clinical factors indicating misuse or abuse of prescription drugs described in subparagraph (G), including dosage, quantity, duration of use, number of and reasonable access to prescribers, and number of and reasonable access to pharmacies used to obtain such drug; or

''(II) with respect to whom the PDP sponsor of a prescription drug plan, upon enrolling such individual in such plan, received notice from the Secretary that such individual was identified under this paragraph to be an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse under a prescription drug plan in which such individual was previously enrolled and such identification has not been terminated under subparagraph (F).

''(ii) EXEMPTED INDIVIDUAL DESCRIBED.—An exempted individual described in this clause is an individual who—

''(I) receives hospice care under this title;

''(II) resides in a long-term care facility, a facility described in section 1905(d), or other facility under contract with a single pharmacy; or

''(III) the Secretary elects to treat as an exempted individual for purposes of clause (i).

''(iii) PROGRAM SIZE.—The Secretary shall establish policies, including the criteria developed under clause (i)(I) and the exemptions under clause (ii)(III), to ensure that the population of enrollees in a drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries operated by a prescription drug plan can be effectively managed by such plans.

''(iv) CLINICAL CONTACT.—With respect to each at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse enrolled in a prescription drug plan offered by a PDP sponsor, the PDP sponsor shall contact the beneficiary's providers who have prescribed frequently abused drugs regarding whether prescribed medications are appropriate for such beneficiary's medical conditions.

''(D) SELECTION OF PRESCRIBERS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—With respect to each at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse enrolled in a prescription drug plan offered by such sponsor, a PDP sponsor shall, based on the preferences submitted to the PDP sponsor by the beneficiary pursuant to clauses (ii)(III) and (iii)(V) of subparagraph (B) if applicable, select—

''(I) one, or, if the PDP sponsor reasonably determines it necessary to provide the beneficiary with reasonable access under clause (ii), more than one, individual who is authorized to prescribe frequently abused drugs (referred to in this paragraph as a 'prescriber') who may write prescriptions for such drugs for such beneficiary; and

''(II) one, or, if the PDP sponsor reasonably determines it necessary to provide the beneficiary with reasonable access under clause (ii), more than one, pharmacy that may dispense such drugs to such beneficiary.

''(ii) REASONABLE ACCESS.—In making the selection under this subparagraph, a PDP sponsor shall ensure, taking into account geographic location, beneficiary preference, impact on cost-sharing, and reasonable travel time, that the beneficiary continues to have reasonable access to drugs described in subparagraph (G), including—

''(I) for individuals with multiple residences; and

''(II) in the case of natural disasters and similar emergency situations.

''(iii) BENEFICIARY PREFERENCES.—

''(I) IN GENERAL.—If an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse submits preferences for which in-network prescribers and pharmacies the beneficiary would prefer the PDP sponsor select in response to a notice under subparagraph (B), the PDP sponsor shall—

''(aa) review such preferences;

''(bb) select or change the selection of a prescriber or pharmacy for the beneficiary based on such preferences; and

''(cc) inform the beneficiary of such selection or change of selection.

''(II) EXCEPTION.—In the case that the PDP sponsor determines that a change to the selection of a prescriber or pharmacy under item (bb) by the PDP sponsor is contributing or would contribute to prescription drug abuse or drug diversion by the beneficiary, the PDP sponsor may change the selection of a prescriber or pharmacy for the beneficiary. If the PDP sponsor changes the selection pursuant to the preceding sentence, the PDP sponsor shall provide the beneficiary with—

''(aa) at least 30 days written notice of the change of selection; and

''(bb) a rationale for the change.

''(III) TIMING.—An at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse may choose to express their prescriber and pharmacy preference and communicate such preference to their PDP sponsor at any date while enrolled in the program, including after a second notice under subparagraph (B)(iii) has been provided.

''(iv) CONFIRMATION.—Before selecting a prescriber or pharmacy under this subparagraph, a PDP sponsor must notify the prescriber and pharmacy that the beneficiary involved has been identified for inclusion in the drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries and that the prescriber and pharmacy has been selected as the beneficiary's designated prescriber and pharmacy.

''(E) APPEALS.—The identification of an individual as an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse under this paragraph, a coverage determination made under a drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries, and the selection of a prescriber or pharmacy under subparagraph (D) with respect to such individual shall be subject to an expedited reconsideration and appeal pursuant to subsection (h).

''(F) TERMINATION OF IDENTIFICATION.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall develop standards for the termination of identification of an individual as an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse under this paragraph. Under such standards such identification shall terminate as of the earlier of—

''(I) the date the individual demonstrates that the individual is no longer likely, in the absence of the restrictions under this paragraph, to be an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse described in subparagraph (C)(i); or

''(II) the end of such maximum period of identification as the Secretary may specify.

''(ii) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in clause (i) shall be construed as preventing a plan from identifying an individual as an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse under subparagraph (C)(i) after such termination on the basis of additional information on drug use occurring after the date of notice of such termination.

''(G) FREQUENTLY ABUSED DRUG.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'frequently abused drug' means a drug that is determined by the Secretary to be frequently abused or diverted and that is—

''(i) a Controlled Drug Substance in Schedule CII; or

''(ii) within the same class or category of drugs as a Controlled Drug Substance in Schedule CII, as determined through notice and comment rulemaking.

''(H) DATA DISCLOSURE.—

''(i) DATA ON DECISION TO IMPOSE LIMITATION.—In the case of an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse (or an individual who is a potentially at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse) whose access to coverage for frequently abused drugs under a prescription drug plan has been limited by a PDP sponsor under this paragraph, the Secretary shall establish rules and procedures to require such PDP sponsor to disclose data, including necessary individually identifiable health information, about the decision to impose such limitations and the limitations imposed by the PDP sponsor under this part.

''(ii) DATA TO REDUCE FRAUD, ABUSE, AND WASTE.—The Secretary shall establish rules and procedures to require PDP sponsors operating a drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries under this paragraph to provide the Secretary with such data as the Secretary determines appropriate for purposes of identifying patterns of prescription drug utilization for plan enrollees that are

outside normal patterns and that may indicate fraudulent, medically unnecessary, or unsafe use.

''(I) SHARING OF INFORMATION FOR SUBSEQUENT PLAN ENROLLMENTS.—The Secretary shall establish procedures under which PDP sponsors who offer prescription drug plans shall share information with respect to individuals who are at-risk beneficiaries for prescription drug abuse (or individuals who are potentially at-risk beneficiaries for prescription drug abuse) and enrolled in a prescription drug plan and who subsequently disenroll from such plan and enroll in another prescription drug plan offered by another PDP sponsor.

''(J) PRIVACY ISSUES.—Prior to the implementation of the rules and procedures under this paragraph, the Secretary shall clarify privacy requirements, including requirements under the regulations promulgated pursuant to section 264(c) of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (42 U.S.C. 1320d–2 note), related to the sharing of data under subparagraphs (H) and (I) by PDP sponsors. Such clarification shall provide that the sharing of such data shall be considered to be protected health information in accordance with the requirements of the regulations promulgated pursuant to such section 264(c).

''(K) EDUCATION.—The Secretary shall provide education to enrollees in prescription drug plans of PDP sponsors and providers regarding the drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries described in this paragraph, including education—

''(i) provided through the improper payment outreach and education program described in section 1874A(h); and

''(ii) through current education efforts (such as State health insurance assistance programs described in subsection (a)(1)(A) of section 119 of the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008 (42 U.S.C. 1395b–3 note)) and materials directed toward such enrollees.

''(L) CMS COMPLIANCE REVIEW.—The Secretary shall ensure that existing plan sponsor compliance reviews and audit processes include the drug management programs for at-risk beneficiaries under this paragraph, including appeals processes under such programs.''.

(2) INFORMATION FOR CONSUMERS.—Section 1860D–4(a)(1)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–104(a)(1)(B)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(v) The drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries under subsection (c)(5).''.

(3) DUAL ELIGIBLES.—Section 1860D–1(b)(3)(D) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–101(b)(3)(D)) is amended by inserting '', subject to such limits as the Secretary may establish for individuals identified pursuant to section 1860D–4(c)(5)'' after ''the Secretary''.

(b) UTILIZATION MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS.—Section 1860D–4(c) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–104(c)), as amended by subsection (a)(1), is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by inserting after subparagraph (D) the following new subparagraph:

''(E) A utilization management tool to prevent drug abuse (as described in paragraph (5)(A)).''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(6) UTILIZATION MANAGEMENT TOOL TO PREVENT DRUG ABUSE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—A tool described in this paragraph is any of the following:

''(i) A utilization tool designed to prevent the abuse of frequently abused drugs by individuals and to prevent the diversion of such drugs at pharmacies.

''(ii) Retrospective utilization review to identify—

''(I) individuals that receive frequently abused drugs at a frequency or in amounts that are not clinically appropriate; and

''(II) providers of services or suppliers that may facilitate the abuse or diversion of frequently abused drugs by beneficiaries.

''(iii) Consultation with the contractor described in subparagraph (B) to verify if an individual enrolling in a prescription drug plan offered by a PDP sponsor has been previously identified by another PDP sponsor as an individual described in clause (ii)(I).

''(B) REPORTING.—A PDP sponsor offering a prescription drug plan in a State shall submit to the Secretary and the Medicare drug integrity contractor with which the Secretary has entered into a contract under section 1893 with respect to such State a report, on a monthly basis, containing information on—

''(i) any provider of services or supplier described in subparagraph (A)(ii)(II) that is identified by such plan sponsor during the 30-day period before such report is submitted; and

''(ii) the name and prescription records of individuals described in paragraph (5)(C).

''(C) CMS COMPLIANCE REVIEW.—The Secretary shall ensure that plan sponsor annual compliance reviews and program audits include a certification that utilization management tools under this paragraph are in compliance with the requirements for such tools.''.

(c) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN COMPLAINTS FOR PURPOSES OF QUALITY OR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT.—Section 1860D–42 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–152) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(d) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN COMPLAINTS FOR PURPOSES OF QUALITY OR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT.—In conducting a quality or performance assessment of a PDP sponsor, the Secretary shall develop or utilize existing screening methods for reviewing and considering complaints that are received from enrollees in a prescription drug plan offered by such PDP sponsor and that are complaints regarding the lack of access by the individual to prescription drugs due to a drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries.''.

(d) SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING USE OF TECHNOLOGY TOOLS TO COMBAT FRAUD.—It is the sense of Congress that MA organizations and PDP sponsors should consider using e-prescribing and other health information technology tools to support combating fraud under MA-PD plans and prescription drug plans under parts C and D of the Medicare Program.

(e) GAO STUDY AND REPORT.—

(1) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study on the implementation of the amendments made by this section, including the effectiveness of the at-risk beneficiaries for prescription drug abuse drug management programs authorized by section 1860D–4(c)(5) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–10(c)(5)), as added by subsection (a)(1). Such study shall include an analysis of—

(A) the impediments, if any, that impair the ability of individuals described in subparagraph (C) of such section 1860D–4(c)(5) to access clinically appropriate levels of prescription drugs;

(B) the effectiveness of the reasonable access protections under subparagraph (D)(ii) of such section 1860D–4(c)(5), including the impact on beneficiary access and health;

(C) how best to define the term ''designated pharmacy'', including whether the definition of such term should include an entity that is comprised of a number of locations that are under common ownership and that electronically share a real-time, online database and whether such a definition would help to protect and improve beneficiary access;

(D) the types of—

(i) individuals who, in the implementation of such section, are determined to be individuals described in such subparagraph; and

(ii) prescribers and pharmacies that are selected under subparagraph (D) of such section;

(E) the extent of prescription drug abuse beyond Controlled Drug Substances in Schedule CII in parts C and D of the Medicare program; and

(F) other areas determined appropriate by the Comptroller General.

(2) REPORT.—Not later than July 1, 2019, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the appropriate committees of jurisdiction of Congress a report on the study conducted under paragraph (1), together with recommendations for such legislation and administrative action as the Comptroller General determines to be appropriate.

(f) REPORT BY SECRETARY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 12 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall submit to the appropriate committees of jurisdiction of Congress a report on ways to improve upon the appeals process for Medicare beneficiaries with respect to prescription drug coverage under part D of title XVIII of the Social Security Act. Such report shall include an analysis comparing appeals processes under parts C and D of such title XVIII.

(2) FEEDBACK.—In development of the report described in paragraph (1), the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall solicit feedback on the current appeals process from stakeholders, such as beneficiaries, consumer advocates, plan sponsors, pharmacy benefit managers, pharmacists, providers, independent review entity evaluators, and pharmaceutical manufacturers.

(g) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (d)(2), the amendments made by this section shall apply to prescription drug plans for plan years beginning on or after January 1, 2018.

(2) STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS PRIOR TO EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than January 1, 2017, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall convene stakeholders, including individuals entitled to benefits under part A of title XVIII of the Social Security Act or enrolled under part B of such title of such Act, advocacy groups representing such individuals, clinicians, plan sponsors, pharmacists, retail pharmacies, entities delegated by plan sponsors, and biopharmaceutical manufacturers for input regarding the topics described in subparagraph (B). The input described in the preceding sentence shall be provided to the Secretary in sufficient time in order for the Secretary to take such input into account in promulgating the regulations pursuant to subparagraph (C).

(B) TOPICS DESCRIBED.—The topics described in this subparagraph are the topics of—

(i) the impact on cost-sharing and ensuring accessibility to prescription drugs for enrollees in prescription drug plans of PDP sponsors who are at-risk beneficiaries for prescription drug abuse (as defined in paragraph (5)(C) of section 1860D–4(c) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–10(c)));

(ii) the use of an expedited appeals process under which such an enrollee may appeal an identification of such enrollee as an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse under

such paragraph (similar to the processes established under the Medicare Advantage program under part C of title XVIII of the Social Security Act);

(iii) the types of enrollees that should be treated as exempted individuals, as described in clause (ii) of such paragraph;

(iv) the manner in which terms and definitions in paragraph (5) of such section 1860D–4(c) should be applied, such as the use of clinical appropriateness in determining whether an enrollee is an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse as defined in subparagraph (C) of such paragraph (5);

(v) the information to be included in the notices described in subparagraph (B) of such section and the standardization of such notices;

(vi) with respect to a PDP sponsor that establishes a drug management program for at-risk beneficiaries under such paragraph (5), the responsibilities of such PDP sponsor with respect to the implementation of such program;

(vii) notices for plan enrollees at the point of sale that would explain why an at-risk beneficiary has been prohibited from receiving a prescription at a location outside of the designated pharmacy;

(viii) evidence-based prescribing guidelines for opiates; and

(ix) the sharing of claims data under parts A and B with PDP sponsors.

(C) RULEMAKING.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall, taking into account the input gathered pursuant to subparagraph (A) and after providing notice and an opportunity to comment, promulgate regulations to carry out the provisions of, and amendments made by subsections (a) and (b).

SA 3368. Mr. CORNYN 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. 705. RELATIVE DRUG INTERDICTION NEEDS AS PRIMARY FACTOR IN ALLOCATION TO STATES OF FUNDS FOR NATIONAL GUARD DRUG INTERDICTION AND COUNTER-DRUG ACTIVITIES.

Section 112 of title 32, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (f), (g), and (h) as subsections (g), (h), and (i), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (e) the following new subsection (f):

''(f) PROVISION OF FUNDS TO STATES BASED ON RELATIVE DRUG INTERDICTION NEEDS.—In providing funds to States under this section, the Secretary shall use as a primary factor in allocating such funds the relative drug interdiction needs of the States (as reflected in the State drug interdiction and counter-drug activities plans of the States under subsection (c)).''.

SA 3369. Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. ALEXANDER) 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—MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE REFORM ACT

SEC. 801. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Mental Health and Substance Abuse Reform Act of 2016''.

SEC. 802. ASSISTANCE FOR INDIVIDUALS TRANSITIONING OUT OF SYSTEMS.

Section 2976(f) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797w(f)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (5), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in paragraph (6), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(7) provide mental health treatment and transitional services for those with mental illnesses or with co-occurring disorders, including housing placement or assistance.''.

SEC. 803. CO-OCCURRING SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES IN DRUG COURTS.

Part EE of title I of Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797u et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 2951(a)(1) (42 U.S.C. 3797u(a)(1)), by inserting '', including co-occurring substance abuse and mental health problems,'' after ''problems''; and

(2) in section 2959(a) (42 U.S.C. 3797u–8(a)), by inserting '', including training for drug court personnel and officials on identifying and addressing co-occurring substance abuse and mental health problems'' after ''part''.

SEC. 804. CO-OCCURRING SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES IN RESIDENTIAL SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAMS.

Section 1901(a) of title I of Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3796ff(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(3) developing and implementing specialized residential substance abuse treatment programs that identify and provide appropriate treatment to inmates with co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders or challenges.''.

SA 3370. Mr. CORNYN 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 II, add the following:

SEC. 205. REQUIREMENT FOR 3-YEAR PLAN TO ACHIEVE 90-PERCENT RATE OF EFFECTIVE DRUG INTERDICTION.

(a) DEFINITION OF TRANSIT ZONE.—In this section, 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 illicit drugs transit, either directly or indirectly, to the United States.

(b) PLAN REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to the relevant congressional committees a report setting forth a comprehensive interagency plan for achieving within 3 years a 90-percent rate of effective interdiction of all illegal drugs that would otherwise—

(1) pass through the Transit Zone en route to the United States; or

(2) enter the United States across the Southwest border.

(c) INTERAGENCY INTEGRATION AND COORDINATION.—The plan required under subsection (b) shall describe the integration and coordination of efforts by all relevant Federal agencies, including the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Justice, and the Department of Defense, necessary to achieve the objective stated in subsection (b).

(d) ELEMENTS.—The plan required under subsection (b) shall include—

(1) a detailed description of the manner in which the stated objective will be accomplished;

(2) a determination of which official will lead the effort and be accountable for its results;

(3) the specific roles and functions that will be carried out by each agency;

(4) the means that will be required, in terms of personnel, equipment, and other resources;

(5) a detailed budget plan describing the funding that will be needed, broken down by agency;

(6) an explanation of any new or different legal authorities that will be required; and

(7) a specific target date on which the stated objective will be achieved.

SA 3371. 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.—Out of any money appropriated to the National Institutes of Health not otherwise obligated, 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.

SA 3372. Mr. HEINRICH (for himself and Mr. ENZI) 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, line 9, strike ''and''.

On page 11, between lines 9 and 10, insert the following:

(6) rural community health professionals; and

On page 11, line 10, strike ''(6)'' and insert ''(7)''.

SA 3373. Mrs. ERNST 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 of section 203, add the following:

(c) GAO REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) review the prescription drug take back program authorized under subsection (b), including participation rates and stakeholder concerns, in order to catalogue the most significant regulatory barriers for voluntary participation by retail pharmacies; and

(2) submit to Congress a report that includes recommendations on how the Drug Enforcement Administration and Congress can address existing regulatory barriers in order to expand voluntary participation by retail pharmacies in the program.

SA 3374. Mr. DONNELLY (for himself and Mrs. CAPITO) 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 33, line 5, strike the period and insert ", which may include an outreach coordinator or team to connect individuals receiving opioid overdose reversal drugs to follow-up services.".

SA 3375. Mr. REID (for Mrs. MCCASKILL (for herself and Mr. BLUNT)) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. REID of NV 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:

In section 601(b), add at the end the following:

(6) STATES WITHOUT PRESCRIPTION DRUG MONITORING PROGRAMS.—In the case of a State that does not have a prescription drug monitoring program, a county or other unit of local government within the State that has a prescription drug monitoring program shall be treated as a State for purposes of this section, including for purposes of eligibility for grants under paragraph (1).

SA 3376. Mr. KAINE (for himself and Mrs. CAPITO) 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 67, line 24, insert "including best practices on the co-prescribing of naloxone" after "guidelines".

On page 77, between lines 5 and 6, insert the following:

SEC. ____. NALOXONE CO-PRESCRIBING IN FEDERAL HEALTH CARE AND MEDICAL FACILITIES.

(a) NALOXONE CO-PRESCRIBING GUIDELINES.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act:

(1) The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall, as appropriate, provide information to prescribers within Federally qualified health centers (as defined in paragraph (4) of section 1861(aa) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395x(aa))), and the health care facilities of the Indian Health Service, on best practices for co-prescribing naloxone for patients receiving chronic opioid therapy and patients being treated for opioid use disorders.

(2) The Secretary of Defense shall, as appropriate, provide information to prescribers within Department of Defense medical facilities on best practices for co-prescribing naloxone for patients receiving chronic opioid therapy and patients being treated for opioid use disorders.

(3) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, as appropriate, provide information to prescribers within Department of Veterans Affairs medical facilities on best practices for co-prescribing naloxone for patients receiving chronic opioid therapy and patients being treated for opioid use disorders.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) CO-PRESCRIBING.—The term "co-prescribing" means, with respect to an opioid overdose reversal drug, the practice of prescribing such drug in conjunction with an opioid prescription for patients at an elevated risk of overdose, or in conjunction with an opioid agonist approved under section 505 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355) for the treatment of opioid use disorders, or in other circumstances in which a provider identifies a patient at an elevated risk for an intentional or unintentional drug overdose from heroin or prescription opioid therapies.

(2) ELEVATED RISK OF OVERDOSE.—The term "elevated risk of overdose" has the meaning given such term by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, which—

(A) may be based on the criteria provided in the Opioid Overdose Toolkit published by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration; and

(B) may include patients on a first course opioid treatment, patients using extended-release and long-acting opioid analgesic, and patients with a respiratory disease or other co-morbidities.

SA 3377. 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, add the following:

TITLE VIII—PHARMACEUTICAL STEWARDSHIP ACT

SEC. 801. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the "Pharmaceutical Stewardship Act of 2016".

SEC. 802. NATIONAL PHARMACEUTICAL STEWARDSHIP PROGRAMS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term "board of directors" means the board of directors of the organization.

(2) The term "producer", with respect to a covered drug, means the holder of an approved application for the covered drug under subsection (b) or (j) of section 505 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355).

(3) The term "certified national pharmaceutical stewardship program" means a national pharmaceutical stewardship program with a certification in effect under subsection (g) or (h).

(4) The term "controlled substance" means a controlled substance (as such term is defined in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802)) in schedule II, III, IV, or V under section 202 of such Act (21 U.S.C. 812).

(5) The term "covered drug" means a drug (as such term is defined in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321)) that is marketed in the United States other than—

(A) a drug for which a take-back program is in effect pursuant to a risk evaluation and mitigation strategy under section 505–1 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355–1);

(B) a vitamin or dietary supplement (as such term is defined in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321));

(C) an herbal-based remedy or homeopathic drug, product, or remedy;

(D) a soap (with or without germicidal agents), laundry detergent, bleach, household cleaning product, shampoo, sunscreen, toothpaste, lip balm, antiperspirant, or other product that is regulated under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 301 et seq.) exclusively as a cosmetic;

(E) a biological product (as defined in section 351 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 262)); or

(F) a pesticide (as defined in section 2 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (7 U.S.C. 136)) that is contained in a collar, powder, shampoo, topical application, or other system for delivery or application to a pet.

(6) The term "organization" means the National Pharmaceutical Stewardship Organization established in accordance with subsection (c).

(7) The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(8) The term "ultimate user" has the meaning given to such term in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802).

(b) REQUIRED PARTICIPATION.—Each producer of a covered drug shall participate in—

(1) the certified national pharmaceutical stewardship program of the National Pharmaceutical Stewardship Organization; or

(2) another certified national pharmaceutical stewardship program.

(c) NATIONAL PHARMACEUTICAL STEWARDSHIP ORGANIZATION.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There shall be established in accordance with this section a nonprofit private corporation to be known as the National Pharmaceutical Stewardship Organization. The organization shall not be an agency or instrumentality of the Federal Government, and officers, employees, and members of the board of the organization shall not, by virtue of such service, be considered officers or employees of the Federal Government.

(2) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the organization shall be to establish and, beginning not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this title, implement a certified national pharmaceutical stewardship program.

(3) BOARD OF DIRECTORS.—

(A) REPRESENTATION.—The organization shall have a board of directors with balanced representation of each of the following:

(i) Producers of covered drugs.

(ii) Public health, pharmacy, law enforcement, and substance use disorder treatment professionals.

(iii) Water quality and waste management stakeholders.

(B) INITIAL MEMBERS.—The Secretary shall appoint the initial members of the board of directors.

(4) POWERS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The organization may—

(i) adopt and amend a constitution and bylaws for the management of its property and the regulation of its affairs;

(ii) adopt and alter a corporate seal;

(iii) choose officers, managers, agents, and employees as the activities of the organization require;

(iv) make contracts;

(v) acquire, own, lease, encumber, and transfer property as necessary to carry out the purposes of the organization;

(vi) borrow money, issue instruments of indebtedness, and secure its obligations by granting security interests in its property;

(vii) sue and be sued; and

(viii) do any other act necessary and proper to carry out the purpose of the organization.

(B) BYLAWS.—The board of directors shall establish the general policies of the organization for carrying out the purpose described in paragraph (2), including the establishment of the bylaws of the organization, which shall include bylaws for the following:

(i) Entering into contracts and agreements with service providers and entities as necessary, useful, or convenient to provide all or portions of the national pharmaceutical stewardship program of the organization.

(ii) Taking any legal action necessary or proper for the recovery of an assessment for, on behalf of, or against producers of a covered drug participating in such program.

(iii) Performing other such functions as may be necessary or proper to carry out the purpose described in paragraph (2).

(iv) Ensuring that the members of the board of directors serve without compensation, but are entitled to reimbursement (solely from the funds of the organization) for expenses incurred in the discharge of their duties as members of the board of directors.

(v) Ensuring that the organization does not use any Federal, State, or local government funds to carry out the purpose described in paragraph (2).

(vi) Allowing the Secretary—

(I) to audit the activities of the organization as the Secretary deems necessary; and

(II) to access any facilities or property of the organization as the Secretary deems necessary to conduct inspections or investigate complaints.

(5) NONPROFIT STATUS.—In carrying out the purpose described in paragraph (2), the board of directors shall establish such policies and bylaws under paragraph (4)(B) as may be necessary to ensure that the organization maintains its status as an organization that—

(A) is described in subsection (c)(3) of section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; and

(B) is, under subsection (a) of such section, exempt from taxation.

(6) CONTRIBUTIONS TO NATIONAL PHARMACEUTICAL STEWARDSHIP ORGANIZATION NOT TREATED AS CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS.—A contribution (including any payment or fee) by a producer of a covered drug to the organization or the organization's national pharmaceutical stewardship program shall not be treated as a charitable contribution for purposes of section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(7) ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION.—The Secretary shall ensure that the initial articles of incorporation of the organization are properly filed not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this title.

(d) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—To be certified (and maintain certification) under subsection (g) or (h), a national pharmaceutical stewardship program (referred to in this section as a ''program'') shall meet each of the following requirements:

(1) The program is operated pursuant to an agreement among the producers of covered drugs participating in the program.

(2) Subject to subsection (e), the costs of the program are fully paid by such producers.

(3) The program shall not impose any fee on individuals, wholesalers, or retailers for transport and disposal of a covered drug through the program, except to the extent an individual, wholesaler, or retailer is acting as a producer of a covered drug.

(4) The program is developed with input from the public, including an opportunity for public comment and public hearings.

(5) The program provides a system to facilitate the collection and disposal of any covered drug that—

(A) is delivered to the program by the ultimate user of the covered drug in the United States; and

(B) is household waste as defined under the implementing regulations of subtitle C of title II of the Solid Waste Disposal Act (42 U.S.C. 6901 et seq.; commonly referred to as the ''Resource Conservation and Recovery Act'').

(6) Collection and disposal of a covered drug through the program's system (described in paragraph (5)) occurs only in a manner that—

(A) is safe and secure;

(B) results in the covered drug being rendered unrecoverable in accordance with the requirements for nonretrievable disposal of controlled substances under part 1300 of title 21, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulations);

(C) protects patient information;

(D) is accessible in every State, county, and city or town, by including—

(i) at least one collection site that is accessible on an ongoing, year-round basis in every county of every State and at least one additional such collection site for every 30,000 county residents, giving preference to retail pharmacies that—

(I) operate secure collection receptacles in accordance with applicable regulations of the Drug Enforcement Administration; and

(II) are geographically distributed to provide reasonably convenient and equitable access;

(ii) if ongoing, year-round collection is not feasible in a specific county or city (as determined by the Secretary)—

(I) periodic collection events; or

(II) the provision of prepaid mailing envelopes or deactivation technologies to individuals in such county or city; and

(iii) prepaid mailing envelopes or deactivation technologies made available to individuals with disabilities and home-bound residents upon request through the program's toll-free telephone number and website under paragraph (8); and

(E) in the case of a controlled substance, is consistent with section 302(g) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 822(g)).

(7) The program—

(A) promotes the collection and disposal of covered drugs through the program; and

(B) to the extent feasible, works with local recycling facilities and officials to collect and recycle covered drug packaging at collection locations.

(8) The program ensures that options for collection and disposal of covered drugs through the program are widely understood by customers, pharmacists, retailers, and health care practitioners including doctors and other prescribers, including by—

(A) maintaining a toll-free telephone number, a website optimized for mobile platforms, and a free mobile application that—

(i) publicize all currently available collection and disposal options, updated within 30 days of any change; and

(ii) provide substance use disorder treatment and referral information;

(B) preparing educational and outreach materials that—

(i) clearly explain what ''covered drugs'' are collected at each collection site;

(ii) describe where and how to dispose of covered drugs through the program;

(iii) address the risks of diversion of covered drugs, including accidental overdose, accidental poisoning, and environmental contamination;

(iv) raise awareness about the importance of safe storage and disposal; and

(v) utilize plain language and explanatory images readily understandable by all residents, including individuals with limited English proficiency; and

(C) providing such materials to pharmacies, health care facilities, and other interested parties for dissemination.

(9) Every 4 years, the program, using an independent evaluator at the expense of the program, evaluates the effectiveness of its educational and outreach activities under paragraph (8), including with respect to—

(A) the percentage of residents of the United States who are aware of the program;

(B) the percentage of residents of the United States who report having access to a collection site, prepaid mail-back envelope, or deactivation system; and

(C) the extent to which residents of the United States find the program to be convenient.

(10) Annually, the program, using an independent auditor at the expense of the program, audits relevant information provided in the program's report to the Secretary, including—

(A) the amount, by weight, of covered drugs collected and disposed of in each State by drop-off site and, if applicable, the total amount by weight collected by mail-back method and disposed of; and

(B) the income and expenditures of the program.

(e) MECHANISM FOR TRANSFER OF COSTS AMONG PRODUCERS.—To be certified (and maintain certification) under subsection (g) or (h), a program shall include a mechanism that—

(1) provides for receiving and transferring of funds among all national pharmaceutical stewardship programs that are so certified in such amounts as may be necessary, to be adjusted on at least an annual basis, to ensure that the producers of covered drugs participating in such programs bear the costs of such programs in a manner that provides for a fair and reasonable allocation of such costs across such participants; and

(2) is specified in a written agreement among all producers of covered drugs.

(f) PROGRAM REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—To be certified (and maintain certification) under subsection (g) or (h), a program shall agree to submit a report to the Secretary within one year following such certification, and annually thereafter.

(2) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted by a program under paragraph (1) shall describe the program's activities during the preceding calendar year, including at a minimum—

(A) a list of producers participating in the program;

(B) a specification of the amount, by weight, of covered drugs collected and disposed of in each State—

(i) by drop-off site; and

(ii) if applicable, by mail-back method;

(C) a description of the collection system in each State, including the location of each collection site and, if applicable, locations where envelopes for mail-back or deactivation technologies are provided;

(D) an identification of any safety or security problems which occurred during collection, transportation, or disposal of covered drugs during the preceding calendar year and, with respect to any such problems, a description of the changes which have or will be made to policies, procedures, or tracking mechanisms to alleviate any such problems

and to improve safety and security in the future;

(E) a description of the educational and outreach activities under subsection (d)(8) and the methodology used to evaluate such activities under subsection (d)(9);

(F) a description of how collected packaging was recycled to the extent feasible, including the recycling facility or facilities used; and

(G) the total expenditures of the program.

(3) PROCEDURES.—The Secretary shall establish procedures for reporting under this subsection not later than the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this title.

(4) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The Secretary shall make each report submitted under this subsection available to the public.

(g) CERTIFICATION OF NATIONAL PHARMACEUTICAL STEWARDSHIP ORGANIZATION'S PROGRAM.—

(1) PROGRAM PLAN.—To seek certification of its program, the organization shall submit a plan to the Secretary containing such information as the Secretary may require.

(2) CONSIDERATION BY SECRETARY.—Upon receipt of a plan under paragraph (1), the Secretary—

(A) shall consult with the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration on the adequacy of the proposed program's security measures for collection, transportation, and disposal of covered drugs, disposal systems, and mechanisms for secure tracking and handling;

(B) shall consult with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency on the adequacy of the program's disposal methods and compliance with environmental requirements;

(C) shall consult with the Secretary of Transportation on the adequacy of the program's compliance with respect to requirements for transport of covered drugs; and

(D) within 90 days after receipt of the plan, shall—

(i) certify the program if the Secretary determines it meets the requirements of this section; or

(ii) reject the proposed program and provide a written explanation of the reasons for such rejection.

(3) RESPONSE TO REJECTION OF PROPOSED PROGRAM.—If the Secretary rejects the organization's proposed program under paragraph (2)(D)(ii), the rejection shall be treated as final agency action, and the organization may—

(A) revise its proposed program and submit a new plan under paragraph (1); or

(B) seek judicial review of the rejection not later than 60 days after receiving notice of the rejection.

(4) TERM OF CERTIFICATION; RECERTIFICATION.—The term of a certification (including a recertification) under paragraph (2)(D)(i) shall be not more than 2 years. To have its program recertified, the organization shall submit a new plan under paragraph (1), including any relevant updates, for approval under paragraph (2)(D)(i).

(5) CHANGES TO CERTIFIED PROGRAM.—Before making any significant change to its certified national pharmaceutical stewardship program, the organization shall seek and obtain approval for the change from the Secretary. Not later than 15 days after submission of a request for a change under the preceding sentence, the Secretary shall approve the change or reject the change and provide a written explanation of the reasons for the rejection.

(6) SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) PUBLICATION.—Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this title, the Secretary shall publish requirements for the submission of program plans under paragraph (1) and requests for changes under paragraph (5), including requirements for the contents of such submissions.

(B) FAILURE TO PUBLISH.—If the Secretary fails to publish such requirements by the deadline specified in subparagraph (A), the requirements of this section applicable to producers of covered drugs shall nonetheless apply.

(h) CERTIFICATION OF OTHER PROGRAMS.—

(1) APPLICATION.—In lieu of participating in the certified national pharmaceutical stewardship program of the organization, one or more producers of a covered drug may submit a stewardship plan to the Secretary seeking certification of a separate national pharmaceutical stewardship program.

(2) GOVERNING PROVISIONS.—The provisions of subsection (g) shall apply with respect to a stewardship plan for certification of a program under paragraph (1) to the same extent and in the same manner as such provisions apply to a program plan for certification of a program by the organization under subsection (g), except as follows:

(A) The reference to 90 days in subsection (g)(2)(D) (relating to the period of the Secretary's review of a program plan) shall be treated as a reference to 120 days.

(B) If the Secretary rejects the proposed stewardship plan, in lieu of submitting a new stewardship plan under paragraph (1) or seeking judicial review of the rejection, the producers may choose to participate in the certified national pharmaceutical stewardship program of the organization.

(C) The reference to 2 years in subsection (g)(4) (relating to the term of certification) shall be treated as references to 1 year.

(i) SOLICITATION OF PUBLIC COMMENT TO INFORM PROGRAM UPDATES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A certified national product stewardship program shall—

(A) annually invite comments from stakeholders on their satisfaction with the services provided by the program, including representatives of health care facilities, prescribers, pharmacies and pharmacists, State and local government officials, law enforcement personnel, public health organizations, substance use disorder professionals, waste management stakeholders, environmental organizations, and consumers;

(B) compile and submit the information received through such comments to the Secretary; and

(C) use such information in developing updates and changes to the program.

(2) USE BY SECRETARY.—The Secretary shall use information submitted under paragraph (1)(B) in reviewing proposed updates and revisions to certified national pharmaceutical stewardship program plans.

(3) GUIDANCE.—The Secretary shall issue guidance on the process for complying with this subsection.

(j) SUSPENSION OF PROGRAM.—

(1) IMMINENT DANGER.—The Secretary may suspend, in whole or in part, the certification of any national pharmaceutical stewardship program under this section if the Secretary determines that such action is necessary to protect the public from imminent danger.

(2) FAILURE TO COMPLY.—If the Secretary determines that a national pharmaceutical stewardship is in violation of the requirements of this section, the Secretary—

(A) within 30 days of learning of the violation, may issue a written warning to the program stating that the program is in violation of this section; and

(B) if the program has not rectified each violation identified in such warning within 30 days of receipt of such warning, may suspend, in whole or in part, the certification of the program.

(k) CIVIL PENALTIES.—Beginning on the date that is 2 years after the date of enactment of this title, a producer of a covered drug shall be liable for a civil penalty of not more than $50,000 for each calendar day on which, as determined by the Secretary, the producer—

(1) is not participating in a certified national pharmaceutical program; or

(2) is in violation of its obligation to contribute to the costs of such a program under subsection (d)(2).

(l) REGULATORY POWER.—The Secretary may adopt rules or guidance necessary to implement, administer, and enforce this section. The Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Director of National Drug Control Policy, the Secretary of Transportation, and the Commissioner of Food and Drugs, may include in such regulations or guidance any performance standards determined appropriate for implementing the program requirements specified in this section.

(m) STATE, TRIBAL, AND LOCAL REGULATION.—Nothing in this title prohibits a State, tribal, or local government from imposing any requirements relating to the safe and secure disposal of covered drugs that are more stringent than the requirements of this title.

(n) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this title, the Secretary shall report to the appropriate committees of the Congress concerning the status of the national pharmaceutical stewardship programs under this section, including any recommendations for changes to this section.

(o) SEVERABILITY.—If any provision of this section or the application of such provision to any person or circumstance is held to be unconstitutional, the remainder of this section, and the application of the provisions of such remainder to any person or circumstance, shall not be affected thereby.

(p) EVALUATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this title, and annually thereafter, the Director of the Office of the National Drug Control Policy, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Attorney General, and the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, shall—

(A) conduct an evaluation of the effectiveness of the national pharmaceutical stewardship programs under this section; and

(B) submit a report to the Congress on the results of each such evaluation, including recommendations for improving the programs.

(2) METRICS.—The evaluation under paragraph (1) shall address each of the following:

(A) Public access to national pharmaceutical stewardship programs under this section.

(B) Public awareness of such programs, including awareness of the risks of diversion of drugs and awareness of the importance of safe storage and safe disposal of pharmaceuticals.

(C) Impact of the programs on prescription drug abuse, including analysis of hospital admissions for prescription drug overdoses, per capita deaths due to prescription drug overdoses, and arrests for illegal possession of controlled substances in schedule II, III, IV, or V.

(q) ANNUAL FEES.—The Secretary may assess, collect, and use, without further appropriation, annual fees from producers of covered drugs to pay the administrative costs of carrying out this section and section 803.

(r) DELAYED APPLICABILITY.—In the case of producer that first offers a covered drug for

sale in interstate commerce (including by importing the covered drug) after the date of enactment of this title, the requirements of this title apply with respect to such producer beginning on the date that is 180 days after the date on which the producer first offers the covered drug for sale in interstate commerce.

SEC. 803. COORDINATED EDUCATION CAMPAIGN ON DRUG DISPOSAL.

Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this title, the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, shall establish and begin implementation of a coordinated education and outreach campaign—

(1) to increase awareness among members of the public regarding how drugs may be safely and securely disposed consistent with public safety, public health, and environmental protection through national pharmaceutical stewardship programs established under section 802 and by other appropriate means; and

(2) to link members of the public to the national and local educational and outreach activities conducted by such programs.

SA 3378. Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, 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:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016''.

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

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Findings.
Sec. 3. Definitions.

TITLE I—PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

Sec. 101. Development of best practices for the prescribing of prescription opioids.
Sec. 102. Awareness campaigns.
Sec. 103. Community-based coalition enhancement grants to address local drug crises.

TITLE II—LAW ENFORCEMENT AND TREATMENT

Sec. 201. Treatment alternative to incarceration programs.
Sec. 202. First responder training for the use of drugs and devices that rapidly reverse the effects of opioids.
Sec. 203. Prescription drug take back expansion.
Sec. 204. Heroin and methamphetamine task forces.

TITLE III—TREATMENT AND RECOVERY

Sec. 301. Evidence-based prescription opioid and heroin treatment and interventions demonstration.
Sec. 302. Criminal justice medication assisted treatment and interventions demonstration.
Sec. 303. National youth recovery initiative.
Sec. 304. Building communities of recovery.

TITLE IV—ADDRESSING COLLATERAL CONSEQUENCES

Sec. 401. Correctional education demonstration grant program.
Sec. 402. National Task Force on Recovery and Collateral Consequences.

TITLE V—ADDICTION AND TREATMENT SERVICES FOR WOMEN, FAMILIES, AND VETERANS

Sec. 501. Improving treatment for pregnant and postpartum women.
Sec. 502. Report on grants for family-based substance abuse treatment.
Sec. 503. Veterans' treatment courts.

TITLE VI—INCENTIVIZING STATE COMPREHENSIVE INITIATIVES TO ADDRESS PRESCRIPTION OPIOID AND HEROIN ABUSE

Sec. 601. State demonstration grants for comprehensive opioid abuse response.

TITLE VII—MISCELLANEOUS

Sec. 701. GAO report on IMD exclusion.
Sec. 702. Funding.
Sec. 703. Conforming amendments.
Sec. 704. Grant accountability.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The abuse of heroin and prescription opioid painkillers is having a devastating effect on public health and safety in communities across the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, drug overdose deaths now surpass traffic accidents in the number of deaths caused by injury in the United States. In 2014, an average of more than 120 people in the United States died from drug overdoses every day.

(2) According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (commonly known as ''NIDA''), the number of prescriptions for opioids increased from approximately 76,000,000 in 1991 to nearly 207,000,000 in 2013, and the United States is the biggest consumer of opioids globally, accounting for almost 100 percent of the world total for hydrocodone and 81 percent for oxycodone.

(3) Opioid pain relievers are the most widely misused or abused controlled prescription drugs (commonly referred to as ''CPDs'') and are involved in most CPD-related overdose incidents. According to the Drug Abuse Warning Network (commonly known as ''DAWN''), the estimated number of emergency department visits involving nonmedical use of prescription opiates or opioids increased by 112 percent between 2006 and 2010, from 84,671 to 179,787.

(4) The use of heroin in the United States has also spiked sharply in recent years. According to the most recent National Survey on Drug Use and Health, more than 900,000 people in the United States reported using heroin in 2014, nearly a 35 percent increase from the previous year. Heroin overdose deaths more than tripled from 2010 to 2014.

(5) The supply of cheap heroin available in the United States has increased dramatically as well, largely due to the activity of Mexican drug trafficking organizations. The Drug Enforcement Administration (commonly known as the ''DEA'') estimates that heroin seizures at the Mexican border have more than doubled since 2010, and heroin production in Mexico increased 62 percent from 2013 to 2014. While only 8 percent of State and local law enforcement officials across the United States identified heroin as the greatest drug threat in their area in 2008, that number rose to 38 percent in 2015.

(6) Law enforcement officials and treatment experts throughout the country report that many people who have misused prescription opioids have turned to heroin as a cheaper or more easily obtained alternative to prescription opioids.

(7) According to a report by the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (commonly referred to as ''NASADAD''), 37 States reported an increase in admissions to treatment for heroin use during the past 2 years, while admissions to treatment for prescription opiates increased 500 percent from 2000 to 2012.

(8) Research indicates that combating the opioid crisis, including abuse of prescription painkillers and, increasingly, heroin, requires a multipronged approach that involves prevention, education, monitoring, law enforcement initiatives, reducing drug diversion and the supply of illicit drugs, expanding delivery of existing treatments (including medication assisted treatments), expanding access to overdose medications and interventions, and the development of new medications for pain that can augment the existing treatment arsenal.

(9) Substance use disorders are a treatable disease. Discoveries in the science of addiction have led to advances in the treatment of substance use disorders that help people stop abusing drugs and prescription medications and resume their productive lives.

(10) According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, approximately 22,700,000 people in the United States needed substance use disorder treatment in 2013, but only 2,500,000 people received it. Furthermore, current treatment services are not adequate to meet demand. According to a report commissioned by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (commonly known as ''SAMHSA''), there are approximately 32 providers for every 1,000 individuals needing substance use disorder treatment. In some States, the ratio is much lower.

(11) The overall cost of drug abuse, from health care- and criminal justice-related costs to lost productivity, is steep, totaling more than $700,000,000,000 a year, according to NIDA. Effective substance abuse prevention can yield major economic dividends.

(12) According to NIDA, when schools and communities properly implement science-validated substance abuse prevention programs, abuse of alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs is reduced. Such programs help teachers, parents, and healthcare professionals shape the perceptions of youths about the risks of drug abuse.

(13) Diverting certain individuals with substance use disorders from criminal justice systems into community-based treatment can save billions of dollars and prevent sizeable numbers of crimes, arrests, and re-incarcerations over the course of those individuals' lives.

(14) According to the DEA, more than 2,700 tons of expired, unwanted prescription medications have been collected since the enactment of the Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–273; 124 Stat. 2858).

(15) Faith-based, holistic, or drug-free models can provide a critical path to successful recovery for a number of people in the United States. The 2015 membership survey conducted by Alcoholics Anonymous (commonly known as ''AA'') found that 73 percent of AA members were sober longer than 1 year and attended 2.5 meetings per week.

(16) Research shows that combining treatment medications with behavioral therapy is an effective way to facilitate success for some patients. Treatment approaches must be tailored to address the drug abuse patterns and drug-related medical, psychiatric, and social problems of each individual. Different types of medications may be useful at different stages of treatment or recovery to help a patient stop using drugs, stay in treatment, and avoid relapse. Patients have a range of options regarding their path to recovery and many have also successfully addressed drug abuse through the use of faith-based, holistic, or drug-free models.

(17) Individuals with mental illness, especially severe mental illness, are at considerably higher risk for substance abuse than the general population, and the presence of a mental illness complicates recovery from substance abuse.

(18) Rural communities are especially susceptible to heroin and opioid abuse. Individuals in rural counties have higher rates of drug poisoning deaths, including deaths from opioids. According to the American Journal of Public Health, ''[O]pioid poisonings in nonmetropolitan counties have increased at a rate greater than threefold the increase in metropolitan counties.'' According to a February 19, 2016, report from the Maine Rural Health Research Center, ''[M]ultiple studies document a higher prevalence [of abuse] among specific vulnerable rural populations, particularly among youth, women who are pregnant or experiencing partner violence, and persons with co-occurring disorders.''

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act—

(1) the term ''first responder'' includes a firefighter, law enforcement officer, paramedic, emergency medical technician, or other individual (including an employee of a legally organized and recognized volunteer organization, whether compensated or not), who, in the course of professional duties, responds to fire, medical, hazardous material, or other similar emergencies;

(2) the term ''medication assisted treatment'' means the use, for problems relating to heroin and other opioids, of medications approved by the Food and Drug Administration in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies;

(3) the term ''opioid'' means any drug having an addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability similar to morphine or being capable of conversion into a drug having such addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability; and

(4) the term ''State'' means any State of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and any territory or possession of the United States.

TITLE I—PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

SEC. 101. DEVELOPMENT OF BEST PRACTICES FOR THE PRESCRIBING OF PRESCRIPTION OPIOIDS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Health and Human Services; and

(2) the term ''task force'' means the Pain Management Best Practices Interagency Task Force convened under subsection (b).

(b) INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE.—Not later than December 14, 2018, the Secretary, in cooperation with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Defense, and the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, shall convene a Pain Management Best Practices Interagency Task Force to review, modify, and update, as appropriate, best practices for pain management (including chronic and acute pain) and prescribing pain medication.

(c) MEMBERSHIP.—The task force shall be comprised of—

(1) representatives of—

(A) the Department of Health and Human Services;

(B) the Department of Veterans Affairs;

(C) the Food and Drug Administration;

(D) the Department of Defense;

(E) the Drug Enforcement Administration;

(F) the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;

(G) the National Academy of Medicine;

(H) the National Institutes of Health;

(I) the Office of National Drug Control Policy; and

(J) the Office of Rural Health Policy of the Department of Health and Human Services;

(2) physicians, dentists, and nonphysician prescribers;

(3) pharmacists;

(4) experts in the fields of pain research and addiction research;

(5) representatives of—

(A) pain management professional organizations;

(B) the mental health treatment community;

(C) the addiction treatment community;

(D) pain advocacy groups; and

(E) groups with expertise around overdose reversal; and

(6) other stakeholders, as the Secretary determines appropriate.

(d) DUTIES.—The task force shall—

(1) not later than 180 days after the date on which the task force is convened under subsection (b), review, modify, and update, as appropriate, best practices for pain management (including chronic and acute pain) and prescribing pain medication, taking into consideration—

(A) existing pain management research;

(B) recommendations from relevant conferences and existing relevant evidence-based guidelines;

(C) ongoing efforts at the State and local levels and by medical professional organizations to develop improved pain management strategies, including consideration of alternatives to opioids to reduce opioid monotherapy in appropriate cases;

(D) the management of high-risk populations, other than populations who suffer pain, who—

(i) may use or be prescribed benzodiazepines, alcohol, and diverted opioids; or

(ii) receive opioids in the course of medical care; and

(E) the Proposed 2016 Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (80 Fed. Reg. 77351 (December 14, 2015)) and any final guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;

(2) solicit and take into consideration public comment on the practices developed under paragraph (1), amending such best practices if appropriate; and

(3) develop a strategy for disseminating information about the best practices to stakeholders, as appropriate.

(e) LIMITATION.—The task force shall not have rulemaking authority.

(f) REPORT.—Not later than 270 days after the date on which the task force is convened under subsection (b), the task force shall submit to Congress a report that includes—

(1) the strategy for disseminating best practices for pain management (including chronic and acute pain) and prescribing pain medication, as reviewed, modified, or updated under subsection (d); and

(2) recommendations for effectively applying the best practices described in paragraph (1) to improve prescribing practices at medical facilities, including medical facilities of the Veterans Health Administration.

SEC. 102. AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services, in coordination with the Attorney General, shall advance the education and awareness of the public, providers, patients, and other appropriate entities regarding the risk of abuse of prescription opioid drugs if such products are not taken as prescribed.

(b) DRUG-FREE MEDIA CAMPAIGN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Office of National Drug Control Policy, in coordination with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Attorney General, shall establish a national drug awareness campaign.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The national drug awareness campaign required under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) take into account the association between prescription opioid abuse and heroin use;

(B) emphasize the similarities between heroin and prescription opioids and the effects of heroin and prescription opioids on the human body; and

(C) bring greater public awareness to the dangerous effects of fentanyl when mixed with heroin or abused in a similar manner.

SEC. 103. COMMUNITY-BASED COALITION ENHANCEMENT GRANTS TO ADDRESS LOCAL DRUG CRISES.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.) is amended by striking section 2997 and inserting the following:

''SEC. 2997. COMMUNITY-BASED COALITION ENHANCEMENT GRANTS TO ADDRESS LOCAL DRUG CRISES.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

''(1) the term 'Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997' means chapter 2 of the National Narcotics Leadership Act of 1988 (21 U.S.C. 1521 et seq.);

''(2) the term 'eligible entity' means an organization that—

''(A) on or before the date of submitting an application for a grant under this section, receives or has received a grant under the Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997; and

''(B) has documented, using local data, rates of abuse of opioids or methamphetamines at levels that are—

''(i) significantly higher than the national average as determined by the Secretary (including appropriate consideration of the results of the Monitoring the Future Survey published by the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the National Survey on Drug Use and Health published by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration); or

''(ii) higher than the national average, as determined by the Secretary (including appropriate consideration of the results of the surveys described in clause (i)), over a sustained period of time;

''(3) the term 'local drug crisis' means, with respect to the area served by an eligible entity—

''(A) a sudden increase in the abuse of opioids or methamphetamines, as documented by local data; or

''(B) the abuse of prescription medications, specifically opioids or methamphetamines, that is significantly higher than the national average, over a sustained period of time, as documented by local data;

''(4) the term 'opioid' means any drug having an addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability similar to morphine or being capable of conversion into a drug having such addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability; and

''(5) the term 'Secretary' means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

''(b) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary, in coordination with the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, may make grants to eligible entities to implement comprehensive community-wide strategies that address local drug crises within the area served by the eligible entity.

''(c) APPLICATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity seeking a grant under this section shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary may require.

''(2) CRITERIA.—As part of an application for a grant under this section, the Secretary shall require an eligible entity to submit a detailed, comprehensive, multisector plan for addressing the local drug crisis within the area served by the eligible entity.

''(d) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity shall use a grant received under this section—

''(1) for programs designed to implement comprehensive community-wide prevention strategies to address the local drug crisis in the area served by the eligible entity, in accordance with the plan submitted under subsection (c)(2); and

''(2) to obtain specialized training and technical assistance from the organization funded under section 4 of Public Law 107–82 (21 U.S.C. 1521 note).

''(e) SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.—An eligible entity shall use Federal funds received under this section only to supplement the funds that would, in the absence of those Federal funds, be made available from other Federal and non-Federal sources for the activities described in this section, and not to supplant those funds.

''(f) EVALUATION.—A grant under this section shall be subject to the same evaluation requirements and procedures as the evaluation requirements and procedures imposed on the recipient of a grant under the Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997.

''(g) LIMITATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Not more than 8 percent of the amounts made available to carry out this section for a fiscal year may be used by the Secretary to pay for administrative expenses.''.

TITLE II—LAW ENFORCEMENT AND TREATMENT

SEC. 201. TREATMENT ALTERNATIVE TO INCARCERATION PROGRAMS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ''eligible entity'' means a State, unit of local government, Indian tribe, or nonprofit organization.

(2) ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANT.—The term ''eligible participant'' means an individual who—

(A) comes into contact with the juvenile justice system or criminal justice system or is arrested or charged with an offense that is not—

(i) a crime of violence, as defined under applicable State law or section 3156 of title 18, United States Code; or

(ii) a serious drug offense, as defined under section 924(e)(2)(A) of title 18, United States Code;

(B) has been screened by a qualified mental health professional and determined to suffer from a substance use disorder, or co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorder, that there is a reasonable basis to believe is related to the commission of the offense; and

(C) has been, after consideration of any potential risk of violence to any person in the program or the public if the individual were selected to participate in the program, unanimously approved for participation in a program funded under this section by, as applicable depending on the stage of the criminal justice process—

(i) the relevant law enforcement agency;

(ii) the prosecuting attorney;

(iii) the defense attorney;

(iv) the pretrial, probation, or correctional officer;

(v) the judge; and

(vi) a representative from the relevant mental health or substance abuse agency.

(b) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services, in coordination with the Attorney General, may make grants to eligible entities to—

(1) develop, implement, or expand a treatment alternative to incarceration program for eligible participants, including—

(A) pre-booking, including pre-arrest, treatment alternative to incarceration programs, including—

(i) law enforcement training on substance use disorders and co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorders;

(ii) receiving centers as alternatives to incarceration of eligible participants;

(iii) specialized response units for calls related to substance use disorders and co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorders; and

(iv) other pre-arrest or pre-booking treatment alternative to incarceration models; and

(B) post-booking treatment alternative to incarceration programs, including—

(i) specialized clinical case management;

(ii) pretrial services related to substance use disorders and co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorders;

(iii) prosecutor and defender based programs;

(iv) specialized probation;

(v) programs utilizing the American Society of Addiction Medicine patient placement criteria;

(vi) treatment and rehabilitation programs and recovery support services; and

(vii) drug courts, DWI courts, and veterans treatment courts; and

(2) facilitate or enhance planning and collaboration between State criminal justice systems and State substance abuse systems in order to more efficiently and effectively carry out programs described in paragraph (1) that address problems related to the use of heroin and misuse of prescription drugs among eligible participants.

(c) APPLICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity seeking a grant under this section shall submit an application to the Secretary of Health and Human Services—

(A) that meets the criteria under paragraph (2); and

(B) at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary of Health and Human Services may require.

(2) CRITERIA.—An eligible entity, in submitting an application under paragraph (1), shall—

(A) provide extensive evidence of collaboration with State and local government agencies overseeing health, community corrections, courts, prosecution, substance abuse, mental health, victims services, and employment services, and with local law enforcement agencies;

(B) demonstrate consultation with the Single State Authority for Substance Abuse (as defined in section 201(e) of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17521(e)));

(C) demonstrate consultation with the Single State criminal justice planning agency;

(D) demonstrate that evidence-based treatment practices, including if applicable the use of medication assisted treatment, will be utilized; and

(E) demonstrate that evidenced-based screening and assessment tools will be utilized to place participants in the treatment alternative to incarceration program.

(d) REQUIREMENTS.—Each eligible entity awarded a grant for a treatment alternative to incarceration program under this section shall—

(1) determine the terms and conditions of participation in the program by eligible participants, taking into consideration the collateral consequences of an arrest, prosecution, or criminal conviction;

(2) ensure that each substance abuse and mental health treatment component is licensed and qualified by the relevant jurisdiction;

(3) for programs described in subsection (b)(2), organize an enforcement unit comprised of appropriately trained law enforcement professionals under the supervision of the State, tribal, or local criminal justice agency involved, the duties of which shall include—

(A) the verification of addresses and other contacts of each eligible participant who participates or desires to participate in the program; and

(B) if necessary, the location, apprehension, arrest, and return to court of an eligible participant in the program who has absconded from the facility of a treatment provider or has otherwise violated the terms and conditions of the program, consistent with Federal and State confidentiality requirements;

(4) notify the relevant criminal justice entity if any eligible participant in the program absconds from the facility of the treatment provider or otherwise violates the terms and conditions of the program, consistent with Federal and State confidentiality requirements;

(5) submit periodic reports on the progress of treatment or other measured outcomes from participation in the program of each eligible participant in the program to the relevant State, tribal, or local criminal justice agency;

(6) describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used to evaluate the program, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the program; and

(7) describe how the program could be broadly replicated if demonstrated to be effective.

(e) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity shall use a grant received under this section for expenses of a treatment alternative to incarceration program, including—

(1) salaries, personnel costs, equipment costs, and other costs directly related to the operation of the program, including the enforcement unit;

(2) payments for treatment providers that are approved by the relevant State or tribal

jurisdiction and licensed, if necessary, to provide needed treatment to eligible participants in the program, including medication assisted treatment, aftercare supervision, vocational training, education, and job placement;

(3) payments to public and nonprofit private entities that are approved by the State or tribal jurisdiction and licensed, if necessary, to provide alcohol and drug addiction treatment and mental health treatment to eligible participants in the program; and

(4) salaries, personnel costs, and other costs related to strategic planning among State and local government agencies.

(f) SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.—An eligible entity shall use Federal funds received under this section only to supplement the funds that would, in the absence of those Federal funds, be made available from other Federal and non-Federal sources for the activities described in this section, and not to supplant those funds.

(g) GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall ensure that, to the extent practicable, the geographical distribution of grants under this section is equitable and includes a grant to an eligible entity in—

(1) each State;

(2) rural, suburban, and urban areas; and

(3) tribal jurisdictions.

(h) PRIORITY CONSIDERATION WITH RESPECT TO STATES.—In awarding grants to States under this section, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall give priority to—

(1) a State that submits a joint application from the substance abuse agencies and criminal justice agencies of the State that proposes to use grant funds to facilitate or enhance planning and collaboration between the agencies, including coordination to better address the needs of incarcerated populations; and

(2) a State that—

(A) provides civil liability protection for first responders, health professionals, and family members who have received appropriate training in the administration of naloxone in administering naloxone to counteract opioid overdoses; and

(B) submits to the Secretary a certification by the attorney general of the State that the attorney general has—

(i) reviewed any applicable civil liability protection law to determine the applicability of the law with respect to first responders, health care professionals, family members, and other individuals who—

(I) have received appropriate training in the administration of naloxone; and

(II) may administer naloxone to individuals reasonably believed to be suffering from opioid overdose; and

(ii) concluded that the law described in subparagraph (A) provides adequate civil liability protection applicable to such persons.

(i) REPORTS AND EVALUATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each fiscal year, each recipient of a grant under this section during that fiscal year shall submit to the Secretary of Health and Human Services a report on the outcomes of activities carried out using that grant in such form, containing such information, and on such dates as the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall specify.

(2) CONTENTS.—A report submitted under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) describe best practices for treatment alternatives; and

(B) identify training requirements for law enforcement officers who participate in treatment alternative to incarceration programs.

(j) FUNDING.—During the 5-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services may carry out this section using not more than $5,000,000 each fiscal year of amounts appropriated to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration for Criminal Justice Activities. No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section.

SEC. 202. FIRST RESPONDER TRAINING FOR THE USE OF DRUGS AND DEVICES THAT RAPIDLY REVERSE THE EFFECTS OF OPIOIDS.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 103, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 2998. FIRST RESPONDER TRAINING FOR THE USE OF DRUGS AND DEVICES THAT RAPIDLY REVERSE THE EFFECTS OF OPIOIDS.

''(a) DEFINITION.—In this section—

''(1) the terms 'drug' and 'device' have the meanings given those terms in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321);

''(2) the term 'eligible entity' means a State, a unit of local government, or an Indian tribal government;

''(3) the term 'first responder' includes a firefighter, law enforcement officer, paramedic, emergency medical technician, or other individual (including an employee of a legally organized and recognized volunteer organization, whether compensated or not), who, in the course of professional duties, responds to fire, medical, hazardous material, or other similar emergencies;

''(4) the term 'opioid' means any drug having an addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability similar to morphine or being capable of conversion into a drug having such addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability; and

''(5) the term 'Secretary' means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

''(b) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary, in coordination with the Attorney General, may make grants to eligible entities to allow appropriately trained first responders to administer an opioid overdose reversal drug to an individual who has—

''(1) experienced a prescription opioid or heroin overdose; or

''(2) been determined to have likely experienced a prescription opioid or heroin overdose.

''(c) APPLICATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity seeking a grant under this section shall submit an application to the Secretary—

''(A) that meets the criteria under paragraph (2); and

''(B) at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary may require.

''(2) CRITERIA.—An eligible entity, in submitting an application under paragraph (1), shall—

''(A) describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used to evaluate the program funded with a grant under this section, and specifically explain how such measurements will provide valid measures of the impact of the program;

''(B) describe how the program could be broadly replicated if demonstrated to be effective;

''(C) identify the governmental and community agencies that the program will coordinate; and

''(D) describe how law enforcement agencies will coordinate with their corresponding State substance abuse and mental health agencies to identify protocols and resources that are available to overdose victims and families, including information on treatment and recovery resources.

''(d) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity shall use a grant received under this section to—

''(1) make such opioid overdose reversal drugs or devices that are approved by the Food and Drug Administration, such as naloxone, available to be carried and administered by first responders;

''(2) train and provide resources for first responders on carrying an opioid overdose reversal drug or device approved by the Food and Drug Administration, such as naloxone, and administering the drug or device to an individual who has experienced, or has been determined to have likely experienced, a prescription opioid or heroin overdose; and

''(3) establish processes, protocols, and mechanisms for referral to appropriate treatment.

''(e) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS.—The Secretary shall make a grant for the purpose of providing technical assistance and training on the use of an opioid overdose reversal drug, such as naloxone, to respond to an individual who has experienced, or has been determined to have likely experienced, a prescription opioid or heroin overdose, and mechanisms for referral to appropriate treatment for an eligible entity receiving a grant under this section.

''(f) EVALUATION.—The Secretary shall conduct an evaluation of grants made under this section to determine—

''(1) the number of first responders equipped with naloxone, or another opioid overdose reversal drug, for the prevention of fatal opioid and heroin overdose;

''(2) the number of opioid and heroin overdoses reversed by first responders receiving training and supplies of naloxone, or another opioid overdose reversal drug, through a grant received under this section;

''(3) the number of calls for service related to opioid and heroin overdose;

''(4) the extent to which overdose victims and families receive information about treatment services and available data describing treatment admissions; and

''(5) the research, training, and naloxone, or another opioid overdose reversal drug, supply needs of first responder agencies, including those agencies that are not receiving grants under this section.

''(g) RURAL AREAS WITH LIMITED ACCESS TO EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES.—In making grants under this section, the Secretary shall ensure that not less than 25 percent of grant funds are awarded to eligible entities that are not located in metropolitan statistical areas, as defined by the Office of Management and Budget.''.

SEC. 203. PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE BACK EXPANSION.

(a) DEFINITION OF COVERED ENTITY.—In this section, the term ''covered entity'' means—

(1) a State, local, or tribal law enforcement agency;

(2) a manufacturer, distributor, or reverse distributor of prescription medications;

(3) a retail pharmacy;

(4) a registered narcotic treatment program;

(5) a hospital or clinic with an onsite pharmacy;

(6) an eligible long-term care facility; or

(7) any other entity authorized by the Drug Enforcement Administration to dispose of prescription medications.

(b) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Attorney General, in coordination with the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, shall coordinate with covered entities in expanding or making available disposal sites for unwanted prescription medications.

SEC. 204. HEROIN AND METHAMPHETAMINE TASK FORCES.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 202, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 2999. HEROIN AND METHAMPHETAMINE TASK FORCES.

''(a) DEFINITION OF OPIOID.—In this section, the term 'opioid' means any drug having an addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability similar to morphine or being capable of conversion into a drug having such addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability.

''(b) AUTHORITY.—The Attorney General may make grants to State law enforcement agencies for investigative purposes—

''(1) to locate or investigate illicit activities through statewide collaboration, including activities related to—

''(A) the distribution of heroin or fentanyl, or the unlawful distribution of prescription opioids; or

''(B) unlawful heroin, fentanyl, and prescription opioid traffickers; and

''(2) to locate or investigate illicit activities, including precursor diversion, laboratories, or methamphetamine traffickers.''.

TITLE III—TREATMENT AND RECOVERY

SEC. 301. EVIDENCE-BASED PRESCRIPTION OPIOID AND HEROIN TREATMENT AND INTERVENTIONS DEMONSTRATION.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 204, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 2999A. EVIDENCE-BASED PRESCRIPTION OPIOID AND HEROIN TREATMENT AND INTERVENTIONS DEMONSTRATION.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

''(1) the terms 'Indian tribe' and 'tribal organization' have the meaning given those terms in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603));

''(2) the term 'medication assisted treatment' means the use, for problems relating to heroin and other opioids, of medications approved by the Food and Drug Administration in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies;

''(3) the term 'opioid' means any drug having an addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability similar to morphine or being capable of conversion into a drug having such addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability;

''(4) the term 'Secretary' means the Secretary of Health and Human Services; and

''(5) the term 'State substance abuse agency' means the agency of a State responsible for the State prevention, treatment, and recovery system, including management of the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant under subpart II of part B of title XIX of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300x–21 et seq.).

''(b) GRANTS.—

''(1) AUTHORITY TO MAKE GRANTS.—The Secretary, acting through the Director of the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and in coordination with the Attorney General and other departments or agencies, as appropriate, may award grants to State substance abuse agencies, units of local government, nonprofit organizations, and Indian tribes or tribal organizations that have a high rate, or have had a rapid increase, in the use of heroin or other opioids, in order to permit such entities to expand activities, including an expansion in the availability of medication assisted treatment and other clinically appropriate services, with respect to the treatment of addiction in the specific geographical areas of such entities where there is a high rate or rapid increase in the use of heroin or other opioids.

''(2) NATURE OF ACTIVITIES.—The grant funds awarded under paragraph (1) shall be used for activities that are based on reliable scientific evidence of efficacy in the treatment of problems related to heroin or other opioids.

''(c) GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION.—The Secretary shall ensure that grants awarded under subsection (b) are distributed equitably among the various regions of the United States and among rural, urban, and suburban areas that are affected by the use of heroin or other opioids.

''(d) ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES.—In administering grants under subsection (b), the Secretary shall—

''(1) evaluate the activities supported by grants awarded under subsection (b);

''(2) disseminate information, as appropriate, derived from the evaluation as the Secretary considers appropriate;

''(3) provide States, Indian tribes and tribal organizations, and providers with technical assistance in connection with the provision of treatment of problems related to heroin and other opioids; and

''(4) fund only those applications that specifically support recovery services as a critical component of the grant program.''.

SEC. 302. CRIMINAL JUSTICE MEDICATION ASSISTED TREATMENT AND INTERVENTIONS DEMONSTRATION.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term ''criminal justice agency'' means a State, local, or tribal—

(A) court;

(B) prison;

(C) jail; or

(D) other agency that performs the administration of criminal justice, including prosecution, pretrial services, and community supervision;

(2) the term ''eligible entity'' means a State, unit of local government, or Indian tribe; and

(3) the term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(b) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary, in coordination with the Attorney General, may make grants to eligible entities to implement medication assisted treatment programs through criminal justice agencies.

(c) APPLICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity seeking a grant under this section shall submit an application to the Secretary—

(A) that meets the criteria under paragraph (2); and

(B) at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary may require.

(2) CRITERIA.—An eligible entity, in submitting an application under paragraph (1), shall—

(A) certify that each medication assisted treatment program funded with a grant under this section has been developed in consultation with the Single State Authority for Substance Abuse (as defined in section 201(e) of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17521(e))); and

(B) describe how data will be collected and analyzed to determine the effectiveness of the program described in subparagraph (A).

(d) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity shall use a grant received under this section for expenses of—

(1) a medication assisted treatment program, including the expenses of prescribing medications recognized by the Food and Drug Administration for opioid treatment in conjunction with psychological and behavioral therapy;

(2) training criminal justice agency personnel and treatment providers on medication assisted treatment;

(3) cross-training personnel providing behavioral health and health services, administration of medicines, and other administrative expenses, including required reports; and

(4) the provision of recovery coaches who are responsible for providing mentorship and transition plans to individuals reentering society following incarceration or alternatives to incarceration.

(e) PRIORITY CONSIDERATION WITH RESPECT TO STATES.—In awarding grants to States under this section, the Secretary shall give priority to a State that—

(1) provides civil liability protection for first responders, health professionals, and family members who have received appropriate training in the administration of naloxone in administering naloxone to counteract opioid overdoses; and

(2) submits to the Secretary a certification by the attorney general of the State that the attorney general has—

(A) reviewed any applicable civil liability protection law to determine the applicability of the law with respect to first responders, health care professionals, family members, and other individuals who—

(i) have received appropriate training in the administration of naloxone; and

(ii) may administer naloxone to individuals reasonably believed to be suffering from opioid overdose; and

(B) concluded that the law described in subparagraph (A) provides adequate civil liability protection applicable to such persons.

(f) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary, in coordination with the Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the Attorney General, shall provide technical assistance and training for an eligible entity receiving a grant under this section.

(g) REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity receiving a grant under this section shall submit a report to the Secretary on the outcomes of each grant received under this section for individuals receiving medication assisted treatment, based on—

(A) the recidivism of the individuals;

(B) the treatment outcomes of the individuals, including maintaining abstinence from illegal, unauthorized, and unprescribed or undispensed opioids and heroin;

(C) a comparison of the cost of providing medication assisted treatment to the cost of incarceration or other participation in the criminal justice system;

(D) the housing status of the individuals; and

(E) the employment status of the individuals.

(2) CONTENTS AND TIMING.—Each report described in paragraph (1) shall be submitted annually in such form, containing such information, and on such dates as the Secretary shall specify.

(h) FUNDING.—During the 5-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary may carry out this section using not more than $5,000,000 each fiscal year of amounts appropriated to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration for Criminal Justice Activities. No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section.

SEC. 303. NATIONAL YOUTH RECOVERY INITIATIVE.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 301, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 2999B. NATIONAL YOUTH RECOVERY INITIATIVE.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term 'eligible entity' means—

''(A) a high school that has been accredited as a recovery high school by the Association of Recovery Schools;

''(B) an accredited high school that is seeking to establish or expand recovery support services;

''(C) an institution of higher education;

''(D) a recovery program at a nonprofit collegiate institution; or

''(E) a nonprofit organization.

''(2) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The term 'institution of higher education' has the meaning given the term in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

''(3) RECOVERY PROGRAM.—The term 'recovery program'—

''(A) means a program to help individuals who are recovering from substance use disorders to initiate, stabilize, and maintain healthy and productive lives in the community; and

''(B) includes peer-to-peer support and communal activities to build recovery skills and supportive social networks.

''(b) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services, in coordination with the Secretary of Education, may award grants to eligible entities to enable the entities to—

''(1) provide substance use disorder recovery support services to young people in high school and enrolled in institutions of higher education;

''(2) help build communities of support for young people in recovery through a spectrum of activities such as counseling and health- and wellness-oriented social activities; and

''(3) encourage initiatives designed to help young people achieve and sustain recovery from substance use disorders.

''(c) USE OF FUNDS.—Grants awarded under subsection (b) may be used for activities to develop, support, and maintain youth recovery support services, including—

''(1) the development and maintenance of a dedicated physical space for recovery programs;

''(2) dedicated staff for the provision of recovery programs;

''(3) health- and wellness-oriented social activities and community engagement;

''(4) establishment of recovery high schools;

''(5) coordination of recovery programs with—

''(A) substance use disorder treatment programs and systems;

''(B) providers of mental health services;

''(C) primary care providers and physicians;

''(D) the criminal justice system, including the juvenile justice system;

''(E) employers;

''(F) housing services;

''(G) child welfare services;

''(H) high schools and institutions of higher education; and

''(I) other programs or services related to the welfare of an individual in recovery from a substance use disorder;

''(6) the development of peer-to-peer support programs or services; and

''(7) additional activities that help youths and young adults to achieve recovery from substance use disorders.''.

SEC. 304. BUILDING COMMUNITIES OF RECOVERY.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 303, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 2999C. BUILDING COMMUNITIES OF RECOVERY.

''(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term 'recovery community organization' means an independent nonprofit organization that—

''(1) mobilizes resources within and outside of the recovery community to increase the prevalence and quality of long-term recovery from substance use disorders; and

''(2) is wholly or principally governed by people in recovery for substance use disorders who reflect the community served.

''(b) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services may award grants to recovery community organizations to enable such organizations to develop, expand, and enhance recovery services.

''(c) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of the costs of a program funded by a grant under this section may not exceed 50 percent.

''(d) USE OF FUNDS.—Grants awarded under subsection (b)—

''(1) shall be used to develop, expand, and enhance community and statewide recovery support services; and

''(2) may be used to—

''(A) advocate for individuals in recovery from substance use disorders;

''(B) build connections between recovery networks, between recovery community organizations, and with other recovery support services, including—

''(i) substance use disorder treatment programs and systems;

''(ii) providers of mental health services;

''(iii) primary care providers and physicians;

''(iv) the criminal justice system;

''(v) employers;

''(vi) housing services;

''(vii) child welfare agencies; and

''(viii) other recovery support services that facilitate recovery from substance use disorders;

''(C) reduce the stigma associated with substance use disorders;

''(D) conduct public education and outreach on issues relating to substance use disorders and recovery, including—

''(i) how to identify the signs of addiction;

''(ii) the resources that are available to individuals struggling with addiction and families who have a family member struggling with or being treated for addiction, including programs that mentor and provide support services to children;

''(iii) the resources that are available to help support individuals in recovery; and

''(iv) information on the medical consequences of substance use disorders, including neonatal abstinence syndrome and potential infection with human immunodeficiency virus and viral hepatitis; and

''(E) carry out other activities that strengthen the network of community support for individuals in recovery.''.

TITLE IV—ADDRESSING COLLATERAL CONSEQUENCES

SEC. 401. CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION DEMONSTRATION GRANT PROGRAM.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 304, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 2999D. CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION DEMONSTRATION GRANT PROGRAM.

''(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term 'eligible entity' means a State, unit of local government, nonprofit organization, or Indian tribe.

''(b) GRANT PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Attorney General may make grants to eligible entities to design, implement, and expand educational programs for offenders in prisons, jails, and juvenile facilities, including to pay for—

''(1) basic education, secondary level academic education, high school equivalency examination preparation, career technical education, and English language learner instruction at the basic, secondary, or post-secondary levels, for adult and juvenile populations;

''(2) screening and assessment of inmates to assess education level and needs, occupational interest or aptitude, risk level, and other needs, and case management services;

''(3) hiring and training of instructors and aides, reimbursement of non-corrections staff and experts, reimbursement of stipends paid to inmate tutors or aides, and the costs of training inmate tutors and aides;

''(4) instructional supplies and equipment, including occupational program supplies and equipment to the extent that the supplies and equipment are used for instructional purposes;

''(5) partnerships and agreements with community colleges, universities, and career technology education program providers;

''(6) certification programs providing recognized high school equivalency certificates and industry recognized credentials; and

''(7) technology solutions to—

''(A) meet the instructional, assessment, and information needs of correctional populations; and

''(B) facilitate the continued participation of incarcerated students in community-based education programs after the students are released from incarceration.

''(c) APPLICATION.—An eligible entity seeking a grant under this section shall submit to the Attorney General an application in such form and manner, at such time, and accompanied by such information as the Attorney General specifies.

''(d) PRIORITY CONSIDERATIONS.—In awarding grants under this section, the Attorney General shall give priority to applicants that—

''(1) assess the level of risk and need of inmates, including by—

''(A) assessing the need for English language learner instruction;

''(B) conducting educational assessments; and

''(C) assessing occupational interests and aptitudes;

''(2) target educational services to assessed needs, including academic and occupational at the basic, secondary, or post-secondary level;

''(3) target career and technology education programs to—

''(A) areas of identified occupational demand; and

''(B) employment opportunities in the communities in which students are reasonably expected to reside post-release;

''(4) include a range of appropriate educational opportunities at the basic, secondary, and post-secondary levels;

''(5) include opportunities for students to attain industry recognized credentials;

''(6) include partnership or articulation agreements linking institutional education programs with community sited programs provided by adult education program providers and accredited institutions of higher education, community colleges, and vocational training institutions; and

''(7) explicitly include career pathways models offering opportunities for incarcerated students to develop academic skills, in-demand occupational skills and credentials, occupational experience in institutional work programs or work release programs, and linkages with employers in the community, so that incarcerated students have opportunities to embark on careers with strong prospects for both post-release employment and advancement in a career ladder over time.

''(e) REQUIREMENTS.—An eligible entity seeking a grant under this section shall—

''(1) describe the evidence-based methodology and outcome measurements that will be used 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; and

''(2) describe how each program described in paragraph (1) could be broadly replicated if demonstrated to be effective.

''(f) CONTROL OF INTERNET ACCESS.—An entity that receives a grant under this section may restrict access to the Internet by prisoners, as appropriate and in accordance with Federal and State law, to ensure public safety.''.

SEC. 402. NATIONAL TASK FORCE ON RECOVERY AND COLLATERAL CONSEQUENCES.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''collateral consequence'' means a penalty, disability, or disadvantage imposed on an individual who is in recovery for a substance use disorder (including by an administrative agency, official, or civil court) as a result of a Federal or State conviction for a drug-related offense but not as part of the judgment of the court that imposes the conviction.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Attorney General shall establish a bipartisan task force to be known as the Task Force on Recovery and Collateral Consequences (in this section referred to as the ''Task Force'').

(2) MEMBERSHIP.—

(A) TOTAL NUMBER OF MEMBERS.—The Task Force shall include 10 members, who shall be appointed by the Attorney General in accordance with subparagraphs (B) and (C).

(B) MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE.—The Task Force shall include—

(i) members who have national recognition and significant expertise in areas such as health care, housing, employment, substance use disorders, mental health, law enforcement, and law;

(ii) not fewer than 2 members—

(I) who have personally experienced a substance abuse disorder or addiction and are in recovery; and

(II) not fewer than 1 of whom has benefitted from medication assisted treatment; and

(iii) to the extent practicable, members who formerly served as elected officials at the State and Federal levels.

(C) TIMING.—The Attorney General shall appoint the members of the Task Force not later than 60 days after the date on which the Task Force is established under paragraph (1).

(3) CHAIRPERSON.—The Task Force shall select a chairperson or co-chairpersons from among the members of the Task Force.

(c) DUTIES OF THE TASK FORCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Task Force shall—

(A) identify collateral consequences for individuals with Federal or State convictions for drug-related offenses who are in recovery for substance use disorder; and

(B) examine any policy basis for the imposition of collateral consequences identified under subparagraph (A) and the effect of the collateral consequences on individuals in recovery in resuming their personal and professional activities.

(2) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the first meeting of the Task Force, the Task Force shall develop recommendations, as it considers appropriate, for proposed legislative and regulatory changes related to the collateral consequences identified under paragraph (1).

(3) COLLECTION OF INFORMATION.—The Task Force shall hold hearings, require the testimony and attendance of witnesses, and secure information from any department or agency of the United States in performing the duties under paragraphs (1) and (2).

(4) REPORT.—

(A) SUBMISSION TO EXECUTIVE BRANCH.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the first meeting of the Task Force, the Task Force shall submit a report detailing the findings and recommendations of the Task Force to—

(i) the head of each relevant department or agency of the United States;

(ii) the President; and

(iii) the Vice President.

(B) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—The individuals who receive the report under subparagraph (A) shall submit to Congress such legislative recommendations, if any, as those individuals consider appropriate based on the report.

TITLE V—ADDICTION AND TREATMENT SERVICES FOR WOMEN, FAMILIES, AND VETERANS

SEC. 501. IMPROVING TREATMENT FOR PREGNANT AND POSTPARTUM WOMEN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 508 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb–1) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by inserting ''(referred to in this section as the 'Director')'' after ''Director of the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment''; and

(2) in subsection (p), in the first sentence—

(A) by striking ''Committee on Labor and Human Resources'' and inserting ''Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions''; and

(B) by inserting ''(other than subsection (r))'' after ''this section''.

(b) PILOT PROGRAM GRANTS FOR STATE SUBSTANCE ABUSE AGENCIES.—Section 508 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb–1) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (r); and

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

''(r) PILOT PROGRAM FOR STATE SUBSTANCE ABUSE AGENCIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall carry out a pilot program under which the Director makes competitive grants to State substance abuse agencies to—

''(A) enhance flexibility in the use of funds designed to support family-based services for pregnant and postpartum women with a primary diagnosis of a substance use disorder, including opioid use disorders;

''(B) help State substance abuse agencies address identified gaps in services furnished to such women along the continuum of care, including services provided to women in nonresidential based settings; and

''(C) promote a coordinated, effective, and efficient State system managed by State substance abuse agencies by encouraging new approaches and models of service delivery that are evidence-based, including effective family-based programs for women involved with the criminal justice system.

''(2) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out the pilot program under this subsection, the Director—

''(A) shall require State substance abuse agencies to submit to the Director applications, in such form and manner and containing such information as specified by the Director, to be eligible to receive a grant under the program;

''(B) shall identify, based on such submitted applications, State substance abuse agencies that are eligible for such grants;

''(C) shall require services proposed to be furnished through such a grant to support family-based treatment and other services for pregnant and postpartum women with a primary diagnosis of a substance use disorder, including opioid use disorders;

''(D) notwithstanding subsection (a)(1), shall not require that services furnished through such a grant be provided solely to women that reside in facilities; and

''(E) shall not require that grant recipients under the program make available all services described in subsection (d).

''(3) REQUIRED SERVICES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall specify minimum services required to be made available to eligible women through a grant awarded under the pilot program under this subsection. Such minimum services—

''(i) shall include the requirements described in subsection (c);

''(ii) may include any of the services described in subsection (d);

''(iii) may include other services, as appropriate; and

''(iv) shall be based on the recommendations submitted under subparagraph (B)

''(B) STAKEHOLDER INPUT.—The Director shall convene and solicit recommendations from stakeholders, including State substance abuse agencies, health care providers, persons in recovery from a substance use disorder, and other appropriate individuals, for the minimum services described in subparagraph (A).

''(4) DURATION.—The pilot program under this subsection shall not exceed 5 years.

''(5) EVALUATION AND REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Out of amounts made available to the Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, the Director of the Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, in cooperation with the recipients of grants under this subsection, shall conduct an evaluation of the pilot program under this subsection, beginning 1 year after the date on which a grant is first awarded under this subsection. The Director of the Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, in coordination with the Director of the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, not later than 120 days after completion of such evaluation, shall submit to the relevant Committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report on such evaluation.

''(B) CONTENTS.—The report to Congress under subparagraph (A) shall include, at a minimum, outcomes information from the pilot program, including any resulting reductions in the use of alcohol and other drugs, engagement in treatment services, retention in the appropriate level and duration of services, increased access to the use of drugs approved by the Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of substance use disorders in combination with counseling, and other appropriate measures.

''(6) DEFINITION OF STATE SUBSTANCE ABUSE AGENCY.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'State substance abuse agency' means, with respect to a State, the agency in such State that manages the substance abuse prevention and treatment block grant program under part B of title XIX.

''(s) FUNDING.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For the purpose of carrying out this section, there are authorized to be appropriated $15,900,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020.

''(2) LIMITATION.—Of the amounts made available under paragraph (1) to carry out this section, not more than 25 percent may be used each fiscal year to carry out subsection (r).''.

SEC. 502. REPORT ON GRANTS FOR FAMILY-BASED SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT.

Section 2925 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797s–4) is amended—

(1) by striking ''An entity'' and inserting ''(a) ENTITY REPORTS.—An entity''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(b) ATTORNEY GENERAL REPORT ON FAMILY-BASED SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT.—The Attorney General shall submit to Congress an annual report that describes the number of grants awarded under section 2921(1) and how such grants are used by the recipients for family-based substance abuse treatment programs that serve as alternatives to incarceration for custodial parents to receive treatment and services as a family.''.

SEC. 503. VETERANS' TREATMENT COURTS.

Section 2991(j)(1)(B)(ii) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797aa(j)(1)(B)(ii)), as amended by the Comprehensive Justice and Mental Health Act of 2015 (S. 993, 114th Congress), is amended—

(1) by inserting ''(I)'' after ''(ii)'';

(2) in subclause (I), as so designated, by striking the period and inserting ''; or''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(II) was discharged or released from such service under dishonorable conditions, if the reason for that discharge or release, if known, is attributable to a substance use disorder.''.

TITLE VI—INCENTIVIZING STATE COMPREHENSIVE INITIATIVES TO ADDRESS PRESCRIPTION OPIOID AND HEROIN ABUSE

SEC. 601. STATE DEMONSTRATION GRANTS FOR COMPREHENSIVE OPIOID ABUSE RESPONSE.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term ''dispenser'' has the meaning given the term in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802);

(2) the term ''prescriber'' means a dispenser who prescribes a controlled substance, or the agent of such a dispenser;

(3) the term ''prescriber of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance'' does not include a prescriber of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance that dispenses the substance—

(A) for use on the premises on which the substance is dispensed;

(B) in a hospital emergency room, when the substance is in short supply;

(C) for a certified opioid treatment program; or

(D) in other situations as the Attorney General may reasonably determine; and

(4) the term ''schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance'' means a controlled substance that is listed on schedule II, schedule III, or schedule IV of section 202(c) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812(c)).

(b) PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General, in coordination with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and in consultation with the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, may award grants to States, and combinations thereof, to prepare a comprehensive plan for and implement an integrated opioid abuse response initiative.

(2) PURPOSES.—A State receiving a grant under this section shall establish a comprehensive response to opioid abuse, which shall include—

(A) prevention and education efforts around heroin and opioid use, treatment, and recovery, including education of residents, medical students, and physicians and other prescribers of schedule II, III, or IV controlled substances on relevant prescribing guidelines and the prescription drug monitoring program of the State;

(B) a comprehensive prescription drug monitoring program to track dispensing of schedule II, III, or IV controlled substances, which shall—

(i) provide for data sharing with other States by statute, regulation, or interstate agreement; and

(ii) allow for access to all individuals authorized by the State to write prescriptions for schedule II, III, or IV controlled substances on the prescription drug monitoring program of the State;

(C) developing, implementing, or expanding prescription drug and opioid addiction treatment programs by—

(i) expanding programs for medication assisted treatment of prescription drug and opioid addiction, including training for treatment and recovery support providers;

(ii) developing, implementing, or expanding programs for behavioral health therapy for individuals who are in treatment for prescription drug and opioid addiction;

(iii) developing, implementing, or expanding programs to screen individuals who are in treatment for prescription drug and opioid addiction for hepatitis C and HIV, and provide treatment for those individuals if clinically appropriate; or

(iv) developing, implementing, or expanding programs that provide screening, early intervention, and referral to treatment (commonly known as ''SBIRT'') to teenagers and young adults in primary care, middle schools, high schools, universities, school-based health centers, and other community-based health care settings frequently accessed by teenagers or young adults; and

(D) developing, implementing, and expanding programs to prevent overdose death from prescription medications and opioids.

(3) PLANNING GRANT APPLICATIONS.—

(A) APPLICATION.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—A State seeking a planning grant under this section to prepare a comprehensive plan for an integrated opioid abuse response initiative shall submit to the Attorney General an application in such form, and containing such information, as the Attorney General may require.

(ii) REQUIREMENTS.—An application for a planning grant under this section shall, at a minimum, include—

(I) a budget and a budget justification for the activities to be carried out using the grant;

(II) a description of the activities proposed to be carried out using the grant, including a schedule for completion of such activities;

(III) outcome measures that will be used to measure the effectiveness of the programs and initiatives to address opioids; and

(IV) a description of the personnel necessary to complete such activities.

(B) PERIOD; NONRENEWABILITY.—A planning grant under this section shall be for a period of 1 year. A State may not receive more than 1 planning grant under this section.

(C) STRATEGIC PLAN AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.—A State receiving a planning grant under this section shall develop a strategic plan and a program implementation plan.

(4) IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS.—

(A) APPLICATION.—A State seeking an implementation grant under this section to implement a comprehensive strategy for addressing opioid abuse shall submit to the Attorney General an application in such form, and containing such information, as the Attorney General may require.

(B) USE OF FUNDS.—A State that receives an implementation grant under this section shall use the grant for the cost of carrying out an integrated opioid abuse response program in accordance with this section, including for technical assistance, training, and administrative expenses.

(C) REQUIREMENTS.—An integrated opioid abuse response program carried out using an implementation grant under this section shall—

(i) require that each prescriber of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance in the State—

(I) registers with the prescription drug monitoring program of the State; and

(II) consults the prescription drug monitoring program database of the State before prescribing a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance;

(ii) require that each dispenser of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance in the State—

(I) registers with the prescription drug monitoring program of the State;

(II) consults the prescription drug monitoring program database of the State before dispensing a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance; and

(III) reports to the prescription drug monitoring program of the State, at a minimum, each instance in which a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance is dispensed, with limited exceptions, as defined by the State, which shall indicate the prescriber by name and National Provider Identifier;

(iii) require that, not fewer than 4 times each year, the State agency or agencies that administer the prescription drug monitoring program of the State prepare and provide to each prescriber of a schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance an informational report that shows how the prescribing patterns of the prescriber compare to prescribing practices of the peers of the prescriber and expected norms;

(iv) if informational reports provided to a prescriber under clause (iii) indicate that the prescriber is repeatedly falling outside of expected norms or standard practices for the prescriber's field, direct the prescriber to educational resources on appropriate prescribing of controlled substances;

(v) ensure that the prescriber licensing board of the State receives a report describing any prescribers that repeatedly fall outside of expected norms or standard practices for the prescriber's field, as described in clause (iii);

(vi) require consultation with the Single State Authority for Substance Abuse (as defined in section 201(e) of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17521(e))); and

(vii) establish requirements for how data will be collected and analyzed to determine the effectiveness of the program.

(D) PERIOD.—An implementation grant under this section shall be for a period of 2 years.

(5) PRIORITY CONSIDERATIONS.—In awarding planning and implementation grants under this section, the Attorney General shall give priority to a State that—

(A)(i) provides civil liability protection for first responders, health professionals, and family members who have received appropriate training in the administration of naloxone in administering naloxone to counteract opioid overdoses; and

(ii) submits to the Attorney General a certification by the attorney general of the State that the attorney general has—

(I) reviewed any applicable civil liability protection law to determine the applicability of the law with respect to first responders, health care professionals, family members, and other individuals who—

(aa) have received appropriate training in the administration of naloxone; and

(bb) may administer naloxone to individuals reasonably believed to be suffering from opioid overdose; and

(II) concluded that the law described in subclause (I) provides adequate civil liability protection applicable to such persons;

(B) has in effect legislation or implements a policy under which the State shall not terminate, but may suspend, enrollment under the State plan for medical assistance under

title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) for an individual who is incarcerated for a period of fewer than 2 years;

(C) has a process for enrollment in services and benefits necessary by criminal justice agencies to initiate or continue treatment in the community, under which an individual who is incarcerated may, while incarcerated, enroll in services and benefits that are necessary for the individual to continue treatment upon release from incarceration;

(D) ensures the capability of data sharing with other States, such as by making data available to a prescription monitoring hub;

(E) ensures that data recorded in the prescription drug monitoring program database of the State is available within 24 hours, to the extent possible; and

(F) ensures that the prescription drug monitoring program of the State notifies prescribers and dispensers of schedule II, III, or IV controlled substances when overuse or misuse of such controlled substances by patients is suspected.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF FUNDING.—For each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020, the Attorney General may use, from any unobligated balances made available under the heading ''GENERAL ADMINISTRATION'' to the Department of Justice in an appropriation Act, such amounts as are necessary to carry out this section, not to exceed $5,000,000 per fiscal year.

TITLE VII—MISCELLANEOUS

SEC. 701. GAO REPORT ON IMD EXCLUSION.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''Medicaid Institutions for Mental Disease exclusion'' means the prohibition on Federal matching payments under Medicaid for patients who have attained age 22, but have not attained age 65, in an institution for mental diseases under subparagraph (B) of the matter following subsection (a) of section 1905 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d) and subsection (i) of such section.

(b) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report on the impact that the Medicaid Institutions for Mental Disease exclusion has on access to treatment for individuals with a substance use disorder.

(c) ELEMENTS.—The report required under subsection (b) shall include a review of what is known regarding—

(1) Medicaid beneficiary access to substance use disorder treatments in institutions for mental disease; and

(2) the quality of care provided to Medicaid beneficiaries treated in and outside of institutions for mental disease for substance use disorders.

SEC. 702. FUNDING.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.), as amended by section 401, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 2999E. FUNDING.

''There are authorized to be appropriated to the Attorney General and the Secretary of Health and Human Services to carry out this part $62,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020.''.

SEC. 703. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.) is amended—

(1) in the part heading, by striking ''**CONFRONTING USE OF METHAMPHETAMINE**'' and inserting ''**COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY**''; and

(2) in section 2996(a)(1), by striking ''this part'' and inserting ''this section''.

SEC. 704. GRANT ACCOUNTABILITY.

(a) GRANTS UNDER PART II OF TITLE I OF THE OMNIBUS CRIME CONTROL AND SAFE STREETS ACT OF 1968.—Part II of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.); as amended by section 702, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 2999F. GRANT ACCOUNTABILITY.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

''(1) the term 'applicable committees'—

''(A) with respect to the Attorney General and any other official of the Department of Justice, means—

''(i) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate; and

''(ii) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives; and

''(B) with respect to the Secretary of Health and Human Services and any other official of the Department of Health and Human Services, means—

''(i) the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate; and

''(ii) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives;

''(2) the term 'covered agency' means—

''(A) the Department of Justice; and

''(B) the Department of Health and Human Services; and

''(3) the term 'covered official' means—

''(A) the Attorney General; and

''(B) the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

''(b) ACCOUNTABILITY.—All grants awarded by a covered official under this part shall be subject to the following accountability provisions:

''(1) AUDIT REQUIREMENT.—

''(A) DEFINITION.—In this paragraph, the term 'unresolved audit finding' means a finding in the final audit report of the Inspector General of a covered agency that the audited grantee has utilized grant funds for an unauthorized expenditure or otherwise unallowable cost that is not closed or resolved within 12 months after the date on which the final audit report is issued.

''(B) AUDIT.—Beginning in the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this section, and in each fiscal year thereafter, the Inspector General of a covered agency shall conduct audits of recipients of grants awarded by the applicable covered official under this part to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse of funds by grantees. The Inspector General shall determine the appropriate number of grantees to be audited each year.

''(C) MANDATORY EXCLUSION.—A recipient of grant funds under this part that is found to have an unresolved audit finding shall not be eligible to receive grant funds under this part during the first 2 fiscal years beginning after the end of the 12-month period described in subparagraph (A).

''(D) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this part, a covered official shall give priority to eligible applicants that did not have an unresolved audit finding during the 3 fiscal years before submitting an application for a grant under this part.

''(E) REIMBURSEMENT.—If an entity is awarded grant funds under this part during the 2-fiscal-year period during which the entity is barred from receiving grants under subparagraph (C), the covered official that awarded the grant funds shall—

''(i) deposit an amount equal to the amount of the grant funds that were improperly awarded to the grantee into the General Fund of the Treasury; and

''(ii) seek to recoup the costs of the repayment to the fund from the grant recipient that was erroneously awarded grant funds.

''(2) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION REQUIREMENTS.—

''(A) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this paragraph and the grant programs under this part, the term 'nonprofit organization' means an organization that is described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of such Code.

''(B) PROHIBITION.—A covered official may not award a grant under this part to a nonprofit organization that holds money in offshore accounts for the purpose of avoiding paying the tax described in section 511(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

''(C) DISCLOSURE.—Each nonprofit organization that is awarded a grant under this part and uses the procedures prescribed in regulations to create a rebuttable presumption of reasonableness for the compensation of its officers, directors, trustees, and key employees, shall disclose to the applicable covered official, in the application for the grant, the process for determining such compensation, including the independent persons involved in reviewing and approving such compensation, the comparability data used, and contemporaneous substantiation of the deliberation and decision. Upon request, a covered official shall make the information disclosed under this subparagraph available for public inspection.

''(3) CONFERENCE EXPENDITURES.—

''(A) LIMITATION.—No amounts made available to a covered official under this part may be used by the covered official, or by any individual or entity awarded discretionary funds through a cooperative agreement under this part, to host or support any expenditure for conferences that uses more than $20,000 in funds made available by the covered official, unless the covered official provides prior written authorization that the funds may be expended to host the conference.

''(B) WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION.—Written authorization under subparagraph (A) shall include a written estimate of all costs associated with the conference, including the cost of all food, beverages, audio-visual equipment, honoraria for speakers, and entertainment.

''(C) REPORT.—

''(i) DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.—The Deputy Attorney General shall submit to the applicable committees an annual report on all conference expenditures approved by the Attorney General under this paragraph.

''(ii) DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.—The Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services shall submit to the applicable committees an annual report on all conference expenditures approved by the Secretary of Health and Human Services under this paragraph.

''(4) ANNUAL CERTIFICATION.—Beginning in the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this section, each covered official shall submit to the applicable committees an annual certification—

''(A) indicating whether—

''(i) all audits issued by the Office of the Inspector General of the applicable agency under paragraph (1) have been completed and reviewed by the appropriate Assistant Attorney General or Director, or the appropriate official of the Department of Health and Human Services, as applicable;

''(ii) all mandatory exclusions required under paragraph (1)(C) have been issued; and

''(iii) all reimbursements required under paragraph (1)(E) have been made; and

''(B) that includes a list of any grant recipients excluded under paragraph (1) from the previous year.

''(c) PREVENTING DUPLICATIVE GRANTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Before a covered official awards a grant to an applicant under this part, the covered official shall compare potential grant awards with other grants

awarded under this part by the covered official to determine if duplicate grant awards are awarded for the same purpose.

''(2) REPORT.—If a covered official awards duplicate grants to the same applicant for the same purpose, the covered official shall submit to the applicable committees a report that includes—

''(A) a list of all duplicate grants awarded, including the total dollar amount of any duplicate grants awarded; and

''(B) the reason the covered official awarded the duplicate grants.''.

(b) OTHER GRANTS.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection—

(A) the term ''applicable committees''—

(i) with respect to the Attorney General and any other official of the Department of Justice, means—

(I) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate; and

(II) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives; and

(ii) with respect to the Secretary of Health and Human Services and any other official of the Department of Health and Human Services, means—

(I) the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate; and

(II) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives;

(B) the term ''covered agency'' means—

(i) the Department of Justice; and

(ii) the Department of Health and Human Services;

(C) the term ''covered grant'' means a grant under section 201, 302, or 601 of this Act or section 508 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb–1) (as amended by section 501 of this Act); and

(D) the term ''covered official'' means—

(i) the Attorney General; and

(ii) the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(2) ACCOUNTABILITY.—All covered grants awarded by a covered official shall be subject to the following accountability provisions:

(A) AUDIT REQUIREMENT.—

(i) DEFINITION.—In this subparagraph, the term ''unresolved audit finding'' means a finding in the final audit report of the Inspector General of a covered agency that the audited grantee has utilized grant funds for an unauthorized expenditure or otherwise unallowable cost that is not closed or resolved within 12 months after the date on which the final audit report is issued.

(ii) AUDIT.—Beginning in the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this Act, and in each fiscal year thereafter, the Inspector General of a covered agency shall conduct audits of recipients of covered grants awarded by the applicable covered official to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse of funds by grantees. The Inspector General shall determine the appropriate number of grantees to be audited each year.

(iii) MANDATORY EXCLUSION.—A recipient of covered grant funds that is found to have an unresolved audit finding shall not be eligible to receive covered grant funds during the first 2 fiscal years beginning after the end of the 12-month period described in clause (i).

(iv) PRIORITY.—In awarding covered grants, a covered official shall give priority to eligible applicants that did not have an unresolved audit finding during the 3 fiscal years before submitting an application for a covered grant.

(v) REIMBURSEMENT.—If an entity is awarded covered grant funds during the 2-fiscal-year period during which the entity is barred from receiving grants under clause (iii), the covered official that awarded the funds shall—

(I) deposit an amount equal to the amount of the grant funds that were improperly awarded to the grantee into the General Fund of the Treasury; and

(II) seek to recoup the costs of the repayment to the fund from the grant recipient that was erroneously awarded grant funds.

(B) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION REQUIREMENTS.—

(i) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this subparagraph and the covered grant programs, the term ''nonprofit organization'' means an organization that is described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of such Code.

(ii) PROHIBITION.—A covered official may not award a covered grant to a nonprofit organization that holds money in offshore accounts for the purpose of avoiding paying the tax described in section 511(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(iii) DISCLOSURE.—Each nonprofit organization that is awarded a covered grant and uses the procedures prescribed in regulations to create a rebuttable presumption of reasonableness for the compensation of its officers, directors, trustees, and key employees, shall disclose to the applicable covered official, in the application for the grant, the process for determining such compensation, including the independent persons involved in reviewing and approving such compensation, the comparability data used, and contemporaneous substantiation of the deliberation and decision. Upon request, a covered official shall make the information disclosed under this clause available for public inspection.

(C) CONFERENCE EXPENDITURES.—

(i) LIMITATION.—No amounts made available to a covered official under a covered grant program may be used by the covered official, or by any individual or entity awarded discretionary funds through a cooperative agreement under a covered grant program, to host or support any expenditure for conferences that uses more than $20,000 in funds made available by the covered official, unless the covered official provides prior written authorization that the funds may be expended to host the conference.

(ii) WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION.—Written authorization under clause (i) shall include a written estimate of all costs associated with the conference, including the cost of all food, beverages, audio-visual equipment, honoraria for speakers, and entertainment.

(iii) REPORT.—

(I) DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.—The Deputy Attorney General shall submit to the applicable committees an annual report on all conference expenditures approved by the Attorney General under this subparagraph.

(II) DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.—The Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services shall submit to the applicable committees an annual report on all conference expenditures approved by the Secretary of Health and Human Services under this subparagraph.

(D) ANNUAL CERTIFICATION.—Beginning in the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this Act, each covered official shall submit to the applicable committees an annual certification—

(i) indicating whether—

(I) all audits issued by the Office of the Inspector General of the applicable agency under subparagraph (A) have been completed and reviewed by the appropriate Assistant Attorney General or Director, or the appropriate official of the Department of Health and Human Services, as applicable;

(II) all mandatory exclusions required under subparagraph (A)(iii) have been issued; and

(III) all reimbursements required under subparagraph (A)(v) have been made; and

(ii) that includes a list of any grant recipients excluded under subparagraph (A) from the previous year.

(3) PREVENTING DUPLICATIVE GRANTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Before a covered official awards a covered grant to an applicant, the covered official shall compare potential grant awards with other covered grants awarded by the covered official to determine if duplicate grant awards are awarded for the same purpose.

(B) REPORT.—If a covered official awards duplicate grants to the same applicant for the same purpose, the covered official shall submit to the applicable committees a report that includes—

(i) a list of all duplicate grants awarded, including the total dollar amount of any duplicate grants awarded; and

(ii) the reason the covered official awarded the duplicate grants.

SA 3379. Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. MENENDEZ) 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 appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. FUNDING FOR OPIOID AND HEROIN ABUSE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Opioid and Heroin Abuse Crisis Investment Act''.

(b) FUNDING.—There are authorized to be appropriated, and are appropriated, out of monies in the Treasury not otherwise obligated, $1,164,600,000 for the period of fiscal years 2017 and 2018, to improve opioid prescribing practices to reduce opioid use disorders and overdose, to be made available in accordance with this section.

(c) STATE TARGETED RESPONSE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—Subpart 1 of part B of title V of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 509 the following:

''SEC. 510. STATE TARGETED RESPONSE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall enter into additional targeted response cooperative agreements with States under this title to expand opioid treatment capacity and make services more affordable to those who cannot afford such services.

''(b) AWARDING OF FUNDING.—The Secretary shall allocate funding to States under this section based on—

''(1) the severity of the opioid epidemic in the State; and

''(2) the strength of the strategy of the State to respond to such epidemic.

''(c) USE OF FUNDS.—Amounts received by a State under this section shall be used to expand treatment capacity and make services more affordable to those who cannot afford such services and to help individuals seek treatment, successfully complete treatment, and sustain recovery.

''(d) FUNDING.—From amounts appropriated under subsection (b) of the Opioid and Heroin Abuse Crisis Investment Act, there shall be made available to carry out this section, $460,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2017 and 2018.''.

(d) TREATMENT FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE AND HEROIN USE.—Section 331(b) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254d(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(3)(A) The Secretary shall use amounts made available under subparagraph (B) to

support enhanced loan repayment awards to increase the number of clinicians in the Corps with medication assisted treatment training to treat individuals with opioid use disorders through loan repayments to clinicians.

''(B) From amounts appropriated under subsection (b) of the Opioid and Heroin Abuse Crisis Investment Act, there shall be made available to carry out this paragraph, $25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2017 and 2018.''.

(e) EVALUATION OF MEDICATION-ASSISTED TREATMENT.—Subpart 1 of part B of title V of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 510, as added by subsection (c)) the following:

''SEC. 511. EVALUATION OF MEDICATION-ASSISTED TREATMENT.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—In order to assess the treatment outcomes of patients with opioid addiction receiving medication-assisted treatment, the Secretary shall evaluate the short, medium, and long-term outcomes of such substance abuse treatment programs in order to increase effectiveness in reducing opioid use disorders, overdose, and death.

''(b) FUNDING.—From amounts appropriated under subsection (b) of the Opioid and Heroin Abuse Crisis Investment Act, there shall be made available to carry out this section, $15,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2017 and 2018.''.

(f) MEDICATION-ASSISTED TREATMENT FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUG AND OPIOID ADDICTION.—Section 509 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb-2) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (f) as subsection (g); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (e), the following:

''(f) MEDICATION-ASSISTED TREATMENT FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUG AND OPIOID ADDICTION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall use amounts made available under paragraph (3) to award grants to States to expand or enhance medication assisted treatment utilizing medications approved by the Food and Drug Administration in combination with psychosocial services, recovery support services, and coordination with HIV or hepatitis C direct services.

''(2) FUNDING.—From amounts appropriated under subsection (b) of the Opioid and Heroin Abuse Crisis Investment Act, there shall be made available to carry out this subsection, $50,100,000 for fiscal year 2017.''.

(g) BUPRENORPHINE-PRESCRIBING AUTHORITY DEMONSTRATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—To increase the availability of medication-assisted treatment services for prescription drug and opioid addiction, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall use amounts made available under paragraph (3) to establish a demonstration project to test the safety and effectiveness of allowing the prescribing of buprenorphine by non-physician advance practice providers in accordance with the providers' prescribing authority under applicable State law.

(2) TARGETING.—In carrying out the demonstration project under paragraph (1), the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall target populations and geographic areas that are most affected by both high-need and limited access to physicians authorized to prescribe buprenorphine.

(3) FUNDING.—From amounts appropriated under subsection (b) of the Opioid and Heroin Abuse Crisis Investment Act, there shall be made available to carry out this subsection, $10,000,000 for fiscal year 2017.

(4) DEMONSTRATION PROJECT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (B)(i) of section 303(g)(2) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(g)(2)(B)(i)), the Secretary of Health and Human Services may, using amounts made available in this Act to carry out title V of the Public Health Service Act, establish and carry out a demonstration project through fiscal year 2021 in which, for purposes of prescribing buprenorphine under such section 303(g)(2), the term ''practitioner'' shall be deemed to include non-physician providers authorized to prescribe buprenorphine by the jurisdiction in which the provider is licensed and who meet such criteria as determined appropriate by the Secretary, in consultation with the Attorney General, for participation in the project.

(B) LIMITATION.—In implementing the demonstration project under subparagraph (A), the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Attorney General shall not be subject to the requirements of section 553 of title 5, United States Code.

(C) GRANTS.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services may enter into grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements with one or more research institutions, and public and nonprofit entities to assist in carrying out the demonstration project under subparagraph (A). Amounts available for fiscal year 2016 to the Attorney General for carrying out such section 303 of the Controlled Substances Act shall also be available to the Attorney General to facilitate and support the efficient operation of the demonstration project under this paragraph.

(D) TERMINATION OF AUTHORITY.—Any authority provided under this paragraph for a provider to prescribe buprenorphine shall end not later than the date on which such provider ceases to participate in the demonstration project under this paragraph.

(h) DISSEMINATION OF GUIDELINES FOR PREVENTING PRESCRIPTION DRUG OVERDOSE.—Section 317 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247b) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(n) DISSEMINATION OF GUIDELINES FOR PREVENTING PRESCRIPTION DRUG OVERDOSE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shall disseminate guidelines to improve opioid prescribing practices to reduce opioid use disorders and overdose.

''(2) USE OF FUNDS.—In carrying out this subsection, the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shall use amounts made available under paragraph (3) to—

''(A) pilot test, evaluate, and adapt comprehensive tools and dissemination strategies to convey opioid prescribing guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in succinct, usable formats accessible to health care providers;

''(B) develop, evaluate, and publicly disseminate clinical decision support tools derived from the opioid prescribing guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;

''(C) establish training modules in partnership with professional societies and health systems, including online modules available for continuing medical education credits and maintenance of certification; and

''(D) coordinate with Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology to ensure that guidelines developed under this subsection are effectively disseminated and translated into clinical support tools for integration into clinical workflow.

''(3) FUNDING.—From amounts appropriated under subsection (b) of the Opioid and Heroin Abuse Crisis Investment Act, there shall be made available to carry out this subsection, $10,000,000 for fiscal year 2017.''.

(i) RURAL OPIOID OVERDOSE REVERSAL GRANT PROGRAM.—Section 330A of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254c) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (j) as subsection (k); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (i), the following:

''(j) RURAL OPIOID OVERDOSE REVERSAL GRANT PROGRAM.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director may award grants to eligible entities to implement activities for the prevention, intervention, and treatment of opioid misuse and overdose.

''(2) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive a grant under this subsection, an entity—

''(A) shall be a rural public or rural nonprofit private entity; and

''(B) shall represent a network composed of participants—

''(i) that include 3 or more health care providers; and

''(ii) that may be nonprofit or for-profit entities.

''(3) USE OF FUNDS.—Amounts awarded under a grant under this subsection shall be used—

''(A) to provide opioid misuse education and prevention services;

''(B) to provide training to licensed health care professionals and first responders in the recognition of the signs of opioid overdose and learn the appropriate way to administer naloxone;

''(C) to provide appropriate transportation services to a hospital or clinic for continued care after administration;

''(D) to refer those individuals with a drug dependency to an appropriate substance use disorder treatment centers where care coordination is provided by a team of providers; and

''(E) to purchase naloxone and opioid overdose reversal devices.

''(4) FUNDING.—From amounts appropriated under subsection (b) of the Opioid and Heroin Abuse Crisis Investment Act, there shall be made available to carry out this subsection, $10,000,000 for fiscal year 2017.''.

(j) PRESCRIPTION DRUG OVERDOSE INITIATIVE.—Section 3001(c) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300jj-11(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(9) PRESCRIPTION DRUG OVERDOSE INITIATIVE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through the National Coordinator, shall use amounts made available under subparagraph (B) to expand efforts to harmonize technical standards to support prescription drug monitoring programs and health information technology interoperability.

''(B) FUNDING.—From amounts appropriated under subsection (b) of the Opioid and Heroin Abuse Crisis Investment Act, there shall be made available to carry out this subsection, $5,000,000 for fiscal year 2017.''.

(k) BUREAU OF PRISONS TREATMENT PROGRAMS.—Section 4042 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(e) TREATMENT PROGRAMS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Bureau of Prisons shall use amounts made available under paragraph (2) to support drug treatment programs within the Bureau of Prisons, including expanding the medication-assisted treatment pilot.

''(2) FUNDING.—From amounts appropriated under subsection (b) of the Opioid and Heroin Abuse Crisis Investment Act, there shall be made available to carry out this subsection, $3,000,000 for fiscal year 2017.''.

(l) SECOND CHANCE ACT OF 2007.—Section 201 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17521) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (f) as subsection (g); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (e), the following:

''(f) COMMUNITY REINTEGRATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General shall use amounts made available under paragraph (2) to carry out activities to reduce recidivism and increase public safety by helping justice-involved individuals successfully reintegrate into the community, including by carrying out activities including providing treatment for co-occurring disorders and providing family-based substance abuse treatment.

''(2) FUNDING.—From amounts appropriated under subsection (b) of the Opioid and Heroin Abuse Crisis Investment Act, there shall be made available to carry out this subsection, $50,000,000 for fiscal year 2017.''.

(m) RESIDENTIAL SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT.—Section 503 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 873) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(e)(1) In carrying out this section, the Attorney General may use amounts made available under paragraph (2) to provide support for State, local, and tribal governments in the development of residential and aftercare services for substance-involved inmates.

''(2) From amounts appropriated under subsection (b) of the Opioid and Heroin Abuse Crisis Investment Act, there shall be made available to carry out this subsection, $14,000,000 for fiscal year 2017.''.

(n) HEROIN ENFORCEMENT GROUPS.—Part E of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 871 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 521. HEROIN ENFORCEMENT GROUPS.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General shall use amounts made available under subsection (b) to establish new heroin enforcement groups with the Drug Enforcement Administration to target, disrupt, and dismantle heroin trafficking organizations.

''(b) FUNDING.—From amounts appropriated under subsection (b) of the Opioid and Heroin Abuse Crisis Investment Act, there shall be made available to carry out this section, $12,500,000 for fiscal year 2017.''.

(o) EMERGENCY DESIGNATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—This section is designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 4(g) of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (2 U.S.C. 933(g)).

(2) DESIGNATION IN SENATE.—In the Senate, this section is designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 403(a) of S. Con. Res. 13 (111th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2010.

SA 3380. Mr. TESTER 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. ___. GRANTS FOR DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVES TO OPIOID DRUGS.

Section 409J of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 284q) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(c) GRANTS FOR DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVES TO OPIOID DRUGS.—The Director of NIH may award grants in collaboration with the Pain Consortium for increasing research and development opportunities to accelerate the development of drugs that are alternatives to opioids for effective pain treatments.''.

SA 3381. Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Mr. PAUL) 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—TREAT ACT

SEC. 801. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Recovery Enhancement for Addiction Treatment Act'' or the ''TREAT Act''.

SEC. 802. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Overdoses from opioids have increased dramatically in the United States.

(2) Deaths from drug overdose, largely from prescription pain relievers, have tripled among men and increased five-fold among women over the past decade.

(3) Nationwide, drug overdoses now claim more lives than car accidents.

(4) Opioid addiction is a chronic disease that, untreated, places a large burden on the healthcare system. Roughly 475,000 emergency room visits each year are attributable to the misuse and abuse of opioid pain medication.

(5) Effective medication-assisted treatment for opioid addiction, in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies, can decrease overdose deaths, be cost-effective, reduce transmissions of HIV and viral hepatitis, and reduce other social harms such as criminal activity.

(6) Effective medication-assisted treatment programs for opioid addiction should include multiple components, including medications, cognitive and behavioral supports and interventions, and drug testing.

(7) Effective medication-assisted treatment programs for opioid addiction may use a team of staff members, in addition to a prescribing provider, to deliver comprehensive care.

(8) Access to medication-assisted treatments, including office-based buprenorphine opioid treatment, remains limited in part due to current practice regulations and an insufficient number of providers.

(9) More than 10 years of experience in the United States with office-based buprenorphine opioid treatment has informed best practices for delivering successful, high quality care.

SEC. 803. EXPANSION OF PATIENT LIMITS UNDER WAIVER.

Section 303(g)(2)(B) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(g)(2)(B)) is amended—

(1) in clause (i), by striking ''physician'' and inserting ''practitioner'';

(2) in clause (iii)—

(A) by striking ''30'' and inserting ''100''; and

(B) by striking '', unless, not sooner'' and all that follows through the end and inserting a period; and

(3) by inserting at the end the following new clause:

''(iv) Not earlier than 1 year after the date on which a qualifying practitioner obtained an initial waiver pursuant to clause (iii), the qualifying practitioner may submit a second notification to the Secretary of the need and intent of the qualifying practitioner to treat an unlimited number of patients, if the qualifying practitioner—

''(I)(aa) satisfies the requirements of item (aa), (bb), (cc), or (dd) of subparagraph (G)(ii)(I); and

''(bb) agrees to fully participate in the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program of the State in which the qualifying practitioner is licensed, pursuant to applicable State guidelines; or

''(II)(aa) satisfies the requirements of item (ee), (ff), or (gg) of subparagraph (G)(ii)(I);

''(bb) agrees to fully participate in the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program of the State in which the qualifying practitioner is licensed, pursuant to applicable State guidelines;

''(cc) practices in a qualified practice setting; and

''(dd) has completed not less than 24 hours of training (through classroom situations, seminars at professional society meetings, electronic communications, or otherwise) with respect to the treatment and management of opiate-dependent patients for substance use disorders provided by the American Society of Addiction Medicine, the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry, the American Medical Association, the American Osteopathic Association, the American Psychiatric Association, or any other organization that the Secretary determines is appropriate for purposes of this subclause.''.

SEC. 804. DEFINITIONS.

Section 303(g)(2)(G) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(g)(2)(G)) is amended—

(1) by striking clause (ii) and inserting the following:

''(ii) The term 'qualifying practitioner' means the following:

''(I) A physician who is licensed under State law and who meets 1 or more of the following conditions:

''(aa) The physician holds a board certification in addiction psychiatry from the American Board of Medical Specialties.

''(bb) The physician holds an addiction certification from the American Society of Addiction Medicine.

''(cc) The physician holds a board certification in addiction medicine from the American Osteopathic Association.

''(dd) The physician holds a board certification from the American Board of Addiction Medicine.

''(ee) The physician has completed not less than 8 hours of training (through classroom situations, seminars at professional society meetings, electronic communications, or otherwise) with respect to the treatment and management of opiate-dependent patients for substance use disorders provided by the American Society of Addiction Medicine, the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry, the American Medical Association, the American Osteopathic Association, the American Psychiatric Association, or any other organization that the Secretary determines is appropriate for purposes of this subclause.

''(ff) The physician has participated as an investigator in 1 or more clinical trials leading to the approval of a narcotic drug in schedule III, IV, or V for maintenance or detoxification treatment, as demonstrated by a statement submitted to the Secretary by this sponsor of such approved drug.

''(gg) The physician has such other training or experience as the Secretary determines will demonstrate the ability of the physician to treat and manage opiate-dependent patients.

''(II) A nurse practitioner or physician assistant who is licensed under State law and meets all of the following conditions:

''(aa) The nurse practitioner or physician assistant is licensed under State law to prescribe schedule III, IV, or V medications for pain.

''(bb) The nurse practitioner or physician assistant satisfies 1 or more of the following:

''(AA) Has completed not fewer than 24 hours of training (through classroom situations, seminars at professional society meetings, electronic communications, or otherwise) with respect to the treatment and

management of opiate-dependent patients for substance use disorders provided by the American Society of Addiction Medicine, the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry, the American Medical Association, the American Osteopathic Association, the American Psychiatric Association, or any other organization that the Secretary determines is appropriate for purposes of this subclause.

''(BB) Has such other training or experience as the Secretary determines will demonstrate the ability of the nurse practitioner or physician assistant to treat and manage opiate-dependent patients.

''(cc) The nurse practitioner or physician assistant practices under the supervision of a licensed physician who holds an active waiver to prescribe schedule III, IV, or V narcotic medications for opioid addiction therapy, and—

''(AA) the supervising physician satisfies the conditions of item (aa), (bb), (cc), or (dd) of subclause (I); or

''(BB) both the supervising physician and the nurse practitioner or physician assistant practice in a qualified practice setting.

''(III) A nurse practitioner who is licensed under State law and meets all of the following conditions:

''(aa) The nurse practitioner is licensed under State law to prescribe schedule III, IV, or V medications for pain.

''(bb) The nurse practitioner has training or experience that the Secretary determines demonstrates specialization in the ability to treat opiate-dependent patients, such as a certification in addiction specialty accredited by the American Board of Nursing Specialties or the National Commission for Certifying Agencies, or a certification in addiction nursing as a Certified Addiction Registered Nurse—Advanced Practice.

''(cc) In accordance with State law, the nurse practitioner prescribes opioid addiction therapy in collaboration with a physician who holds an active waiver to prescribe schedule III, IV, or V narcotic medications for opioid addiction therapy.

''(dd) The nurse practitioner practices in a qualified practice setting.''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(iii) The term 'qualified practice setting' means 1 or more of the following treatment settings:

''(I) A National Committee for Quality Assurance-recognized Patient-Centered Medical Home or Patient-Centered Specialty Practice.

''(II) A Centers for Medicaid & Medicare Services-recognized Accountable Care Organization.

''(III) A clinical facility administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Defense, or Indian Health Service.

''(IV) A Behavioral Health Home accredited by the Joint Commission.

''(V) A Federally-qualified health center (as defined in section 1905(l)(2)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(l)(2)(B))) or a Federally-qualified health center look-alike.

''(VI) A Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services-certified Opioid Treatment Program.

''(VII) A clinical program of a State or Federal jail, prison, or other facility where individuals are incarcerated.

''(VIII) A clinic that demonstrates compliance with the Model Policy on DATA 2000 and Treatment of Opioid Addiction in the Medical Office issued by the Federation of State Medical Boards.

''(IX) A treatment setting that is part of an Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine, or American Osteopathic Association-accredited residency or fellowship training program.

''(X) Any other practice setting approved by a State regulatory board or State Medicaid Plan to provide addiction treatment services.

''(XI) Any other practice setting approved by the Secretary.''.

SEC. 805. GAO EVALUATION.

Two years after the date on which the first notification under clause (iv) of section 303(g)(2)(B) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(g)(2)(B)), as added by this title, is received by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Comptroller General of the United States shall initiate an evaluation of the effectiveness of the amendments made by this title, which shall include an evaluation of—

(1) any changes in the availability and use of medication-assisted treatment for opioid addiction;

(2) the quality of medication-assisted treatment programs;

(3) the integration of medication-assisted treatment with routine healthcare services;

(4) diversion of opioid addiction treatment medication;

(5) changes in State or local policies and legislation relating to opioid addiction treatment;

(6) the use of nurse practitioners and physician assistants who prescribe opioid addiction medication;

(7) the use of Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs by waived practitioners to maximize safety of patient care and prevent diversion of opioid addiction medication;

(8) the findings of Drug Enforcement Administration inspections of waived practitioners, including the frequency with which the Drug Enforcement Administration finds no documentation of access to behavioral health services; and

(9) the effectiveness of cross-agency collaboration between Department of Health and Human Services and the Drug Enforcement Administration for expanding effective opioid addiction treatment.

SA 3382. Mr. MARKEY (for himself and 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:

SEC. ___. CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN PRACTITIONERS PRESCRIBING CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES.

Section 303 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823) is amended—

(1) in subsection (f), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''The Attorney General shall register'' and inserting ''Subject to subsection (j), the Attorney General shall register''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(j)(1) In this subsection, the term 'covered practitioner' means a practitioner that is not a hospital, pharmacy, or veterinarian.

''(2)(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B), as a condition of granting or renewing the registration of a covered practitioner under this part to dispense, or conduct research with, controlled substances in schedule II, III, IV, or V, the Attorney General shall require, before each such grant or renewal of registration, that the covered practitioner complete training (through classroom situations, seminars at professional society meetings, electronic communications, or otherwise) that the Secretary of Health and Human Services determines meets the requirements under paragraph (3).

''(B) Subparagraph (A) shall not apply to the granting or renewal of a registration described in subparagraph (A) if the registration is solely for dispensing non-narcotic controlled substances or substances on schedule IV or V.

''(3) The training provided for purposes of paragraph (2) shall, at a minimum, expose covered practitioners to—

''(A) best practices for pain management, including alternatives to prescribing controlled substances and other alternative therapies to decrease the use of opioids;

''(B) responsible prescribing of pain medications, as described in Federal prescriber guidelines for nonmalignant pain;

''(C) methods for diagnosing, treating, and managing a substance use disorder, including the use of medications approved by the Food and Drug Administration and evidence-based nonpharmacological therapies;

''(D) linking patients to evidence-based treatment for substance use disorders; and

''(E) tools to manage adherence and diversion of controlled substances, including prescription drug monitoring programs, drug screening, informed consent, overdose education, and the use of opioid overdose antagonists.

''(4) The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration shall establish or support the establishment of not less than 1 training module that meets the requirements under paragraph (3) that is provided—

''(A) to any covered practitioner registered or applying for a registration under this part to dispense, or conduct research with, controlled substances in schedule II, III, IV, or V;

''(B) online; and

''(C) free of charge.

''(5) The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall establish, maintain, and periodically update a publically available database providing information relating to training modules that meet the requirements under paragraph (3).

''(6) Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall evaluate and make publically available a report describing how exposure to the training required under this subsection has changed prescribing patterns of controlled substances.''.

SA 3383. Mr. MARKEY 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. ___. SUSPENSION OF MEDICAID BENEFITS FOR INMATES OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1902(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)) is amended by inserting after paragraph (77) the following new paragraph:

''(78) provide that the State shall not terminate (but may suspend) enrollment under a State plan for medical assistance for an individual who is an inmate of a public institution and was enrolled for medical assistance under the State plan immediately before becoming an inmate of such a public institution or who becomes eligible to enroll for such medical assistance while an inmate of a public institution;''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply to the eligibility and enrollment of individuals who become inmates of public institutions on or after the date that is 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) RULE FOR CHANGES REQUIRING STATE LEGISLATION.—In the case of a State plan for medical assistance under title XIX of the Social Security Act which the Secretary of Health and Human Services determines requires State legislation (other than legislation appropriating funds) in order for the plan to meet the additional requirements imposed by the amendment made by subsection (a), the State plan shall not be regarded as failing to comply with the requirements of such title solely on the basis of its failure to meet these additional requirements before the first day of the first calendar quarter beginning after the close of the first regular session of the State legislature that begins after the date of the enactment of this Act. For purposes of the previous sentence, in the case of a State that has a 2-year legislative session, each year of such session shall be deemed to be a separate regular session of the State legislature.

SA 3384. Mr. MARKEY 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. ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR APPROVAL OF NEW OPIOID DRUGS.

Section 505 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(y) ADVISORY COMMITTEE REGARDING OPIOID DRUGS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the Secretary shall convene a panel of experts, which shall expressly consider the issues of addiction, abuse, and dependence—

''(1) to review an application submitted under subsection (b) or (j) for a new drug that is an opioid before the Secretary may approve such application; and

''(2) to review a supplement to an application approved under this section for a drug that is an opioid before the Secretary may approve such supplement.''.

SA 3385. Mr. DAINES (for himself and Mr. PETERS) 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, strike line 23 and insert the following:

disorder, service-connected post-traumatic stress disorder, military sexual trauma, or a service-connected traumatic brain injury, as determined on a case-by-case basis.''.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 1, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room 328A of the Russell Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Business Meeting: To consider the Chairman's Mark on Biotechnology Labeling Solutions.''

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

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 1, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 1, 2016, at 10:30 a.m., in room SD–215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''The Multiemployer Pension Plan System: Recent Reforms and Current Challenges.''

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 1, 2016, at 2:30 p.m., in room SH–219 of the Hart Senate Office Building.

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

SUBCOMMITTE ON AIRLAND

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Airland of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 1, 2016, at 3 p.m.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE DEPARTMENT AND USAID MANAGEMENT, INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS, AND BILATERAL INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on State Department and USAID Management, International Operations, and Bilateral International Development be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 1, 2016, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''A Review of the FY 2017 State and USAID Budget Request.''

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 524

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following leader remarks on Wednesday, March 2, the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 369, S. 524, be agreed to, that the committee-reported substitute amendment be withdrawn, that Senator GRASSLEY or his designee be recognized to offer a substitute amendment, No. 3378, and that the first three first-degree amendments in order be the following: 3362, which is a Feinstein-Grassley amendment; 3345, Shaheen; 3367, Toomey; and that Senator GRASSLEY or his designee be permitted to offer a side-by-side amendment to the Shaheen amendment and that Senator LEAHY or his designee be permitted to offer a side-by-side amendment to the Toomey amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

RARE DISEASE DAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged and the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 380.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 380) designating February 29, 2016 as ''Rare Disease Day.''

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

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

The resolution (S. Res. 380) was agreed to.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I finally ask unanimous consent that 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 preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of February 29, 2016, under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

CONGRATULATING THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES OF IOWA

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 382, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 382) congratulating the community colleges of Iowa for 50 years of outstanding service to the State of Iowa, the United States, and the world.

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. 382) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, pursuant to Public Law 94–201, as amended by Public Law 105–275, appoints the following individual as a member of the Board of Trustees of the American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress: Jean M. Dorton of Kentucky.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2, 2016

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Wednesday, March 2; 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 begin consideration of S. 524, as under the previous order.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:28 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, March 2, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY AND CONGRATULATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, March 4, 2016, marks the 155th anniversary of the Government Publishing Office (GPO), the legislative-branch agency that Congress depends upon every day to produce the documents we need to discharge our constitutional responsibilities. Opening its doors for business as the Government Printing Office the same day that Abraham Lincoln was first inaugurated as President, the GPO since that time has worked around the clock in support of Congress, Federal agencies, and the right of the American people for access to information by and about our Government.

Where once GPO produced this Government information solely through the printing process, in the past generation GPO has transformed itself into a digital publisher, reducing dramatically the cost of producing Government information while exponentially expanding its reach to the public. More than 8,000 staff labored at GPO when it provided print only, while today there are about 1,700. Yet because of technology changes embraced by GPO the productivity of the 1,700 vastly exceeds their predecessors'. That productivity has yielded huge savings for the taxpayers and vastly modernized the way we work on behalf of the citizens we represent.

The technological changes the GPO has undergone have not gone unnoticed. In 2014, legislation was introduced in the Senate to recognize that the GPO is, by virtue of its digital progress, not just for printing anymore, and Congress and the President agreed that the time had come to change the GPO's name. Today, the GPO is the Government Publishing Office, a lean, technologically proficient, and thoroughly modern agency under the leadership of Director Davita Vance-Cooks, a talented manager who understands how to lead and sustain the benefits of change.

For the third year in a row Director Vance-Cooks has sent Congress a flat budget request. With her at the helm the GPO's employees have rated it one of the best places to work—a big change from how they felt ten years ago—and in their work they now turn out one success after another. Last year they installed high-efficiency equipment that has yielded a significant price reduction in the cost of producing our hearings. Last month, they unveiled a new, easy-to-use website that is drawing universal praise, including from you, Mr. Speaker.

Moreover, together with the Library of Congress, GPO employees last week launched public access to bulk-data files of bill-status information, a move that is further expanding openness and transparency to the legislative process. For the future they are poised to support the State Department's introduction of the next generation e-Passport and in 2017 they will move to a new composition system to speed and further reduce the cost of producing documents for Congress and Federal agencies.

Mr. Speaker, in remarks five years ago observing the GPO's sesquicentennial, I noted that Benjamin Franklin—America's patron saint of printing and Philadelphia's greatest citizen—would be surprised and pleased by what the GPO is and does. I can confidently say that he would feel the same today. On behalf of all of us in this House, congratulations and best wishes to GPO Director Davita Vance-Cooks and the men and women of the Government Publishing Office. Many thanks for all their good work.

SUPREME COURT VACANCY

SPEECH OF

HON. MARCIA L. FUDGE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, when taking office, every Member of Congress swears to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. This includes Article II, Section 2, Clause 2, also known as the ''Appointments Clause.''

The Appointments Clause clearly states the President has the power to nominate Justices of the Supreme Court. Nowhere does this clause state the President abdicates this constitutional responsibility during a presidential election year. And, nowhere does it state the U.S. Senate can make threats against the President for exercising his constitutional authority. Our separate branches of government exist to provide checks and balances against tyranny, not to hijack Constitutional processes for political gain.

Many Republicans have argued that Supreme Court Justices are not typically appointed during presidential election years, and especially during a president's last term. To those claims I invoke Mahlon Pitney, Louis Brandeis, John H. Clarke, Benjamin Cardozo, Frank Murphy, and Anthony Kennedy—all examples of Supreme Court Justices who were confirmed during a presidential election year.

Supreme Court Justices Anthony Kennedy and Benjamin Cardozo in particular, were confirmed during President Reagan and President Hoover's last years, respectively. Justice Louis Brandeis was nominated and confirmed in 1916 to replace Justice Joseph Lamar, who died in early January of that same year.

Not only has the Senate voted on and confirmed Supreme Court nominees during presidential election years, the process has never taken more than 125 days. In fact, on average, nominees have been confirmed, rejected, or withdrawn within 25 days. Ample time remains for President Obama to work with Congress to approve a nominee.

However, Republican leadership has once again let politics get in the way of doing what the American people elected them to do.

The Constitution is clear. Just as we honor our First Amendment right to freedom of religion or our Second Amendment right to bear arms, so should we defend the constitutionality of the Supreme Court appointment process. We cannot pick and choose which sections we enforce.

As Members of Congress, we made a promise to our constituents that we would ''faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which'' we have been elected to. It is the Senate's duty to consider a Supreme Court nominee.

I implore my Republican colleagues: Put politics aside and do your job; do not block President Obama's nominee. Rulings handed down by the Supreme Court directly affect our economy, security, and civil rights. This seat is too important to leave vacant.

SUPREME COURT VACANCY

SPEECH OF

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, barely an hour after Justice Scalia's death was confirmed, Senate Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL issued a statement rejecting any judge President Obama chose to nominate to the Supreme Court.

At that point, the President hadn't even announced his intention to fill the vacancy on our highest court.

It's a sad state of affairs that the highest ranking Republican in the Senate would politicize the Court in such a grotesque way when many of us were still learning of Justice Scalia's passing.

But this is par for the course for the Republicans. On issue after issue, debate after debate, they continue to solidify their reputation as the party of ''no,'' to the detriment of this great nation.

Senate Republicans continue to maintain that they will deny a confirmation hearing to any individual nominated by President Obama to serve on the Supreme Court.

This is part of the Republican political agenda to disrupt the work of government when it does not align with their far-right ideology.

It is a thinly-veiled attempt to obstruct the nomination process in hopes of packing the Supreme Court with conservative justices who will roll back the progress our nation has made, from marriage equality to reproductive rights.

We have already seen what is at stake here. In 2013, the Supreme Court struck down the heart of the Voting Rights Act—a major setback for civil rights and voting rights, and a major blow to fundamental democracy in this country.

The president has a constitutional responsibility to nominate a successor to Justice Scalia.

The Senate also has a constitutional responsibility—to give the nominee a fair hearing and a timely vote.

This is about democracy and protecting the institution of the Supreme Court.

What we are seeing from Republicans is a clear pattern of obstruction. They have shut down the government, threatened not to pay our debts, and halted the nomination process before it has even begun.

This divisiveness is a detriment to our democracy, an affront to justice, and an insult to the American people, who deserve to have their nation's highest court working at full capacity.

Republicans have said that there is no precedent for confirming a Supreme Court nominee during an election year. That is blatantly wrong: six Justices have been confirmed in presidential election years, including three Republican appointees.

Since the 1980s, Congress has almost never left any vacancy during a single Supreme Court session.

What is unprecedented in modern history is denying the President of the United States a hearing or vote on a nomination to the Supreme Court.

And yet that's what the Republican plan is.

It's hard not to see this as an effort to delegitimize the nation's first black president.

Republicans have been trying to derail President Obama ever since he took office.

And now, whoever ends up being nominated for the Supreme Court, regardless of qualifications, will be rejected simply because he or she is an Obama nominee.

The disdain Republicans have for Obama is so great that they are willing to trample on the U.S. Constitution to prevent him from appointing a judge to the Supreme Court.

The U.S. Constitution—the very document that Republicans like to accuse the President of ignoring—states that the president "shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint . . . Judges of the Supreme Court."

Not only does he have the right, he has a duty to appoint a judge to the Court.

Now, President Obama made clear that he seeks judges "who approach decisions without any particular ideology or agenda, but rather a commitment to impartial justice, a respect for precedent, and a determination to faithfully apply the law to the facts at hand."

There is nothing radical about the President's position. His comments speak to his respect for the law and the seriousness he brings to the nomination process.

Republicans must do their job as it relates to that process—earnestly debate and then vote on the person nominated by the President.

There are many hotly debated issues in our country—immigration, gun reform, health care, campaign finance; issues that necessitate the maximum strength of the Supreme Court.

The American people deserve far better than attempts by Republican politicians in Washington to stack the Supreme Court with far-right judges who will forgo impartial justice to advance the conservative agenda.

They expect their government to work for them, and Senate Republicans must meet that expectation by swiftly filling the vacancy on the Court.

SUPREME COURT VACANCY

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 29, 2016

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, sixteen days ago, and just moments after learning the sad news that Antonin Scalia, the most senior Justice on the Supreme Court, had died in his sleep at the age of 79, the Republican Senate Majority Leader, announced emphatically that "this vacancy should not be filled until we have a new President."

Later that evening, the Senate Majority Leader's position was echoed at a presidential primary debate in South Carolina by every Republican presidential candidate.

Justice Scalia may have had many qualities but none endeared him more to his admirers on that debate stage and across the country than his professed devotion to the rule of law, his exaltation of the doctrine of "original intent," and his insistence that the meaning of the Constitution is to be divined only from the strictest reading of the text.

Given the praise heaped on Justice Scalia by Republican senators and presidential candidates, it is passing strange indeed that they claim to be honoring his memory by taking a position that repudiates the very principles Justice Scalia devoted his life to advancing.

Mr. Speaker, so-called "strict constructionists" claim that the Constitution is to be interpreted according to its literal text.

Well, there is nothing clearer than the provision in Article II, Section 2, which states that the President "with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, judges of the Supreme Count[.]"

To read the Constitution as containing a limitation restricting the President's exercise of this power in the fourth year of his term of office would be to treat the Constitution as a "living document" and to engage in the type of judicial activism that Justice Scalia opposed and fought during his 30 years on the Court.

Indeed, just three years ago, at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Justice Scalia in discussing his judicial philosophy, expressed his view of the Constitution: "It's not a living document. It's dead, dead, dead."

If it had been the original intention of the Framers to restrict the President from nominating Supreme Court Justices to fill vacancies occurring in the fourth year of his or her term, they would have manifested that intent clearly, explicitly, and unmistakably, as they did in conditioning Supreme Court appointments to the advice and consent of the Senate and in prohibiting the President from exercising the Pardon Power in cases of impeachment.

Mr. Speaker, disregarding the procedure expressly set forth in the Constitution for filling vacancies on the Supreme Court because it may not result in the appointment of one's preferred justice makes a mockery of the "rule of law," adherence to which is claimed to be the most sacred principle of both judicial and political conservatives.

The bottom line is this: for those who revered Justice Scalia, cherish his memory, and wish to do honor to the work of his life, the way forward is clear.

And that is for Republican senators to gladly receive, when it is put forward, President Obama's nominee to fill the vacancy left by the death of their hero and discharge their constitutional duty to advise and consent (or not consent) to the nomination as reflected by an up or down vote on the nominee.

Republican senators protest there is an 80 year precedent against confirming a Supreme Court nominee during an election year, and besides, there is not sufficient time even if they wished to do so.

This is a short horse soon curried.

The most recent instance where there was a vacancy on the Supreme Court in an election year occurred not 80 but 28 years ago, in 1988, during the administration of President Reagan.

That vacancy was filled on February 3, 1988 by the appointment of Justice Anthony Kennedy, who was confirmed 97–0 by a Democrat-controlled Senate.

The Justice Kennedy nomination is the controlling precedent, as Justice Scalia would recognize.

The erudite Justice would say to anyone claiming otherwise, "Leges posteriores priores contrarias abrogant," which is Latin for the canon of judicial interpretation that "the last expression of the people prevails."

There are 326 days left in President Obama's term, which is more than sufficient time for the President to nominate, and for the Senate to consider and vote to confirm or reject his nominee.

Since 1900, there have been 60 Supreme Court vacancies.

The average time taken to fill these 60 vacancies is 73 days, which is less than 25% of the time remaining in the President's term.

The average time to fill each of the 13 vacancies since 1975 is a mere 67 days.

And of the current members of the Supreme Court, the average time is 74 days, the longest being the 99 days taken to confirm the controversial nomination of Justice Clarence Thomas in October 1991.

Mr. Speaker, as is often noted, elections have consequences; they also impose responsibilities and duties.

And one of the most important duties imposed by the Constitution on the President is to nominate persons to fill vacancies on the Supreme Court and for the Senate to consider those nominations with dispatch.

The Supreme Court is the nation's highest court and its essential and indispensable role in our constitutional system is to provide definitive interpretations of American law and the Constitution.

Its decisions are the law of the land binding in every state and territory.

The Supreme Court is the only judicial tribunal capable of providing the legal clarity and certainty required for the legal system to function and give meaning to the rule of law.

President Obama has announced that he intends to fulfill the responsibility devolved upon him by the Constitution and will submit to the Senate a nominee to fill the large shoes left by the late Justice Antonin Scalia.

The Senate should fulfill its constitutional duty to advise and consent, or withhold its consent, by casting an up or down vote on that nomination.

That is the way to pay fitting tribute to Justice Scalia, to honor the Constitution, and to keep faith with the American people.

CELEBRATING THE INDIANA BOROUGH BICENTENNIAL

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Indiana Borough in Pennsylvania's 9th Congressional District for reaching a huge milestone: its Bicentennial.

Officially incorporated on March 11, 1816, countless citizens of the Indiana Borough have contributed to and witnessed the impressive development of a uniquely welcoming and enterprising community over the past 200 years. As a proud American city, Indiana can claim as one of its many notable contributions to our country to have had citizens participate in the Civil War, World Wars I and II, the Korean conflict, the Vietnam War, and our wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. What's more, the borough has helped develop citizens who have contributed meaningfully to just about every aspect of our society, including: business, education, medicine, the arts, and politics. As many of my constituents know, Indiana Borough is also the hometown of famous Hollywood actor Jimmy Stewart. Additionally, it is home to the Indiana University of Pennsylvania, which attracts thousands of bright students to the area each year.

As the product of a region that has experienced the benefits of a strong coal industry, I am also proud to highlight Indiana Borough's contributions to the rich heritage associated with coal mining. There can be no doubt that over the past 200 years, the Indiana Borough has contributed an invaluable spirit as well as list of accomplishments and successful residents to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and I am certainly proud to represent this borough and its citizens.

As such, it is with great pleasure that I congratulate the Indiana Borough and its remarkable citizens on this Bicentennial milestone, and wish them an even brighter future.

RECOGNITION OF GUY PRESTON RICHARDSON

HON. BRETT GUTHRIE

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and remember the life of Guy Preston Richardson Sr. of Danville, Kentucky, who passed away on Friday, December 11, 2015.

Guy was a World War II veteran, serving in the U.S. Army from 1944–1946. He earned his paratrooper wings, and served in the 11th Airborne that fought in the Battle of Mount Macolod and liberated the Philippines. Guy was awarded the Bronze Star and was part of the honor guard to witness the return of General Douglas MacArthur.

After serving with the occupation forces in Japan for a year, he returned to Danville, Kentucky, in 1946 to attend Centre College on the G.I. Bill. It was there that he met the love of his life, Sue Swan. Following graduation, Guy went into his family's grocery business, which he successfully managed for more than 50 years.

Mr. Richardson was an active member of the First Presbyterian Church of Danville for more than 60 years, serving as a Stephen Minister, Sunday school superintendent, deacon, elder, and trustee. He was a former president of the Rotary Club of Danville when, as a survivor of polio, he led the effort to raise local money to eradicate polio. He was also a former president of the Boyle County Chamber of Commerce, and served on the boards of the Boyle County Library, Ephraim McDowell Hospital and Central Kentucky Federal Savings Bank.

A lifelong, passionate student of politics and policy, Guy was the model of an engaged citizen. He managed numerous campaigns for State Representative Joe Clarke over the course of 20 years. He was a leader in the local civil rights movement to integrate the Danville schools, and was part of Dr. Martin Luther King's 1964 march in Frankfort, KY. He is survived by his wife of 66 years, Sue, their four children, and many grandchildren.

True to his abiding faith, Guy Richardson sought justice and was dedicated to his community in Boyle County and the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

HONORING MRS. LORI PAULSON OF LAS CRUCES, NEW MEXICO

HON. STEVAN PEARCE

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor an outstanding citizen in the great State of New Mexico, Mrs. Lori Paulson. Lori, despite being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in 2013, has dedicated the last two years to the betterment of her community, and beloved New Mexico State University. She is undoubtedly an inspiration and role model to all she meets. In the last two years, Lori has become more than a friend or mentor to the NMSU football team, she has become family.

During both the 2014 and 2015 football season, Lori served as the Aggies' honorary captain—attending practices and events with the team, even participating in the opening coin tosses during every home game.

Throughout her time with the team, Lori has helped players through injury and personal tragedy. Recently, Lori took another step to help the school and team she loves—she gifted $100,000 to the football program in the creation of the Lori Paulson Football Excellence Fund. When asked about the donation, Lori simply stated—"It's just me confirming what I have always said, which is that I believe in them."

Lori is an exemplary Aggie. We can all learn from her selfless dedication and courage. As a fellow Aggie and New Mexican, it is an honor to rise and recognize Lori's commitment to her community and alma mater.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, during the votes today, March 1, 2016, 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. 136.

Yes on H.R. 3735.

HONORING THE WOMEN WHO SERVED DURING WORLD WAR II FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

HON. CANDICE S. MILLER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I along with Representative DINGELL would like to recognize an incredible group of women today. On May 29, 1943, in the midst of war, a new image appeared on the cover of the Saturday Evening Post. Created by Norman Rockwell, it was an image of a woman who was strong and brave. The image acted as an introduction to heroes the American people had already come to know. These heroes, known as Rosie the Riveters, have been solidified in our national memory as champions. Initially, there was uncertainty as to whether or not women should be allowed to work in industries and fill positions that were previously only occupied by men. However, as the war moved on, women began to fill positions in the workplace and keep American industry, and the war effort, afloat. Slogans such as "The More Women at Work the Sooner We Win" were sprawled across newspapers and magazines and appealed to women's patriotism and willingness to serve.

As a part of Women's History Month, on March 22nd, we will welcome a group of "Original Rosies" to the United States Capitol to celebrate their tremendous contributions to our nation.

To these women we say: through your service during the Second World War, you played an invaluable role in the war effort and victory as a part of the Greatest American Generation. Your rigorous work and passionate love of our great country are arguably what sustained the American people, at home and abroad, during a volatile time of war and uncertainty. You made great personal sacrifices and served with such infectious zeal that you were able to reinvigorate the war effort and inspire, encourage, and support your communities. Since your time serving during the War, the number of working women in the United States has never fallen to pre-war levels; this is one of countless examples of your legacy. Your generation paved a path for the generations of women to follow.

We are grateful for the work you have done. We honor you and recognize your work as a symbol of American strength and ingenuity. Rosie's story inspires us. You inspire us, and we will continue to tell your stories to our children and grandchildren to ensure the American spirit, which you embody, never leaves our hearts. Your spirit is a reminder to the American people that we, too, can do something more for our country.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BEN RAY LUJÁN

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 87, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted yes.

HONORING IRVING LADIMER

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a man commonly referred to as the ''Mayor of Riverdale,'' Mr. Irving Ladimer, a staple of the northwest Bronx community and a dear friend. Irving turned 100 years old on February 16, 2016, and I am so grateful to be able to help celebrate his reaching that remarkable milestone by honoring him in the hallowed halls of Congress.

Irving has contributed a great deal to the Riverdale neighborhood, both professionally and through his work in various community groups. As an attorney specializing in health care issues, Irving's compassion for his fellow man was always evident. Incredibly, Irving maintains his distinguished law career to this day, and still travels into his law firm's office in Manhattan every week to work. Irving's legal expertise has also been put to work as a law professor at institutions such as Yale, Columbia, and New York University, where he taught on a wide array of topics from patient safety, rights for the elderly, ethics, and nutrition.

Irving has also dedicated a great deal of time to the community. As a trustee at his synagogue, he has volunteered to help the aging and still offers his legal expertise to those in need. Irving also generously gives his time to the Catholic Health Services Center and has teamed up with local officials to reach out to schools and community centers to offer civics lessons about the constitution and government. It has always been important to Irving for his fellow community members to be more civic-minded, and as a member of the Ben Franklin Reform Democratic Club he has made huge strides in advocating for that type of civic engagement.

Without question, Irving has been an influential member of the community. He is the most spry 100 year old I've ever met, and I wish him nothing but the best and thank him for all he's done for the Bronx.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, due to an unforeseen conflict, I unavoidably missed the following votes on February 24, 2016 and February 29, 2016.

Had I been present, I would have voted as follows:

1. On roll call No. 85, I would have voted ''nay'' (Feb 24) (On Ordering the Previous Question for Providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3624) to amend title 28, United States Code, to prevent fraudulent joinder).

2. On roll call No. 86, I would have voted ''nay'' (Feb 24) (On Agreeing to the Resolution for Providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3624) to amend title 28, United States Code, to prevent fraudulent joinder).

3. On roll call No. 102, I would have voted ''yea'' (Feb 29) (On 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'').

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 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 $19,080,123,823,020.74. We've added $8,453,246,774,207.66 to our debt in 6 years. This is over $7.5 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

WELCOME ABIGAIL WESSON SYDNOR AND ANNA LOUISE SYDNOR

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to congratulate Chad Sydnor, Military Legislative Assistant for Senator RICHARD BURR, and his wife, Alli Sydnor, on the birth of their twin girls. Abigail Wesson Sydnor and Anna Louise Sydnor were born at 8:10 a.m. on Friday, February 19, 2016, at Inova Fairfax Hospital in Falls Church, Virginia. Abigail weighed six pounds and measured 19 inches long and Anna weighed five pounds and three ounces and measured 18 and ½ inches long. They are the first children for the happy couple and I have no doubt their talented parents will be dedicated to their well-being and bright future.

I would also like to congratulate Abigail and Anna's grandparents, Robert and Christal Blakely of Great Falls, Virginia, and Charles and Cindy Sydnor of Snow Camp, North Carolina. Congratulations to both the Blakely and Sydnor families as they welcome their newest additions of pure pride and joys.

A BILL FOR THE RELIEF OF MYONG MOK BAE AND KEI ZA RYU BAE

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce a bill to provide relief for Mr. Myong Mok Bae and Mrs. Kei Za Ryu Bae. Mr. and Mrs. Bae are eighteen-year residents of Guam, who currently face removal by the Department of Homeland Security Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

The Baes came to the United States in June 1997 as immigrant entrepreneurs. Although unforeseen natural disasters and economic hardships hampered the success of their investment, the Baes remained active members of the Guam community. They continue to serve as goodstanding members of the community who have no criminal history and pose no risk to public safety or national security.

Removal of the Baes would cause them to suffer extreme hardship. The Baes arrived in Guam from Korea, a country which they have now not seen in 15 years. They are an elderly couple with no family or community in Korea, and with no means of gainful employment at this stage in their lives.

This bill would provide the Baes relief from this extreme hardship by establishing their eligibility, under the Immigration and Naturalization Act, for either an immigrant visa, or an adjustment of status to that of an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence, or an adjustment of status to that of a lawful permanent resident. The bill provides a timeline of two years to allow the Baes to file, and pay the applicable fees, for the appropriate status. Finally, the bill reduces by two, the total number of immigrant visas that are made available to those whose country of origin is Korea.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to advance this legislation to relieve the Baes from the extreme hardship that would result from their removal, and to allow them to remain in the United States—the place they have lived for nearly two decades and the place they call their home.

HONORING WESTCHESTER JEWISH COUNCIL 40TH ANNIVERSARY GALA

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, organizations which strive to instill and promote core values and traditions play an indispensable role in any community. The Westchester Jewish Council continues to play prominent roles in assisting the Jewish community of Westchester, through social action, education, youth, dialogue with elected officials, and instilling Jewish values to promote interfaith dialogue within the Westchester community. Their value to our local communities is of the utmost importance and of great value to us all.

Since 1975, the Westchester Jewish Council has served as a prominent organization in the

Westchester Jewish community and plays a key role in fostering relationships with organizations, law enforcement, and community leaders, both inside the Jewish community and the community at large. Additionally, their work involves interfaith initiatives and events aimed at communicating and coordinating services and programs for the Jewish community. Furthermore, the Westchester Jewish Council provides meaningful opportunities to engage in volunteer work throughout the community.

The Westchester Jewish Council also sponsors various educational roundtables which foster Israel advocacy and Jewish education, initiatives that are paramount to the organization's mission. The Westchester Jewish Council works together with 150 other organizations to help facilitate Westchester Jewish traditions and culture by supporting and hosts various community-wide events aimed at celebrating Jewish history and heritage. The wide variety of services they offer are meaningful, indispensable, and cultivate the important traditions of the community.

On February 6th, 2016 the Westchester Jewish Council will be celebrating their 40th Anniversary Gala. I want to congratulate the entire organization on the occasion, and thank them for the invaluable work they have done for the entire Westchester community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. J. FRENCH HILL

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 102, 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, had I been present, I would have voted yes.

HONORING THE 90TH BIRTHDAY OF MRS. ROSE BAENKE

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Rose Baenke was born on February 24, 1926, in Chicago, Illinois. At an early age, she developed a passion for politics. When she turned 18, she voted in her first election and has taken pride in the honor and privilege of voting ever since.

In 1992, Mrs. Baenke and her husband moved to the community of Nesbit, Mississippi. She became involved in the local political scene and was a charter member of the Desoto County Republican Women, a group in which she remains an active member. At age 90, she participates in the club's events and dedicates her time and effort to the group's mission.

Mrs. Baenke has been politically involved at the state level as well. She says that her crowning achievement was assisting Governor Phil Bryant's successful campaign to be Mississippi's 64th Governor. She has served in leadership positions with the DeSoto County Republican Women, which has enabled her to become an effective voice in the Republican Party. As an active citizen, she also served two terms on the Mississippi River Commission.

Currently, Mrs. Baenke resides at Wesley Meadows Retirement Community in Hernando, Mississippi, where she works tirelessly to urge other residents to remain engaged and informed on political issues. Specifically, she asks other residents to exercise their right, which was earned at a very high price, to vote.

I would like to wish Mrs. Baenke a Happy 90th Birthday and extend my deepest appreciation for her passion and dedication to her country and state.

CAPTAIN WIELENGA ASSUMES COMMAND OF HESPERIA SHERIFF'S STATION

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department Captain Gregg Wielenga, who was recently promoted to the position of Captain for the Hesperia, California Sheriff's station. Captain Wielenga is a twenty-five year veteran of law enforcement and has served with the department since 1990.

Over the course of his distinguished career, Captain Wielenga has served the citizens of San Bernardino County in a variety of ways. His assignments have included Patrol Deputy in Needles, Detective in the Victor Valley, and Sergeant at the county's jail facilities. Prior to Captain Wielenga's recent promotion he served as the Lieutenant at the Hesperia station.

I would like to congratulate Captain Wielenga on his new position. He exemplifies the professionalism of the men and women of the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department. I am honored to have him serving the people of Hesperia and wish him the best of luck.

WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION WEEK

HON. LAMAR SMITH

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, March 6th marks the beginning of Women in Construction Week. The National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) takes this week to highlight women in the construction industry. Chapter 11 of NAWIC is located in San Antonio, which I represent. This week allows thousands of NAWIC members across the country to raise awareness of the opportunities available to women in the construction industry and emphasize the growing role of women in the industry.

In sincere appreciation, Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this week as Women in Construction Week.

HONORING DAVID FORD

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a good friend and trusted employee, David Ford, who today is being honored by the Black Dems of Westchester for 50 years of incredible service to the community.

David has been a resident of Mt. Vernon for 53 years and an active member in the community his entire adult life. He has pursued his two great passions—community service and politics—with great vigor and has accomplished a great deal in both fields over a long and impressive career.

First elected Chairman of the Mt. Vernon Democratic Party in 1969, David inherited a club in a rock bed of Republican politics. For the next 27 years he served as Chairman and oversaw a complete political switch in the area. When he left the position in 1996, every elected official in Mt. Vernon was a Democrat, whereas none were in 1969.

David has also made his mark in the community through engagement with various civic organizations and as Commissioner of the Mt. Vernon Water Department, a role he served in for 33 years until his retirement in 2009. He has been President of the Mt. Vernon Lions Club, the Mt. Vernon YMCA, and the Citizens Veterans Association. As Board Chairman of the Mt. Vernon Neighborhood Health Center for 30 years, David was instrumental in turning a small program with 19 employees into one of the largest Health Care Centers in the region, employing over 400 people serving 40,000 patients annually. It is no wonder then why David has received countless honors in the community, including the Torch Liberty Award from the Anti-Defamation League and the "Citizen of the Year" Award from the YMCA.

But for all of his accomplishments in the community, I will always value David's incredible hard work as one of my most trusted and talented special assistants, a role he still serves in to this day. I congratulate David on this well-deserved and wonderful recognition from the Black Dems of Westchester, and thank him personally for all he has done to better the Mt. Vernon community. I am proud of David for all of his hard work, but I am even more proud to call him a friend.

HONORING STEVEN AND KATHERINE DIEBERT AS THEY CELEBRATE 50 YEARS OF MARRIAGE

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Steven and Katherine Diebert on the celebration of their 50th wedding anniversary.

Steven and Katherine Diebert were married on February 26, 1966 in Fresno, California. They met as young students at Roosevelt High School by the drinking fountain; however, their paths unknowingly had crossed as children in 1953 when Steven was one of

Hopalong Cassidy's cowboy sidekicks at a Fresno department store called Coopers. Katherine's mother brought her to meet Hopalong Cassidy on that day, and little did she know that the boy by Hoppy's side would one day be her husband and that they would raise two beautiful daughters together.

In December of 1965, Steven proposed to Katherine and they were joined in marriage on February 26, 1966 at the First Baptist Church in Fresno. Despite many opportunities to leave the Central Valley over the last 50 years, they chose to remain in Fresno and raised their family here. The highlight of their marriage have been their two daughters, Stephanie (along with her husband, Kenneth) and Melissa (along with her husband, Layne), who have blessed them with five grandchildren, Leo Stephen, Ari Benjamin, Kaitlin Jade, Ella Rose, and Harrison Steven.

Steven Diebert was born on July 10, 1943 in Fresno, California to parents of Volga German descent, who were also born and raised in the San Joaquin Valley. Steven was a highly regarded football player at Roosevelt High School, where he proudly graduated from in 1961. Following high school, Steven attended Fresno State University where he graduated with a degree in Political Economy in 1966. Upon receiving his bachelor's degree, Steven went on to work for the Xerox Corporation where he worked for two years. In 1968, he returned to Fresno State to continue his education and received a graduate degree to become a Certified Public Accountant. Following graduate school, he worked for the national accounting firm Touche Ross and in 1975, he was appointed by then California Controller, Ken Cory, to serve as a California Probate Referee. Steven is regarded as one of the finest probate referees in California and has carefully developed a reputation as a straight shooter and as a man of great integrity.

Katherine Diebert was born on November 6, 1944 in Fresno, California. Her parents were of Armenian, English and Irish decent and lived the majority of their lives in Fresno. Katherine graduated from Roosevelt High School in 1962 and went on to attend Fresno City College. In 1964, she began working in the medical administration and billing department at Fresno Medical Group. Katherine continued to work at Fresno Medical Group until she and Steven were blessed with their first daughter, Stephanie in 1971. Upon the birth of their second daughter, Melissa in 1975, Katherine decided to take some time off of work to raise her children. In 1977 Katherine returned to work for Internal Medicine and Associates where she worked until her retirement in 2008. While, building a beautiful family and successful career, Katherine has maintained a beautiful home and has continued to keep a meticulous and stunning garden.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Steven and Katherine Diebert on their fifty years of marriage and may they be blessed with many more. They serve as a prime example to us all of what it means to be committed to strong family values.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I want to state that yesterday, February 29, 2016, I was detained in my district and missed the one roll call vote of the day. Had I been present I would have voted:

AYE—Roll Call No. 102—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.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 102 I was inadvertently detained and missed the vote on H.R. 4238.

Had I been present, I would have voted Yea.

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

See Résumé Congressional Activity.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S1105–S1168

Measures Introduced: Nine bills and three resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 2607–2615, and S. Res. 381–383. **Pages S1134–35**

Measures Reported:

Special Report entitled "2016 Economic Report of the President". (S. Rept. No. 114–218)

S. 2609, to amend the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 to require the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a national voluntary labeling standard for bioengineered foods. **Page S1134**

Measures Passed:

Rare Disease Day: Committee on the Judiciary was discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 380, designating February 29, 2016 as "Rare Disease Day", and the resolution was then agreed to. **Page S1167**

Congratulating Iowa Community Colleges: Senate agreed to S. Res. 382, congratulating the community colleges of Iowa for 50 years of outstanding service to the State of Iowa, the United States, and the world. **Pages S1167–68**

Measures Considered:

Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act—Agreement: Senate continued 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 S1106–32**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that at approximately 9:30 a.m., on Wednesday, March 2, 2016, the motion to proceed to consideration of the bill be agreed to, the committee-reported substitute amendment be withdrawn, and that Senator Grassley, or his designee, be recognized to offer a substitute amendment, Amendment No. 3378, and that the first three first-degree amendments in order be the following: Feinstein/Grassley Amendment No. 3362, Shaheen Amendment No. 3345, and Toomey Amendment No. 3367; and that Senator Grassley or his designee, be permitted to offer a side-by-side amendment to Shaheen Amendment No. 3345, and Senator Leahy, or his designee, be permitted to offer a side-by-side amendment to Toomey Amendment No. 3367. **Page S1167**

Appointments:

Board of Trustees of the American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress: The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, pursuant to Public Law 94–201, as amended by Public Law 105–275, appointed the following individual as a member of the Board of Trustees of the American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress: Jean M. Dorton of Kentucky. **Page S1168**

Messages from the House: **Pages S1133–34**

Measures Referred: **Page S1134**

Enrolled Bills Presented: **Page S1134**

Executive Communications: **Page S1134**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S1135–36**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S1136–40**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S1140–67**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S1167**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10:30 a.m. and adjourned at 6:28 p.m., until 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, March 2, 2016. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S1168.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry: Committee ordered favorably reported an original bill to amend the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 to require the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a national voluntary labeling standard for bioengineered foods.

FARM ECONOMY

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies concluded a hearing to examine the state of the farm economy, after receiving testimony from Robert Johansson, Chief Economist, Department of Agriculture; Patrick Westhoff, Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute, Columbia, Missouri; and Nathan Kauffman, Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, Omaha, Nebraska.

APPROPRIATIONS: TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Department of Homeland Security concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Transportation Security Administration, after receiving testimony from Peter V. Neffenger, Administrator, Transportation Security Administration, Department of Homeland Security.

APPROPRIATIONS: SENATE SERGEANT AT ARMS AND CAPITOL POLICE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Legislative Branch concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Senate Sergeant at Arms and the Capitol Police, after receiving testimony from Frank J. Larkin, Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper of the Senate; and Chief Kim C. Dine, United States Capitol Police.

U.S. EUROPEAN COMMAND

Committee on Armed Services: Committee concluded a hearing to examine United States European Command, after receiving testimony from General Philip M. Breedlove, USAF, Commander, United States European Command/Supreme Allied Commander, Europe.

LONG RANGE STRIKE-BOMBER

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Airland received a closed briefing on the Air Force Long Range Strike-Bomber from Lisa S. Disbrow, USAF, Under Secretary of the Air Force, Lieutenant General Arnold W. Bunch, Jr., USAF, Military Deputy, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition, Randall G. Walden, Director, Air Force Rapid Capabilities Office, and William D. Bailey, System Program Director, Long Range Strike Bomber, all of the Department of Defense.

MULTIEMPLOYER PENSION PLAN SYSTEM

Committee on Finance: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the multiemployer pension plan system, focusing on recent reforms and current challenges, after receiving testimony from Joshua Gotbaum, The Brookings Institution, and Andrew G. Biggs, American Enterprise Institute, both of Washington, D.C.; Cecil E. Roberts, United Mine Workers of America, Triangle, Virginia; and Rita Lewis, West Chester, Ohio.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND USAID BUDGET

Committee on Foreign Relations: Subcommittee on State Department and USAID Management, International Operations, and Bilateral International Development concluded a hearing 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, after receiving testimony from Douglas Pitkin, Director, Bureau of Budget and Planning, and Hari Sastry, Director, Office of Foreign Assistance Resources, both of the Department of State; and Roman Napoli, Acting Director, Office of Budget and Resource Management, United States Agency for International Development.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee held closed hearings on intelligence matters, receiving testimony from officials of the intelligence community.

Committee recessed subject to the call.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 5 public bills, H.R. 4654–4658; and 4 resolutions, H. Con. Res. 121; and H. Res. 630–631, 633 were introduced. **Pages H1083–84**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H1084–85**

Report Filed: A report was filed today as follows:

H. Res. 632, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3716) to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to provide to the Secretary of Health and Human Services certain information with respect to provider terminations, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 114–440). **Page H1083**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Donovan to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H1047**

Recess: The House recessed at 10:31 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H1051**

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

Naming the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Sevierville, Tennessee, the Dannie A. Carr Veterans Outpatient Clinic: H.R. 2814, to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Sevierville, Tennessee, the Dannie A. Carr Veterans Outpatient Clinic; **Pages H1055–56**

Designating 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": 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", by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 381 yeas with none voting "nay", Roll No. 103; **Pages H1056–57, H1067–68**

Federal Advisory Committee Act Amendments: H.R. 2347, amended, to amend the Federal Advisory Committee Act to increase the transparency of Federal advisory committees; **Pages H1057–60**

Designating 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": 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", by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 371 yeas to 9 nays with one answering "present", Roll No. 104; **Pages H1060–62, H1069**

Designating the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1048 West Robinhood Drive in Stockton, California, as the "W. Ronald Coale Memorial Post Office Building": H.R. 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"; **Pages H1062–63**

Designating the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 5351 Lapalco Boulevard in Marrero, Louisiana, as the "Lionel R. Collins, Sr. Post Office Building": H.R. 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"; **Pages H1063–64**

Designating 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": 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"; **Pages H1064–65**

Designating the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4567 Rockbridge Road in Pine Lake, Georgia, as the "Francis Manuel Ortega Post Office": 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"; **Pages H1065–66**

Designating 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": 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"; **Pages H1066–67**

Designating 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: 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; and **Page H1067**

Designating 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": 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". **Pages H1069–70**

Suspension—Proceedings Postponed: The House debated the following measure under suspension of the rules. Further proceedings were postponed.

Designating 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: 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. **Pages H1070–71**

Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation—Appointment: Read a letter from Representative Pelosi, Minority Leader, in which she appointed the following Member to the Board of Trustees of the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation: Representative Larson (CT). **Page H1083**

Quorum Calls—Votes: Two yea-and-nay votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H1068 and H1069. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 4:52 p.m.

Committee Meetings

VOLUNTARY CONSERVATION: UTILIZING INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

Committee on Agriculture: Subcommittee on Conservation and Forestry held a hearing entitled "Voluntary Conservation: Utilizing Innovation and Technology". Testimony was heard from Jason Weller, Chief, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Department of Agriculture; and public witnesses.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development held a budget hearing on the Department of Energy. Testimony was heard from Ernest Moniz, Secretary, Department of Energy.

APPROPRIATIONS—NAVY AND MARINE CORPS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Defense held a budget hearing on the Navy and Marine Corps. Testimony was heard from Ray Mabus, Secretary, U.S. Navy; Admiral John M. Richardson, Chief of Naval Operations, U.S. Navy; and General Robert B. Neller, Commandant, U.S. Marine Corps.

APPROPRIATIONS—CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Homeland Security held a budget hearing on Customs and Border Protection. Testimony was heard from R. Gil Kerlikowske, Commissioner, U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

APPROPRIATIONS—CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education held a budget hearing on Corporation for National and Community Service. Testimony was heard from Wendy Spencer, Chief Executive Officer, Corporation for National and Community Service.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, NATIONAL NUCLEAR SECURITY ADMINISTRATION, WEAPONS AND ACTIVITIES AND NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION AND NAVAL REACTORS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development held a budget hearing on Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration, Weapons and Activities and Nuclear Nonproliferation and Naval Reactors. Testimony was heard from the following Department of Energy officials: Frank Klotz, Administrator for Nuclear Security; Anne Harrington, Deputy Administrator for Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation; Brigadier General S.L. Davis, Acting Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs; and Admiral James Frank Caldwell, Jr., Deputy Administrator for Office of Naval Reactors.

APPROPRIATIONS—CAPITOL POLICE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Legislative Branch held a budget hearing on Capitol Police. Testimony was heard from the following U.S. Capitol Police officials: Kim C. Dine, Chief of Police; Matthew R. Verderosa, Assistant Chief of Police; and Richard L. Braddock, Chief Administrative Officer.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies held a budget hearing on Department of Housing and Urban Development. Testimony was heard from Julian Castro, Secretary, Department of Housing and Urban Development.

APPROPRIATIONS—ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Legislative Branch held a budget hearing on the Architect of the Capitol. Testimony was heard from Stephen T. Ayers, Architect, U.S. Capitol.

MEMBER DAY—NATIONAL DEFENSE PRIORITIES FROM MEMBERS FOR THE FY 2017 NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Committee on Armed Services: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Member Day—National Defense Priorities from Members for the FY 2017 National Defense Authorization Act''. Testimony was heard from Representatives Chabot, Velázquez, Rothfus, Crawford, Hanna, Meehan, Judy Chu of California, Perry, Poliquin, Wagner, Radewagen, Hardy, Blackburn, Neugebauer, Bost, and Yoho.

AIR FORCE PROJECTION FORCES AVIATION PROGRAMS AND CAPABILITIES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces held a hearing entitled ''Air Force Projection Forces Aviation Programs and Capabilities for Fiscal Year 2017''. Testimony was heard from Lieutenant General James M. ''Mike'' Holmes, USAF, Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategic Plans and Requirements; and Lieutenant General Arnold W. Bunch, Jr., USAF, Military Deputy, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition.

SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES IN AN EVOLVING THREAT ENVIRONMENT: A REVIEW OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2017 BUDGET REQUEST FOR U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities held a 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''. Testimony was heard from Theresa Whelan, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict (ASD/SOLIC); and General Joseph L. Votel, Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command.

LEGISLATIVE HEARING TO EXAMINE PIPELINE SAFETY REAUTHORIZATION

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Energy and Power held a hearing entitled ''Legislative Hearing to Examine Pipeline Safety Reauthorization''. Testimony was heard from Marie Therese Dominguez, Administrator, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, Department of Transportation; and public witnesses.

EXAMINING THE FINANCING AND DELIVERY OF LONG-TERM CARE IN THE U.S.

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Health held a hearing entitled ''Examining the Financing and Delivery of Long-Term Care in the U.S.''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

HELPING THE DEVELOPING WORLD FIGHT TERROR FINANCE

Committee on Financial Services: Task Force to Investigate Terrorism Financing held a hearing entitled ''Helping the Developing World Fight Terror Finance''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

TRANSPARENCY, TRUST AND VERIFICATION: MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS AND SITUATIONAL AWARENESS ALONG THE BORDER

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security held a hearing entitled ''Transparency, Trust and Verification: Measuring Effectiveness and Situational Awareness along the Border''. Testimony was heard from Ronald D. Vitiello, Acting Chief, U.S. Border Patrol, Department of Homeland Security; Major General Randolph D. ''Tex'' Alles (Retired, USMC), Executive Assistant Commissioner, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security; and Rebecca Gambler, Director, Homeland Security and Justice Issues, Government Accountability Office.

THE ORIGINAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROLE OF CONGRESS AND HOW FAR WE'VE DRIFTED FROM IT

Committee on the Judiciary: Task Force on Executive Overreach held a hearing entitled ''The Original Understanding of the Role of Congress and How Far We've Drifted from It''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

THE ENCRYPTION TIGHTROPE: BALANCING AMERICANS' SECURITY AND PRIVACY

Committee on the Judiciary: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''The Encryption Tightrope: Balancing Americans' Security and Privacy''. Testimony was heard from James B. Comey, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation; and public witnesses.

EXAMINING THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR'S SPENDING PRIORITIES AND THE PRESIDENT'S FISCAL YEAR 2017 BUDGET PROPOSAL

Committee on Natural Resources: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Examining the Department of the Interior's Spending Priorities and the President's Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Proposal''. Testimony was heard from Sally Jewell, Secretary, Department of the Interior.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURE

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Water, Power and Oceans held a hearing on H.R. 4576, the ''Ensuring Access to Pacific Fisheries Act''. Testimony was heard from David Balton, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Oceans and Fisheries, Department of State; Russell Smith, Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; and public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Full Committee held a 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''. The following legislation was ordered reported, without amendment: S. 1109, H.R. 3866, H.R. 4605, H.R. 4612, and H.R. 4372. The following legislation was ordered reported, as amended: H.R. 2615, H.R. 2908, H.R. 4359, H.R. 4361, H.R. 4392, and H.R. 4639.

ENSURING TERMINATED PROVIDERS ARE REMOVED FROM MEDICAID AND CHIP ACT

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H.R. 3716, the ''Ensuring Terminated Providers are Removed from Medicaid and CHIP Act''. The committee granted, by voice vote, a structured rule for H.R. 3716. The rule provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule makes in order as original text for purpose of amendment an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114–45 and provides that it shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute. The rule makes in order only those further amendments printed in the Rules Committee report. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question. The rule waives all points of order against the amendments printed in the report. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. Testimony was heard from Representatives Bucshon and Tonko.

SAVING TAXPAYER DOLLARS BY REDUCING FEDERAL OFFICE SPACE COSTS

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management held a hearing entitled ''Saving Taxpayer Dollars by Reducing Federal Office Space Costs''. Testimony was heard from Representative Hoyer; D. Brooks Smith, Chair, Committee on Space and Facilities, Judicial Conference of the United States; Norman Dong, Commissioner, Public Buildings Service, General Services Administration; Richard L. Haley II, Chief Financial Officer/Assistant Director, Facilities and Logistics Services Division, Federal Bureau of Investigation.

GETTING INCENTIVES RIGHT: CONNECTING LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS WITH JOBS

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Human Resources held a hearing entitled ''Getting Incentives Right: Connecting Low-Income Individuals with Jobs''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

GERMANY'S CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE OSCE

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Commission concluded a hearing to examine Germany's chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, focusing on priorities and challenges, after receiving testimony from Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Berlin, Germany.

NEW PUBLIC LAWS

(For last listing of Public Laws, see DAILY DIGEST, *p. D185)*

H.R. 487, to allow the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma to lease or transfer certain lands. Signed on February 29, 2016. (Public Law 114–127)

H.R. 890, to revise the boundaries of certain John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System units in Florida. Signed on February 29, 2016. (Public Law 114–128)

H.R. 3262, to provide for the conveyance of land of the Illiana Health Care System of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Danville, Illinois. Signed on February 29, 2016. (Public Law 114–129)

H.R. 4056, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to convey to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs all right, title, and interest of the United States to the property known as ''The Community Living Center'' at the Lake Baldwin Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic, Orlando, Florida. Signed on February 29, 2016. (Public Law 114–130)

H.R. 4437, to extend the deadline for the submittal of the final report required by the Commission on Care. Signed on February 29, 2016. (Public Law 114–131)

S. 2109, to direct the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to develop an integrated plan to reduce administrative costs under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. Signed on February 29, 2016. (Public Law 114–132)

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2, 2016

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

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, 10 a.m., SD–124.

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.

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.

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.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: to hold an oversight hearing to examine the Federal Communications Commission, 10 a.m., SR–253.

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'', 9:30 a.m., SD–406.

Committee on Finance: business meeting to consider the nominations of Mary Katherine Wakefield, of North Dakota, to be Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services, Andrew LaMont Eanes, of Kansas, to be Deputy Commissioner of Social Security, and Elizabeth Ann Copeland, of Texas, and Vik Edwin Stoll, of Missouri, both to be a Judge of the United States Tax Court, Time to be announced, Room to be announced.

Committee on Foreign Relations: to hold hearings to examine the economic and geopolitical implications of low oil and gas prices, 10 a.m., 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, 10 a.m., 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, 10 a.m., SD–G50.

House

Committee on Agriculture, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Past, Present, and Future of SNAP: Examining State Options'', 10 a.m., 1300 Longworth.

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on Department of Veterans Affairs, 9:30 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Defense, budget hearing on the Air Force, 10 a.m., H–140 Capitol.

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.

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, budget hearing on Department of Energy, Applied Energy, 10:30 a.m., 2362–B Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on Department of the Interior, 1 p.m., B–308 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, budget hearing on Department of Energy, Science, 1:30 p.m., 2362–B Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Legislative Branch, budget hearing on House of Representatives officers, 1:30 p.m., HT–2 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Homeland Security, budget hearing on Transportation Security Administration, 2 p.m., H–309 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on Federal Aviation Administration, 2 p.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Legislative Branch, budget hearing on the Library of Congress, 2:30 p.m., HT–2 Capitol.

Committee on Armed Services, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''World Wide Threats'', 10 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces, hearing entitled ''Ground Force Modernization Budget Request'', 1 p.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, hearing entitled ''Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Request for Department of Defense Nuclear Forces'', 2 p.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Energy and Power, hearing entitled ''The Fiscal Year 2017 DOE Budget'', 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled ''Examining the U.S. Public Health Response to the Zika Virus'', 10:15 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

Select Investigative Panel of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, hearing entitled ''Bioethics and Fetal Tissue'', 10 a.m., HVC–210.

Committee on Financial Services, 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, Full Committee, markup on H. Con. Res. 121, expressing the sense of the Congress condemning the gross violations of international law amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict in Syria, and asking the President to direct his Ambassador at the United Nations to promote the establishment of a war crimes tribunal where these crimes could be addressed; 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.

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, Subcommittee on Transportation Security, hearing entitled ''The Transportation Security Administration's FY2017 Budget Request'', 10 a.m., 311 Cannon.

Committee on Natural Resources, 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, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Geolocation Technology and Privacy'', 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

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, 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, Subcommittee on Research and Technology, hearing entitled ''Smart Health: Empowering the Future of Mobile Apps'', 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, 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, 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, Subcommittee on Oversight, hearing entitled ''Protecting the Free Exchange of Ideas on College Campuses'', 10 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

Joint Meetings

Joint Hearing: 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.

Joint Economic Committee: to hold hearings to examine the Economic Report of the President, 2:30 p.m., SH–216.

Résumé of Congressional Activity

SECOND SESSION OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

The first table gives a comprehensive résumé of all legislative business transacted by the Senate and House. The second table accounts for all nominations submitted to the Senate by the President for Senate confirmation.

DATA ON LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY

January 4 through February 29, 2016

	Senate	*House*	*Total*
Days in session	25	24	..
Time in session	133 hrs., 44′	115 hrs., 2′	..
Congressional Record:			
Pages of proceedings	1,104	1,046	..
Extensions of Remarks	..	250	..
Public bills enacted into law	5	12	17
Private bills enacted into law	..	..	..
Bills in conference	..	..	..
Measures passed, total	45	86	131
Senate bills	6	8	..
House bills	9	53	..
Senate joint resolutions	..	1	..
House joint resolutions	..	..	..
Senate concurrent resolutions	3	3	..
House concurrent resolutions	2	4	..
Simple resolutions	25	17	..
Measures reported, total	* 30	* 54	84
Senate bills	20	1	..
House bills	5	43	..
Senate joint resolutions	..	..	..
House joint resolutions	..	..	..
Senate concurrent resolutions	..	..	..
House concurrent resolutions	..	..	..
Simple resolutions	5	10	..
Special reports	1	..	..
Conference reports	1	..	..
Measures pending on calendar	237	15	..
Measures introduced, total	217	414	631
Bills	170	341	..
Joint resolutions	3	3	..
Concurrent resolutions	6	15	..
Simple resolutions	38	55	..
Quorum calls	..	1	..
Yea-and-nay votes	27	32	..
Recorded votes	..	69	..
Bills vetoed	1	1	..
Vetoes overridden	..	..	..

* These figures include all measures reported, even if there was no accompanying report. A total of 18 written reports have been filed in the Senate, 54 reports have been filed in the House.

DISPOSITION OF EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS

January 4 through February 29, 2016

Civilian nominations, totaling 207 (including 181 nominations carried over from the First Session), disposed of as follows:	
Confirmed	18
Unconfirmed	186
Withdrawn	3
Other Civilian nominations, totaling 339 (including 97 nominations carried over from the First Session), disposed of as follows:	
Confirmed	222
Unconfirmed	116
Withdrawn	1
Air Force nominations, totaling 2,908 (including 181 nominations carried over from the First Session), disposed of as follows:	
Confirmed	802
Unconfirmed	2,106
Army nominations, totaling 2,428 (including 1,740 nominations carried over from the First Session), disposed of as follows:	
Confirmed	1,879
Unconfirmed	549
Navy nominations, totaling 69 (including 5 nominations carried over from the First Session), disposed of as follows:	
Confirmed	9
Unconfirmed	60
Marine Corps nominations, totaling 1,228 (including 3 nominations carried over from the First Session), disposed of as follows:	
Confirmed	744
Unconfirmed	484

Summary

Total nominations carried over from the First Session	2,207
Total nominations received this Session	4,972
Total confirmed	3,674
Total unconfirmed	3,501
Total withdrawn	4
Total returned to the White House	0

Next Meeting of the SENATE

9:30 a.m., Wednesday, March 2

Senate Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Senate will begin consideration of S. 524, Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Wednesday, March 2

House Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Consideration of H.R. 3716—Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers Act (Subject to a Rule).

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