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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 2, 1016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JODY B. HICE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

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

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

HONORING COACH MIKE BAEB

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

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize New Trier High School wrestling coach Mike Baeb, who is leaving New Trier after helping lead the wrestling program for over 30 years.

When he arrived at New Trier, he truly injected new life into the program, and I should know because I was a senior on the wrestling team when he came in as a coach. As a senior and the captain of the team, I often had to wrestle Coach Baeb; and I have to tell you, wrestling Coach Baeb was like wrestling a bear.

Unfortunately, I only had 1 year of coaching from Mike, and I certainly could have benefited from many more. During his time as coach, Mike won 8 Central Suburban League Conference championships, 13 IHSA Regional championships, and 7 State place winners.

Coach Baeb has also been a leader, a friend, and a mentor to many students over the past 30 years, all of whom are better off having been under his leadership, and that includes myself.

I offer my sincere thanks to Coach Baeb for his friendship and for his leadership. I wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

DIVERSITY ON NETWORK TELEVISION

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

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, when we got our first color TV, it was a big deal in my family. We were working class, Puerto Rican, and not used to such luxury; so when we got a color TV, we had really arrived in America.

Every Sunday night, my sister and I would watch ''The Wonderful World of Disney'' that always started with the same announcement: ''The following program is brought to you in living color on NBC.'' Then you would hear the NBC chimes.

Well, that was a long time ago. Now you turn on NBC, and the furthest thing from your mind is color. What is going on at NBC? Last week Wake Forest University professor and MSNBC television host Melissa Harris-Perry was abruptly pulled from the airwaves without even a chance to say good-bye.

NBC said they wanted a show that was more about politics, but I have to say, when I watched her show, Melissa Harris-Perry was talking about politics in a unique way, like few others on the airwaves. She brought diverse voices to the table to talk directly and unapologetically about the politics of race in America, a major theme among candidates and a critical conversation to include on the airwaves.

I am sad to see her go, just like Alex Wagner before her, but I am even sadder because I don't think these are isolated cases.

Anchorman Jose Diaz-Balart is another voice that seems to be disappearing from English language airwaves. You remember Jose. He is the Telemundo anchorman NBC would bring out to ask a question—only one question—about immigration during the Republican Presidential debates in 2012.

You may have met his brother Lincoln. He used to sit over there, and his other brother MARIO still does. Jose had a 2-hour show on MSNBC and did a very good job, but Jose is a lot harder to find these days. They cut him back, and now it seems that they are cutting him out.

For example, MSNBC announced that they were sending a team of reporters to Florida to report on the primary next Tuesday, but not Jose, one of the most respected and recognized journalists in America, who happens to be from Miami and a Florida political dynasty. Apparently he is not the right guy to report on politics in Florida.

Let's not forget the great NBC racism flip-flop last year when NBC severed its ties to Donald Trump because of his racist remarks about Latinos, only to have him host their flagship comedy show ''Saturday Night Live'' a few months later.

That was right about the same time last fall when NBC's executives met with members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and NBC News President Deborah Turness told us, ''We love the Hispanic community,'' as she updated us on strides they were making

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on diversity in hiring. She made it very clear that she had our community's interests at heart when she said, ''Yo hablo Español'' in her beautiful British accent.

Most of the news coverage of this meeting was about when she used the term ''illegals'' to describe immigrants, which, in case you need a reminder, is not a good idea when you are meeting with members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

Well, forgive me for not noticing just how much progress NBC was making on diversity when some of the most visible people of color at NBC, like Alex Wagner, Melissa Harris-Perry, and Jose Diaz-Balart, are disappearing.

But let's be clear: this is not about quotas, window dressing, or checking the diversity box. Journalists of color bring a different texture and a different perspective on what issues matter and what should be discussed and debated on television.

The reality is that our Nation has become more diverse, and our television and our news media and our political institutions, including the Democratic and Republican Parties, have not kept up.

When NBC has a bad year when it comes to race, or when the Oscars have a couple of bad years when it comes to people of color, these are moments to talk about and confront the emotions and ideas we all have—we all have—about race and ethnicity.

It is a good time to think about what the phrase ''e pluribus unum'' really means in America today. This is a discussion we should all be having all of the time here in this body, on news programs, and in entertainment. It is a discussion I hope every family is having at their dinner table.

TAMMY BATEMAN'S STORY

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

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, every West Virginian knows about the consequences of the war on coal. We see it everywhere we go: mines are closing; school districts are laying off employees; county commissions are forced to lay off deputy sheriffs; retailers are going out of business; mom-and-pop stores are struggling, barely able to hang on.

A pink slip doesn't mean just a loss of a job. It means a loss of a way of life; it means hard choices; and for some it means having to leave West Virginia entirely to find work elsewhere. The war on coal is killing West Virginia jobs.

Tammy Bateman and her family had to make a difficult decision. It changed the life of every member of her family, in particular that of her daughter. Tammy is a West Virginia coal voice. This is her family.

Here is what Tammy wrote to me:

''My husband worked for Cecil Walker Machinery for over 20 years at the Logan branch in West Virginia. We have lived here for all of our lives.

''Due to the declining coal industry, we had to move to another State and move our daughter from the school that she loves.

''We have a lot of friends and family that have either had to pack up and move away also and some that have stayed and have been laid off and are suffering.

''This is all due to Obama's war on coal. You see, when coal is affected, so are small businesses, schools, and much more, especially people's livelihoods.''

Mr. Speaker, the people of my district want to work. They want a paycheck to provide for their families. They want a better future for their children.

Thanks to the war on coal, thanks to the EPA's regulations putting coal mines out of business, West Virginians are suffering. This administration needs to put West Virginians back to work, not put West Virginians out of work.

SPECIAL IMMIGRANT VISA PROGRAM

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today a bipartisan group of several dozen Members from both sides of the aisle led by ADAM KINZINGER and me were going to be sending a letter to Secretary Kerry, and I am pleased to say we don't have to send it.

The origin of the request dealt with our military operations in the Middle East, the brave Iraqi and Afghan men and women who provided sensitive and trusted services to United States military personnel. For over a decade, I have been working to try and protect them.

These Iraqis and Afghans who worked with Americans, whether as drivers or interpreters, were shoulder to shoulder with our troops, often in dangerous circumstances. In some instances, we have heard how their services literally made the difference as to whether our soldiers lived or died.

Now, thousands of our allies who helped us, face kidnapping, torture, and murder as a direct result of their assistance provided to the United States because members of the Taliban and the self-proclaimed Islamic State and other hostile elements on the ground see these individuals' service as an act of betrayal—and they have long memories.

To reward their faithful service and to fulfill our moral obligation, I have worked with colleagues on both sides of the aisle and with Senators, starting with Senator MCCAIN and the late Senator Kennedy in 2007, to create a special immigrant visa program. Known as the SIV program, enables the safe relocation of these Afghans and Iraqis to the United States.

Since 2007, our bipartisan team in Congress, including a number of Members who have recently joined us who served in Iraq and Afghanistan and know these circumstances firsthand, has been working to reform and revise the program, sometimes fighting just to keep it alive.

In November of last year, the National Defense Authorization Act extended and expanded the Afghan SIV program to ensure the continued protection of these souls. However, the final version of the bill also lengthened the period of service from 1 to 2 years required for individuals ''submitting a petition after September 30, 2015.''

The State Department's initial announcement on the interpretation of the law would have made more than 3,000 of our Afghan allies who had already begun the cumbersome application process start over to demonstrate the 2 years of qualifying employment. That is why Representative KINZINGER and I prepared this bipartisan letter to call on the State Department to revisit the interpretation.

Thankfully, after review and consideration of the concerns from Members of Congress, the State Department agreed to apply the 2-year requirement only to new applicants. This is welcome news.

Every hour that is delayed to relocate these vital partners to safety, puts their lives at risk and lives of their families. I am glad we have put this behind us perhaps, but we cannot keep operating in this inefficient manner while our allies and their families face consistent threats.

□ 1015

They deserve better. And we can do better.

It is shameful that we cannot better serve those who have put their lives on the line to help us. It seems that there is always another roadblock that occurs.

This should be a bipartisan issue that Members of Congress and the administration can work together on to save lives. It is not just saving the lives of the people who helped us.

It ensures the safety of our troops and other American personnel currently serving in harm's way. It will ensure the success of our future missions. No one in their right mind will cooperate with American forces under dire circumstances if we abandon them after their vital assistance.

I applaud the State Department's reinterpretation of this work requirement and look forward to working with my colleagues on the SIV program improvements this year. I hope we can do a better job to meet our responsibility to these souls who risked so much to help Americans.

REFORMING OUR MENTAL HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

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

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of reforming our Nation's broken mental health care system.

Too often we are reminded that the country's mental health care system is not working nearly as well as should be the case. Many Americans hide behind the curtain of shame and insecurity while many others lack access, assistance, or even information on how they may receive treatment.

It is a vicious cycle, where the vulnerable who need the most care are instead left out of society, unemployable, and, in some cases, a danger to themselves and others.

Recent data suggests that fewer than one-third of Americans with diagnosable mental illness actually get treatment. Experts also estimate that more than half of those who suffer from severe mental disorders do not receive treatment in any given year.

At least 25 percent of returning troops from Iraq and Afghanistan will experience some type of mental health condition. We owe our servicemen and -women and veterans this effort to get them the care they need and deserve.

I am proud to partner with Democratic Congresswoman DORIS MATSUI of California, with whom I serve on the Energy and Commerce Committee, in recently introducing a bill to significantly expand access and strengthen community mental health and behavioral health services across the country.

The Expand Excellence in Mental Health Care Act aims to expand mental health care planning grants in two dozen States, including New Jersey, through an initiative based on our 2014 Excellence in Mental Health Act that was signed into law by President Obama in 2014.

This measure is directly tackling one of the most significant mental health care challenges: access. The Expand Excellence in Mental Health Act will enable more States to experiment with the tools and practices to fix this broken system.

By expanding the law to include more States, we encourage greater collaboration and testing to find out what solutions work, how best to care for those who need treatment, and what we can do to keep the people of the United States safe.

The Excellence in Mental Health Care Act is one of the most significant works Congress has already passed into law on mental health care. We should expand it and keep the momentum going.

I am also proud to be working with Republican Congressman TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania on this issue. Dr. MURPHY, who has a Ph.D. in psychology, has been using his expertise to lead a serious discussion in the House Energy and Commerce Committee on this critical issue.

His Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act, which I am proud to cosponsor, takes a clinical approach to supporting families and individuals undergoing sudden or long-term mental health crises. The bill views those who need care through the mental health lens, not just through the criminal justice system.

Our work on these bills is part of a larger conversation on improving mental health care in this country. These bills will help struggling families who seek the best care for their loved ones. It will help those who fear stigma to get the care they need and will give our servicemen and -women and veterans the care they deserve.

I urge support for these measures, and I welcome all good ideas to the table for reforming our mental health care system.

CELEBRATING GEORGE ZANDER'S LEGACY

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

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and celebrate the life of a magnificent human being, remarkable leader, and close personal friend, Mr. George Zander of Palm Springs, California.

Many in our community knew George as a strident advocate for equality. George was a gentle man with a burning passion to make our Nation a more perfect Union, particularly for our LGBT brothers and sisters.

In my years working in the Coachella Valley, I, like so many others in our community, knew George as a colleague, adviser, and, above all, a dear friend.

George left this world on December 10, 2015. Nonetheless, his vision, passion, and vigorous strength to fight for a more just Coachella Valley, a more just Nation, and, ultimately, a more just world, are what remain.

George's legacy is one of social justice. For over three decades, he was actively engaged in the communities that make up the desert of the Coachella Valley. He was a leader among us and steadfastly guided our community toward a more inclusive and welcoming place.

So today I would like to take a moment to memorialize the life of George Zander, whose legacy will live on for future generations, not just in the Coachella Valley, but in the history of our Nation.

As a young man, George heeded President Kennedy's call to service and joined the Peace Corps, where it became clear that he was a natural leader.

His leadership and advocacy for the LGBT community spanned decades and began in a time where it was far less politically or socially acceptable to do so, but that didn't stop him.

In Seattle, Washington, George was a member of the first openly gay and lesbian association, called the Dorian Group. This vanguard organization advocated for the advancement of the rights of LGBT individuals at a difficult time in our Nation's history.

It took great courage, but George was never one to shy away from taking a stand. George had a passion for public service and a sincere faith that our representative government plays a role in improving lives.

He worked alongside his good friend, Seattle's mayor Ed Murray, was chair of the King County Democratic Party, and worked for the 1996 Clinton-Gore campaign. Later, moving to San Francisco, he worked side by side with Cleve Jones, another prominent LGBT rights activist.

From Washington to San Francisco, to our beautiful desert in the Coachella Valley, George made an enormous impact. After moving to the Valley, he worked in the office of the great Senator BOXER.

He was a member of the Palm Springs Police Advisory Board, the Palm Springs Police Department LGBT Outreach Committee, and vice chair of the Warm Sands Neighborhood Organization.

George was a contributor for the LGBT publication, The Bottom Line, cofounded the Desert-Stonewall Democrats, and later became the Palm Springs field officer manager for Equality California.

George played a key role in advocating for laws that protect the LGBT community locally and statewide, working tirelessly to defeat proposition 8. He also collaborated with other local LGBT groups, such as the Palm Springs Human Rights Campaign, the LGBT Center, Desert AIDS Project, and Trans Palm Springs.

Mr. Speaker, George was a true leader who was the victim of a hate crime weeks before his death. I condemn these acts. There should be no space for these types of actions toward any human being, regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

For more than three decades, George spearheaded efforts advocating for human rights and equality for all in my district and across the Nation.

George was not only an extraordinary leader, activist, friend, and husband, but, overall, a gentle, loving, and caring human being.

In honor of George Zander, let us pay our respects and never forget his legacy. Let us continue fighting for a more just and tolerant world.

THE NEED TO STAND UP AGAINST ASSAD AND RUSSIAN WAR CRIMES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. BROOKS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, last week a U.N. panel released a deeply troubling report on the grave and horrific atrocities taking place across Syria. The report was mandated by the U.N. Human Rights Commission to investigate and record all violations of international law since March 2011.

The report outlines in painstaking detail the mass human rights abuses that innocent civilians must endure from both the Russian-backed Syrian offensive and terrorist groups like ISIS.

Hospitals are deliberately targeted—33 in Aleppo alone—resulting in mass civilian casualties. In blatant disregard of core human rights law, starvation has systematically been used as a weapon of war.

Over 450,000 people are currently trapped in besieged towns and villages in Syria, and thousands are at risk of starving to death.

Schools and playgrounds and other public spaces are routinely shelled to inflict the maximum amount of terror on innocent civilians. The report tells of attacks on a girls school in Duma, where 19 civilians were killed. Even though there were no military objectives, government forces attacked the school twice, the second attack taking place during first aid evacuation efforts.

Last month Secretary Kerry helped negotiate a temporary, 2-week cease-fire with Russia that was supposed to end the fighting and allow for the delivery of aid to besieged towns.

Unfortunately, like the deal we struck with Russia on Assad's use of chemical weapons, this cease-fire merely locks in the gains achieved by the Assad regime and gives Russia outsized influence in shaping the future of the Middle East. Regardless, the terms of the agreement were almost immediately violated.

Any hope of a sustained peace was dashed this week with the almost-immediate and predictable breach of the cease-fire agreement.

On Sunday, the Syrian opposition released a letter documenting violations of the cease-fire agreement by the Assad regime, Russia, and Iranian-backed militia, which I will include in the RECORD.

FEBRUARY 28, 2016.

H.E. Mr. BAN KI-MOON,
Secretary-General,
United Nations, New York.

EXCELLENCY SECRETARY-GENERAL: I regret to inform you that hostilities committed by Russian, Iranian, the Syrian regime, and foreign militias and mercenaries allied to them have continued against the Syrian people despite the truce taking effect on the 27th February 2016.

Right from the onset of the truce, a large number of violations have been committed by the regime and its allies in several parts of Syria. The regime has continued to target populated areas using helicopter raids to deploy explosive barrels, resulting in a large number of fatalities and causing significant injuries, most of whom were innocent women and children. There were seven recorded incidents of such breach. Furthermore, there have been twenty-four recorded breaches involving artillery shelling and five incidents recording offensive ground operations. Recorded breaches of the truce were registered in twenty-six different areas held by the moderate opposition.

Moreover, today, Sunday 28th February, Russian fighter jets launched twenty-six air strikes against territory held by opposition groups which have announced and entered into the truce. Disturbingly significant is the fact that cluster bombs as well as thermobaric weapons were deployed, adding to the number of innocent civilian fatalities and horrifying injuries.

In light of repeated breaches by the regime and its allies since the commencement of the truce, the growing number of fatalities, which currently stands at twenty-nine documented deaths, in addition to the dozens who have been injured as indiscriminate targeting of populated areas continues, we wish to clarify the following:

It is most unfortunate that the Russian Ministry of Defense presented an erroneous map riddled with false military information (http://youtu.be/MaYvdEidSzsSent) and attributed this map to the United Nations for calculated political and military purposes, as purported areas of political influence and distribution of forces on Syrian territory. The sole purpose of that exercise was to exclude certain areas from the truce and to continue their systematic bombardment and forced displacement. Given the serious consequences of these violations on the Syrian people and on the unity and territorial integrity of Syria, we urge that you take the necessary measures to respond and counter false Russian allegations and put a stop to such practices.

We call on the United Nations and the Friends of Syria Group to be mandated to specify the territory covered by the truce to prevent hostilities in the designated inclusion zones, such a task must be assumed by an impartial and transparent party. We also note that the absence of clear separation lines will result in the targeting of civilian populated areas by the regime and its allies, and henceforth constitute yet another flagrant violation of Security Council resolutions jeopardizing the truce.

Although the Syrian opposition groups have demonstrated maximum levels of self-restrain and have thus far continued to adhere to their obligations to the truce, it seems likely that the regime and its allies' persistent crimes against the Syrian people will inevitably undermine international efforts for the continuation of the truce.

We have agreed to the temporary truce as a response to sincere international efforts aiming to ease the suffering of the Syrian people and to assist in the implementation of the humanitarian provisions of UNSCR 2254, in particular: articles 12, 13 and 14. Failure to achieve any significant progress in this regard will leave us no option but to examine alternative measures to ensure the protection of the Syrian people and bring an end to the crimes committed against them. It is therefore of critical importance for the Security Council to stand firm and unwavering in its resolve.

The persistent violations of the regime and the forces allied to it will undermine Security Council efforts for a political process, including the most recent, UNSCR 2268. It is abhorrent to pursue a political process through which the suffering of the Syrian people is used as a means to achieve political and military gains; under such circumstances, negotiations will be unfeasible.

Excellency Secretary-General, the gravity of the situation, and the consequent clear and direct threat to peace and security at a regional and international level, require the United Nations to intervene immediately, to stop the crimes committed against the Syrian people and to preserve the unity and integrity of Syria.

Yours respectfully,

DR. RIAD HIJAB,
Coordinator General, The High Negotiations Committee.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. These violations discussed in this letter are comprised of barrel and cluster bomb attacks and a number of ground incursions against opposition groups who had entered into the truce.

In the first 2 days alone, there were more than 29 documented deaths, mostly of women and children, and dozens of injuries. This is during the alleged cease-fire.

Some believe that this far-off conflict isn't affecting communities across America. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to say they are wrong.

I routinely meet with Syrian Americans in Indiana who share stories of the devastation their loved ones are experiencing back in their homeland. Listening to them recount the struggles of their families reminds me that, if we are to adhere to our values as a Nation, we must defend the vulnerable and expand basic human liberty.

Standing idly by as bombs rain down on hospitals or as Assad uses starvation as a method of warfare is an abdication of what we stand for as a Nation, but that is exactly what we have done.

This President's insistence on diminishing American power abroad has empowered Putin to step into the leadership vacuum, has bolstered Assad in Syria, and has prolonged the conflict.

We must not succumb to difficulty. We must take a stand and start meaningfully engaging our allies and strengthen the moderate Syrian forces, like the Kurds on the ground, to fight to replace the Assad regime.

Both my constituents and the Nation's top military advisers know that doing so is the only way to bring any long-term stability to Syria.

□ 1030

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY'S ACCESS TO WATER

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about one of the most important issues facing the San Joaquin Valley, and that is the access to water.

California has received well-above-average rainfall during the months of December and January. But for the past several weeks, we have seen dry conditions, once again, come back.

For the last several weeks I have tried to speak on behalf of the need to make changes so that we can urge the Federal agencies to pump water at maximum levels that are allowed under the biological opinions, so that we could bring more water to the San Joaquin Valley and the farms located south of the delta.

It is welcome news that they are pumping at more robust levels, and it is my hope that we will continue to pump at maximum levels when allowable, especially because these El Nino conditions that we have had in December and January are now fading, sadly.

With the possibility of California's rainy and snow seasons coming to an end, and with much less precipitation than we had hoped for, we must take advantage of every drop of precious water that is in the system.

We need a comprehensive plan to fix California's broken water system that provides short-term operational flexibility and, at the same time, increases the State's long-term drought resiliency that will provide real water reliability and actually recovers species that have been listed in the Sacramento, San Joaquin Delta.

It is time to address these issues that are impacting these species in the delta and implement a plan to recover them so that we can stop operating the water system primarily with the blunt tools of the Endangered Species Act that clearly aren't working. They are not working because the species are not recovering.

Studies have indicated that on some rivers feeding into the delta, over 98 percent of the juvenile salmon are eaten by invasive species like the striped bass that aren't even native to California.

Despite this knowledge and the clear protections provided listed species by the Endangered Species Act, the administration has established a goal to double the amount of striped bass in California.

It should not be the policy of the United States to increase the populations of invasive species that prey on native salmon in California. I don't get it. This makes absolutely no sense and needs to be corrected.

We should be implementing a predator control program which, I might add, is supported by the Salmon Fisheries Institute. As a matter of fact, they have got over 31 programs on predator control that they would like to implement. They can't implement one of them.

We should be focusing on trying to make a difference, and that is why I am proud to be a cosponsor of Representative JEFF DENHAM's legislation, the Save Our Salmon Act.

The Save Our Salmon Act, by Congressman DENHAM, would eliminate the policy of doubling striped bass populations in the delta, a policy which has very serious negative impacts to our native salmon species and causes tremendous harm to the farm communities in the San Joaquin Valley.

We have to determine if California is going to operate with a broken system or if Congress, the administration, and the State can come together with Federal and State legislation to provide meaningful solutions to fix our broken water system for the future, for the 21st century.

Will we allow communities to dry up and blow away, as some of my colleagues, I believe, sometimes infer?

Or will we come together and craft a solution that can improve conditions for everyone across the State, while focusing on drought recovery for those who have been most affected in areas that I represent?

I am talking about farm workers. I am talking about farmers. I am talking about farm communities that put food every night on America's dinner table. I will continue to believe that we still can come together if we focus on achievable solutions.

After years of moving more and more water through the delta in an attempt to halt species decline, we haven't actually recovered any of these species. It is high time, I believe, to try something new.

I remain committed to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to craft solutions that increase California's drought resiliency and provide water to the communities who have been most impacted by the recent drought because, after all, this is about security. It is about job security, it is about economic security, it is about the future security of our valley and the State of California.

We must fix California's broken water system for the short term and the long term. Time is of the essence, and every day of delay only results in losses of these vital water supplies.

SEVENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MILLER-RAFFAELE VFW POST

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 the 70th anniversary of the Miller-Raffaele VFW Post 6221 in Emporium, Cameron County, located in the Pennsylvania Fifth Congressional District.

The post is named after two sets of brothers who answered the call to defend the United States of America in World War II, Jack and Harry Miller, along with Sam and Frank Raffaele.

Jack and Harry were killed within 1 month of each other in 1944. Sadly, Sam and Frank also made the ultimate sacrifice on the same day, yet miles apart from one another, also in 1944.

After the war ended, the community welcomed back the surviving men and women who formed the Miller-Raffaele Post 6221, which was officially opened on March 5, 1946.

Mr. Speaker, we owe so much to the members of our Nation's Armed Forces, and especially to those members of the Greatest Generation who traveled to places such as Europe and Asia to fight tyranny.

I am proud to salute the members of the Emporium VFW on this important anniversary, and I wish them the best of success in the future.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 404TH MANEUVER ENHANCEMENT BRIGADE

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

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to formally congratulate the 404th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade from Normal, Illinois, for receiving the Reserve Family Readiness Award from the Department of Defense at the Pentagon last Friday.

This award is bestowed on the top unit in each Reserve component for their outstanding programs that support unit missions and family readiness.

The 404th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, under Unit Commander, Captain Jera Muder, has more than 2,000 soldiers in various functional units, from engineering to military police, to support units.

These family readiness support programs allow our soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen, and guardsmen to serve throughout the world with peace of mind, knowing that their home front is safe.

This is a prestigious title, and it makes me proud and Illinois proud that these remarkable men and women call central Illinois home.

Today we applaud their families for the sacrifices they make so their soldiers can defend our country abroad, and we congratulate them on this well-deserved award.

To those in our Armed Forces keeping our homes and families safe, thank you. And to the fathers, mothers, wives, husbands, and children behind our troops, you also deserve our gratitude for your ongoing sacrifice and bravery.

KLAMATH RIVER DAM REMOVAL

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the Natural Resources Committee, I requested and demanded that the Interior Department explain its involvement in creating what appears to be a shell corporation, which it calls a non-Federal entity, which would work to remove dams on the Klamath River in northern California and southern Oregon, this without any authorization from Congress.

Interior officials refused to answer in committee whether they will be subject to the Freedom of Information Act or even explain why stakeholders are required at these meetings to sign nondisclosure agreements before learning how they will be affected by the actions at these secret meetings.

They don't like having them called secret meetings. They have other euphemisms, such as a private conversation, what have you. They are even organizing bylaws for an incoming board at these meetings.

Mr. Speaker, the very idea that Federal and State government employees are involved in a project designed explicitly to avoid open government,

open government laws, and public disclosure should give us all pause, especially since tax dollars are being used to pay for the salaries of those folks involved, their travel, the meeting spaces, et cetera. They are not doing this pro bono.

While this is billed as a California-Oregon project, the Interior Secretary's signature is on a pact to create this entity that suggests that the administration is, again, trying to end run Congress to achieve a political goal.

I will continue working to get answers on this Klamath issue on the removal of the dams and the effect it will have on the Klamath Basin water users.

But in the meantime, the administration needs to end its focus on dam removal and work towards a solution that doesn't ignore the water supply issues that affect so much of the West, affect many thousands in northern California, and especially those directly in the line of fire in the Klamath Basin that have been clamoring for so long for a long-term solution to keep the waters flowing to their farms.

At a time of extreme drought in California and the Western States, and even more burdens such as the electricity renewable mandate that is going to affect California to 50 percent of required renewables, the concept of removing hydroelectric dams that also make a little water storage and have some positive effects on river temperature is absurd.

Why is the priority something that is going to hurt the people of the region, hurt their goals?

Instead, we should be pursuing water storage in California and putting this issue aside.

On top of that insult to injury is that it is being done in secret, without congressional approval, without the chance for all the stakeholders that really have an affect in the area to be involved.

This is the wrongheaded way to do things. It is offensive to me, it is offensive to my constituents.

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 41 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MOOLENAAR) at noon.

PRAYER

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

Dear Lord of mercy, we give You thanks for giving us another day. Hear our prayers and those of people around the world that there might be an end to hunger.

We use this moment to be reminded of Your presence and to tap the resources needed by the Members of this people's House to do their work as well as it can be done.

As the Nation digests the results of a most significant voting day, may the Members remain focused on the tasks at hand.

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

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

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas 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 PRO TEMPORE

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

U.S.-CANADA PRECLEARANCE AGREEMENT

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

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, in my district in northern New York, Canada is more than just a bordering nation. They are our neighbors and our friends.

Canadians and upstate New Yorkers enjoy their summers together fishing along the St. Lawrence River, golfing on Wellesley Island, visiting the Thousand Islands National Park, and exploring Boldt Castle.

Plattsburgh, a city in my district, has even branded itself as Montreal's U.S. suburb, hosting more than 100 U.S. subsidiaries of Canadian companies, with 15 percent of its area workforce working for a Canadian or border-related employer.

That is why I helped lead the efforts and support the Promoting Travel, Commerce, and National Security Act, a necessary step to solidify the preclearance agreement between the U.S. and Canada, which was reached nearly a year ago.

This significant, bipartisan legislation is great news for U.S.-Canadian relations, and I strongly encourage my colleagues to cosponsor this vital piece of legislation to maintain a secure northern border and facilitate travel and commerce between the U.S. and Canada and benefit our upstate New York economy.

BELFAIR SHOOTING

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

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, last Friday, in the region I represent, tragedy struck the close-knit community of Belfair. A shooting took the lives of a family and a neighbor. All the victims were taken too soon from this world. Right now, in their place, is heartbreak.

Since this happened, we have been thinking of the friends and family impacted by this shooting. Pastors from North Mason have gathered mourners together to offer support and prayers.

I want to make sure we note the courage of local law enforcement and other first responders who came to the scene. The Mason County Sheriff's Office, among others, deserves praise for putting their lives on the line in confronting the person responsible for this violence and responding to an awful situation.

As a dad of two little girls, it pains me that so many communities like ours are faced with tragedies like this. I am hopeful we can come together to find ways to stop them.

The words of Jamie McCallum, a pastor at Belfair Community Baptist Church, ring true as we pick up the pieces from this incident. Pastor McCallum said:

> Violence and pain may have the strongest voice for the moment, but love and life have the final say.

REMEMBERING BORIS NEMTSOV

(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 past Saturday, February 27, marked the first anniversary of the assassination of Russian pro-democracy and opposition leader Boris Nemtsov, who was tragically gunned down in Moscow.

Killed just days before he was due to publish evidence of Russian military involvement in Ukraine, Boris led the effort in exposing the regime's corruption at every turn as he fought for a more open and democratic Russia.

Mr. Speaker, this poster was actually used in Russia by Boris' supporters protesting in the aftermath of his murder.

I had the honor of working with Boris for many years, and he would want us to do our part to hold Putin accountable. But we cannot forget the questionable circumstances surrounding his murder.

I call on the administration to sanction any Russian official involved in Boris' murder, and I urge that their names be added now to the Magnitsky list of human rights violators. Let's honor Boris in this way.

GUN MYTH

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

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, today I want to bring attention to another myth about gun violence: the suggestion that more guns are the key to reducing gun violence.

On December 4, just days after San Bernardino, Senator TED CRUZ said, ''You stop bad guys by using our guns.''

We hear similar comments from gun advocates and allies all the time, but the facts tell a much different story. Not one of the 62 mass shootings from 1982 to 2012 was stopped by an armed citizen.

A 1998 study in the Journal of Trauma, Injury, Infection, and Critical Care found that a gun in the home is 22 times more likely to be used against a friend or family member than used in self-defense.

A 2003 study found women in homes with a gun were 2.7 times more likely to be murdered. A 2013 study found, for each percentage point increase in a State's gun ownership rate, firearm homicide rates increased by 0.9 percent.

Facts are stubborn things. But the facts are clear. More guns will not end our country's epidemic of gun violence.

HONORING CARL NORDSTROM ON HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY

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

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 100th birthday of Carl Nordstrom of Topeka on March 5.

Carl has devoted his life to public service. He was the executive director of the Kansas Association of Commerce and Industry from 1970 until 1982. He was cofounder of Leadership Kansas, inspiring leaders to maintain and strengthen the social, business, and political fabric of our State. In 1983, Carl was named Kansan of the Year by the Native Sons and Daughters of Kansas.

A graduate of Topeka High School and Washburn University, he participated in many amphibious landings in the Pacific during World War II. He is a past president of the Washburn Alumni Association and is in the Washburn Athletic Hall of Fame. He remains to this day a leader and teacher in the University United Methodist Church in Topeka.

Happy 100th birthday, Carl Nordstrom, and thank you for your service to Kansas.

PROMOTING TRAVEL, COMMERCE, AND NATIONAL SECURITY ACT

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Promoting Travel, Commerce, and National Security Act introduced in the House and Senate.

This legislation sets rules by which American border agents will operate in Canada, thereby allowing a land port of entry to move the inspection of all inbound cargo to the Canadian side of the border.

Last year U.S. Customs and Border Protection conducted a pilot program at the Peace Bridge in Buffalo. It concluded that preinspection of cargo would double the capacity of the bridge and slash wait times during peak season from 22 minutes to 5 minutes.

The Peace Bridge is an economic lifeline between western New York and southern Ontario, and its efficiency and safety is a top priority. I thank Congresswoman KUSTER for her leadership and partnership. I urge the House to approve this important legislation.

AMERICAN PEOPLE NEED TO KNOW

(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, yesterday Economics Professor Peter Morici of the University of Maryland in The Washington Times cited facts the American people need to know:

''President Obama would like us to believe things are getting better every day, but average median incomes are down about $1,650 on his watch. Elderly women are working in record numbers because pensions and retirement incomes are being decimated.'' ''Young folks, bogged down by student loans, can't buy homes and face rocketing apartment rents.''

''Should the economy tumble, Hillary Clinton will try to buy off voters with more Obama-vintage free stuff that makes creating jobs in the private sector so tough.''

''Expanding ObamaCare-mandated benefits will push up prices for drugs, medical services, and insurance premiums even more and cause employers to hire even fewer workers.''

''Instead of more jobs, America will have more debt and more employers fleeing.''

''America did not become a superpower by being timid, and it's time for a President who understands this.''

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

WHOLE WOMAN'S HEALTH V. HELLERSTEDT

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

Ms. JUDY CHU of California. Mr. Speaker, this morning I stood in front of the Supreme Court with hundreds of passionate voices rallying to defend our right to choice.

Before the Court today is one of the most significant abortion cases to be heard in years. For over 40 years now, Roe v. Wade has been the law of the land, recognizing a woman's right to a safe abortion when she needs it and where she needs it.

But State laws, like the Texas law in question, chip away at that right so that women must drive hundreds of miles and face serious delays before exercising their right to choice.

What is worse is that preventing women from accessing safe medical care has led to a sharp increase in self-induced abortions. We cannot accept putting women at risk by returning to the horrors of the back alley that harmed so many.

Today I call on the Supreme Court to keep women safe and recognize that our constitutional rights should not depend on our ZIP Code.

BLEEDING DISORDERS AWARENESS MONTH

(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, I rise today wearing my red tie because this March marks the first national Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month.

Bleeding disorders, such as hemophilia or Von Willebrand disease, are currently estimated to affect more than 3 million people nationwide.

These disorders are frequently underdiagnosed, and many victims of these disorders often struggle to get proper medical care. As a doctor who treated patients in northern Michigan, I have firsthand experience with patients tackling these difficulties.

While the medical community has made great strides over the years in improving the quality of care available for those impacted by bleeding disorders, we can do more.

I met recently with constituents in my district who are impacted by bleeding disorders, and they shared with me the great work being done in northern Michigan by Munson Healthcare's Bleeding Disorder Center to provide better care for patients throughout northern Michigan.

I hope that my colleagues and I can all join together with the medical research community to build on these

gains and find commonsense and bipartisan ways to develop new treatment options for those suffering from bleeding disorders.

□ 1215

VICTIMS OF GUN VIOLENCE

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

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, Roy, Utah, June 21, 2015: Shawna Smith, 26 years old; Tylee Smith, 6; Blake Smith, 2.

Bristol, Tennessee, August 29, 2015: Lena Rose, 57 years old; Toshya Millhorn, 39; James Millhorn, 36.

Columbus, Ohio, November 23, 2015: John Anderson, 31; Christina Anderson, 30 years old; Landon Anderson, 7.

Montgomery, Alabama, December 28, 2013: Glenn Thomas, 22 years old; Kimberle Johnson, 21; Timnorious Hamilton, 20.

Tucson, Arizona, May 12, 2015: Raul Carrillo, 58 years old; Karen Saari, 53; Erik Carrillo, 32; Isela Rodriguez, 17.

Cleveland, Ohio, November 21, 2014: Lemon Bryant, 60 years old; Sherita Johnson, 41; Ja'Rio Taylor, 19 years old; Shaylona Williams, 17 years old.

Mountain, Alabama, November 16, 2015: Sylvia Duffe, 71 years old; Clara Edwards, 68.

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF THE MILITARY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE OF KEY WEST

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

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Military Affairs Committee of Key West on their 50th anniversary celebration. Since its inception, MAC's mission has been to strengthen the bonds between military members and civilians in the Florida Keys. Members of MAC are devoted citizens of their community, participating or volunteering in local events to ensure that Keys life continues to thrive.

Today I am proud to recognize two original charter members of MAC, Mr. Edward B. Knight and Mr. Frank Toppino. Mr. Knight is a former Naval aviator in World War II, while Mr. Toppino was in the U.S. Army in the Pacific Theatre, also in World War II.

Both men have gone on to become successful entrepreneurs, businessmen, and philanthropists in Key West. They are highly respected pillars of the Florida Keys community, bringing together military members and civilians. They lead by example, inspiring us to uphold the values and the visions of MAC and their charter members.

I applaud Mr. Toppino, Mr. Knight, and the members of the Military Affairs Committee of Key West on a very successful and unifying 50 years. May MAC and its mission continue to flourish.

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE HONORABLE PATSY MINK DURING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

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

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, after graduating from Maui High in 1944 as class president and valedictorian, and attempting college with dreams of becoming a doctor, Patsy Mink had over a dozen medical schools slam the door shut simply because she was a woman.

Rather than quit, she took action. She went to law school, becoming the first Japanese American female attorney in Hawaii, and was elected as the first Asian American woman ever to Congress in 1965.

Through her 12 terms in the House of Representatives serving Hawaii's Second District, which I am honored to represent today, she was a true champion for equal rights and opportunity.

In 1972, her landmark bill, Title IX, was signed into law, legislation that has since allowed young women all across the country the very same opportunities to jump high, run fast, hit hard, and go the extra mile, the same as their male counterparts.

As we kick off Women's History Month, let us recognize and celebrate Patsy Mink and the countless other women throughout our Nation's history who have blazed trails before us and broken down barriers for a better future for our next generation.

SHOOTING IN CENTRAL KANSAS

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

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, last Thursday, yet another city, this time in central Kansas, was added to the list of communities across the country affected by gun violence.

Three lives were taken, 14 injured, and many others changed forever. Sadly, many of us know all too well the pain that comes from acts of violence caused by the trigger of a gun.

Ninety minutes before this shooter opened fire, he was served with a restraining order in response to a domestic violence report. Often these protection orders serve as the first notification to an abuser that the relationship is ending and, as in this case, that can lead to more violence.

That is why I offered the Protecting Domestic Violence and Stalking Victims Act, a bill that would prevent individuals subject to judicial protection orders from temporarily purchasing or possessing a firearm.

The hours right after an abuser is first served with a restraining order are the most volatile and dangerous, and it is only responsible to remove firearms from this situation temporarily.

I urge my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring this commonsense bill.

TEXAS HAS NO CHOICE

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, this morning I joined hundreds of women on the steps of the Supreme Court to protest the Texas law that is under consideration by the Court today.

The Texas law has already shut down over half of the abortion clinics in the State of Texas, and if the law is upheld today, it will effectively end the constitutional right of women in Texas to obtain a legal abortion.

If that happens, the extreme Texas law will likely be used as a blueprint by anti-choice extremists across this country.

Now, they claim that this law's restrictive provisions are necessary to protect a woman's health. But doctors across this Nation will tell you that that is a lie. The harsh restrictions were designed with the single purpose of closing and blocking access to choice.

I proudly joined over 162 of my colleagues on an amicus brief urging the Court to strike down this law. The right to choose is meaningless without the access to choice.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

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

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to acknowledge and celebrate the month of March as Women's History Month. During this month, we recognize the many successes of women all across America and our Nation's history.

I am proud to represent California's 33rd Congressional District, home to many female trailblazers such as Barbra Streisand who, in addition to her many accomplishments in the entertainment industry and her philanthropic contributions, is the first female director to receive Kennedy Center Honors and recently received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Nation's highest civilian honor.

We also have Sherry Lansing, who was the first woman to head a major Hollywood studio, the first female studio chief to receive a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, and the first woman to be named Pioneer of the Year by the Foundation of Motion Picture Pioneers.

Then we have Michelle Kwan, who was born in my hometown of Torrance, an alumnus of UCLA, who is not only a 5-time world championship ice skater with two Olympic medals, but also serves as senior adviser to the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, among many other roles.

As we celebrate Women's History Month, let us continue to work to create equal opportunities for future generations of women.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3716, ENSURING REMOVAL OF TERMINATED PROVIDERS FROM MEDICAID AND CHIP ACT

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 632 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 632

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 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. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Energy and Commerce now printed in the bill, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114-45. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

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

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

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 632 provides for a rule to consider a commonsense, bipartisan piece of legislation that will address waste, fraud, and abuse within the Medicaid program.

The rule provides for 1 hour of debate, equally divided between the majority and the minority of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. The Committee on Rules made in order four amendments that were submitted to the committee, three Democratic amendments and one bipartisan offering.

Finally, the rule affords the minority the customary motion to recommit, a final opportunity to amend the legislation should the minority choose to exercise that option.

H.R. 3716, the Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers Act, combines two bipartisan bills that were unanimously reported out of the Energy and Commerce Committee: H.R. 3716, the Ensuring Terminated Providers Are Removed from Medicaid and CHIP Act that was introduced by Dr. LARRY BUCSHON, a member of the committee; and H.R. 3821, the Medicaid DOC Act authored by Representative CHRIS COLLINS, also on the committee.

Not only is this bill bipartisan, it has received support of the administration, and it is an important illustration of the work we are doing in the House right now to improve health care for all Americans.

The Medicaid program continues to suffer from fraud, waste, and abuse. These issues cause direct harm to the beneficiaries and waste billions of taxpayer dollars.

Medicaid beneficiaries frequently end up in the emergency room, not because they need emergency care, but because they cannot find a physician participating in their Medicaid program. This is an inefficient and ineffective way to access health care.

H.R. 3716 is commonsense legislation that resolves both of these problems and improves beneficiary access to quality providers. Not only is this bill good for patients, it is fiscally responsible.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, this package would reduce Federal outlays by $15 million over the budget window because the Medicaid program would no longer be paying providers who had been terminated for reasons of fraud, integrity, or quality.

Although the Congressional Budget Office does not estimate State-specific savings, this bill would also save State Medicaid programs from several million dollars over the same timeframe.

The Office of Inspector General at the Department of Health and Human Services has previously found that 12 percent of terminated providers were participating in a State Medicaid program as of January 1, 2012, after the same provider was terminated for reasons of integrity or quality from another State Medicaid program.

□ 1230

The base bill, H.R. 3716, will ensure that we put an end to this problem.

State Medicaid and State CHIP programs will be required to report terminated providers to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services within 21 business days. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services will then be required to include that data and Medicare provider terminations in its Termination Notification database within 21 business days. In addition, State Medicaid and State CHIP managed care contracts will be required to include a provision that providers terminated for reasons of integrity or quality from Medicare, Medicaid, or SCHIP be terminated from participation in their provider networks. Where Medicaid or CHIP payments are made to providers for services performed more than 60 days after the provider's termination, those States will be required to pay back the Federal portion of the Medicaid match of those payments.

The bill will also ensure that State Medicaid agencies have a current and complete list of providers serving Medicaid patients by requiring providers to enroll with the State agency. To streamline reporting requirements and eliminate duplication, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services will be required to develop uniform terminology for terminations related to fraud, integrity, or quality.

These simple reforms will ensure that we stop paying millions of Federal taxpayer dollars for fraudulent and wasteful care and that beneficiaries are not receiving care from providers who have failed to adhere to basic standards of quality or integrity.

The second key issue this bill tackles is one of access to care. Beneficiaries in the Medicaid program have historically struggled to find a physician who will accept Medicaid and can provide treatment. H.R. 3716 includes H.R. 3812, introduced by Representative CHRIS COLLINS of New York, to empower beneficiaries with better information that will arm them with the information that they need to access care without first going to an emergency room.

While Medicaid beneficiaries enrolled in managed care plans have a defined network of providers, about half of States use delivery systems other than risk-based managed care, and those served under a fee-for-service or primary care case management program

include some of the most vulnerable Medicaid enrollees, such as the elderly and disabled children. Unfortunately, these enrollees may have limited assistance in identifying physicians who participate in the Medicaid program.

Specifically, the policy would require State Medicaid programs to publish an electronic directory of physicians who have billed Medicaid in the prior year—an indication that the physician has or likely still accepts Medicaid patients. That directory would include the physician's name, specialty, address, telephone number, and, where relevant, information on whether the physician is accepting new patients and linguistic capabilities.

Medicaid is estimated to cover 83 million people this year, and it is growing. H.R. 3716 makes two targeted but important reforms to strengthen the integrity of the Medicaid program and to improve access to quality care. This legislation is another example of the Energy and Commerce Committee's record of success on bipartisan reform to improve the state of health care in America. I encourage my colleagues to vote for this package.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding me the customary 30 minutes for debate.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to debate the rule for H.R. 3716, Ensuring Removal of Terminated Providers from Medicaid and CHIP Act. Among other things, this bill requires State Medicaid and CHIP programs to report providers terminated for reasons of fraud, integrity, or quality to CMS within 21 business days.

The requirements in this legislation are straightforward and have achieved broad bipartisan support. I find myself strangely in the position of agreeing with all of what my colleague from Texas had to say. I listened to him intently. So it only leaves the question: Why is this bill being presented here today instead of under the suspension calendar?

Rather than taking the time to debate a rule for a bill that could be passed without the need for a special rule, would it not be a better use of this body's valuable legislative time to debate and pass a budget resolution and get the appropriations process started?

Mr. Speaker, I applaud Speaker RYAN's promises to end Republican obstruction and dysfunction and return to regular order, but I cannot see how what is unfolding now is a step in that direction.

Last fall, Republicans and Democrats came together to pass a bipartisan budget agreement. Now Republicans, appeasing the most extreme fringe of their party, are considering breaking that agreement. Breaking this agreement will not be without consequences for this Nation, including deeper cuts to seniors and working families.

Mr. Speaker, the majority's fumble on the budget has ushered in a new level of dysfunction for this institution. My Republican friends' inability to govern has gotten so bad that they can't even agree to follow through on an agreement they have already agreed to and has been signed into law.

As we debate today, it is still not clear how the majority plans to move forward on one of this body's most basic constitutional obligations: appropriating funds to run the country.

I told the young people working with me that I thought of a metaphor last night about when I first learned to swim. I grew up in an area where there were a lot of lakes, so it was automatic that all of us would learn how to swim, and we did. In learning to swim, among the things that the young boys taught me was there were times when you just tread water, where you don't move forward or backward. If you are backstroking, just tread water. Some learned to float. I didn't. But apparently my Republican friends have learned to float and have learned to tread water because we are not going anywhere fast in this institution of dysfunction.

The inability to fulfill this obligation is truly astounding and reveals a Republican majority that may wish upon every star in the sky to return to regular order but has no earthly idea of how to do so. Indeed, the only regularity we see coming out of today's Republican leadership is one dedicated to disorder.

The inability to even begin a fruitful discussion of a budget process is but one among many pieces of evidence that prove that the Republican hopes of regular order are as elusive as is their ability to put forth a plan that will benefit working class Americans, strengthen our infrastructure, and provide for the least among us. It would be comical if it were not so dire.

Let's recap how we have arrived at this point of Republican inability to govern. For the first time in 40 years, Republicans refuse to even invite a representative from the administration to testify on the President's budget proposal. Then, Republican leaders failed to hold a committee markup on a budget resolution last week and fumbled their plans to present their conference with a promised budget blueprint. Now, in order to appease the insatiable radical fringe of his party, Speaker RYAN is threatening to break the terms of the bipartisan budget agreement passed into law last year—totally unbelievable.

Mr. Speaker, the American people deserve better. They want us to work together to fund their government and solve the problems of this country. This whole Republican budget process has shown that the majority and the radical fringe rightwing of their party are simply not up to that task.

I might add that I read last night that the majority leader in the other body has made it very clear that he is not going to play along with House Republican functionaries who would send stuff to the Senate that is not going to pass. I predict that we will one day have the usual omnibus at the end of this process, and that is tragic.

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, so pending Mr. HASTINGS' conclusion, I will reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers as well, and I am prepared to close.

I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I am going to offer an amendment to the rule to bring up a resolution that would require the Republican majority to stop its partisan games and finally hold hearings on the President's budget proposal.

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' and defeat the previous question.

Mr. Speaker, the bill underlying this rule institutes a number of proposals that have broad bipartisan support. So again I ask: Why are we here debating a rule for such a bill? Quite obviously, it is because Republicans have no choice but to tread water. In doing so, they have called a time-out on helping the American people; they have called a time-out on doing their job.

They have done so so that they may make haste in putting Humpty Dumpty back together again.

Good luck, my friends. Truly, truly, I wish you good luck.

In the meantime, rest assured that those of us on this side of the aisle stand ready in getting to the people's business once you can pull yourselves together and put forth a budget plan. I am, of course, suspect of whether our friends on the other side of the aisle will be able to do so.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I do want to point out today is March 2, significant for many of us in Texas because that is Texas Independence Day, a date that is recognized across the Nation as one that brought independence to the State of Texas.

I would point out it seems like oftentimes, in my role here presenting the Republican case for the rule from the Rules Committee, it also becomes my duty to provide some historical perspective for the House of Representatives, and today is no exception.

March 2, today, the first year that the Democrats had the majority in recent memory was calendar year 2007.

When was a budget passed in calendar year 2007? It was passed on March 29. I would point out that the only thing bipartisan about that budget resolution was the opposition.

Calendar 2008, a bit better, the budget passed on March 13, the middle of the month, about 2 weeks from where we are today. Once again, on that budget, 212 yeas and 207 nays. But the nays were bipartisan. The yeas, of course, were of a single party.

Calendar year 2009, the budget didn't pass until the month of April, and, once again, the only thing bipartisan about the budget that year was its opposition.

Then, finally, I would point out that the following calendar year, 2010, there was no budget submitted.

So, Mr. Speaker, my understanding from the chairman of the Budget Committee is they are actively working on the budget. I wish them Godspeed. I am thankful that I don't have to be in the room while it is being done, but I have every confidence that they will produce a budget document that the House will then consider. But today—today—Mr. Speaker, today's rule provides for consideration of an important fix to the Nation's Medicaid program.

I certainly want to thank Dr. LARRY BUCSHON and Mr. COLLINS of New York—both, of the Energy and Commerce Committee, two important members of the Committee on Energy and Commerce—for their work on this legislation.

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

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

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 632 OFFERED BY MR. HASTINGS OF FLORIDA

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

SEC. 2. Immediately upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the resolution (H. Res. 624) Directing the Committee on the Budget to hold a public hearing on the President's fiscal year 2017 budget request with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget as a witness. The resolution shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the resolution and preamble to adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget.

SEC. 3. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H. Res. 624.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

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

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

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

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

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

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

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1245

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BENISHEK). Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for a period of less than 15 minutes.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 51 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1301

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DOLD) at 1 o'clock and 1 minute p.m.

ENSURING REMOVAL OF TERMINATED PROVIDERS FROM MEDICAID AND CHIP ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 3716.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 632 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 3716.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1302

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 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, with Mr. HOLDING in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

The gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUCSHON) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana.

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

The bipartisan bill before us today improves access to quality healthcare providers for vulnerable Medicaid patients.

Today, State Medicaid programs too often suffer from waste, fraud, and abuse, which can harm beneficiaries and waste taxpayer dollars. At the same time, too many Medicaid patients may have a hard time finding a doctor. Our bill takes an important step forward in addressing both of these issues.

First, H.R. 3716 would ensure healthcare providers that are terminated from Medicaid or from one State's Medicaid program for reasons

of fraud, integrity, or quality are also terminated from other State Medicaid programs. The Office of Inspector General at HHS has previously found that 12 percent of terminated providers were participating in a State Medicaid program after the same provider was terminated from another State Medicaid program.

It is critical that fraudulent providers are not allowed to defraud taxpayers or to harm patients across the board. Medicaid beneficiaries are some of the most vulnerable patients, so our bipartisan bill will ensure that they are better protected. This commonsense bill was reported favorably from our Health Subcommittee and from the full Energy and Commerce Committee last year.

The other important aspect of this legislation was authored by CHRIS COLLINS of New York. This provision of the bill requires State Medicaid programs to provide beneficiaries who are served under fee-for-service or primary care case management programs an electronic directory of physicians who are participating in the program.

Research shows that too often Medicaid patients today have a hard time finding a doctor. The Government Accountability Office has previously found that Medicaid patients face particular challenges in accessing certain types of care, such as obtaining specialty care or dental care. Additionally, the GAO has previously reported that 38 States experienced challenges in ensuring enough participating providers.

To help empower Medicaid patients and equip them with better information, this policy would apply requirements similar to those in place for Medicaid managed care plans to fee-for-service and/or primary care case management programs.

Under the bill, States would be required to list on their Web sites a directory of physicians that would include the physician's name, specialty, address, and telephone number. Additionally, for physicians serving as case managers through the PCCM programs, States would be required to include information on whether a physician is accepting new patients as well as to list the physician's cultural and linguistic capabilities.

In a day and age when Medicaid patients can use their phones to search for the nearest gas station or grocery store, it makes good sense to ensure that States are giving patients better information so that they can readily find a doctor near them who accepts Medicaid patients.

Finally, according to the Congressional Budget Office, H.R. 3716 would reduce Federal outlays by $15 million over a 10-year budget window because the Medicaid program would no longer be paying providers that were terminated for reasons of fraud, integrity, or quality. The CBO does not estimate State-specific savings, but this bill would also save State Medicaid programs several million dollars over the same timeframe.

Mr. Chairman, this legislation provides commonsense reforms that help protect Medicaid beneficiaries, that improve access to care, and that save Federal and State dollars in the Medicaid program. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3716.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I am here to express my strong support for the Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers Act.

In particular, I am pleased that this legislation incorporates the Medicaid Directory of Caregivers Act, also known as the Medicaid DOC Act. This is legislation in which I joined with my colleague and friend from New York, Representative COLLINS, in introducing.

I thank Representative COLLINS for his initiative in this area and for working together on this issue in a collaborative and bipartisan way. I also thank the Energy and Commerce Committee staffs on both sides for providing constructive feedback and for expeditiously moving this bill out of committee.

The impetus behind this bill is simple and straightforward: to make it easier for Medicaid beneficiaries to find and access a doctor.

The underlying legislation would require States that operate a fee-for-service Medicaid program to publish an online provider directory, just like managed care plans and private insurance are already required to do. By creating a one-stop-shop for Medicaid beneficiaries to find information on participating providers, this commonsense legislation will make it easier for individuals and families to access quality health care.

The legislation details the minimum items that must be included in a provider directory, but it also allows States to go beyond those given standards. All consumers deserve to have access to a basic electronic provider directory to find the best physicians for their use.

The second component of the legislation under consideration would provide the CMS with critical tools to keep patients safe, to protect taxpayer dollars, and to protect the integrity of our Medicaid program.

This bipartisan bill, introduced by Representatives BUCSHON, WELCH, and BUTTERFIELD, implements previous OIG recommendations and builds on authorities originally authorized under the ACA. The ACA included a provision that prohibited disqualified providers from Medicare or a one State Medicaid program from simply crossing State lines and receiving payments in another State Medicaid program.

The ACA provision has been hard to implement, however, because States don't have a consistent or a standardized way of knowing when a specific provider has been terminated by Medicare or by another State. All States are not currently required to report this information, and if it is reported, it is in many differing formats, limiting the data's usability.

This legislation would require all States to report information on fraudulent providers to the Secretary for inclusion in a currently existing termination database that is accessible to all States. The legislation also requires the Secretary to develop uniform criteria for States to use when submitting information.

The language would also require all providers in managed care to enroll with State Medicaid agencies so that States know all providers that are participating in the program. This legislation preserves all existing provider appeals processes, and it changes nothing regarding the underlying standard for fraud in this part of the program.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I urge all Members to support this bipartisan legislation, which makes Medicaid more consumer-friendly and strengthens program integrity.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

This is the type of legislation that we should be passing on the House floor, and I will urge the Senate to pass this legislation later. This is just good government. It corrects some obvious flaws in the Medicaid program that will protect patients and save taxpayers money. I am very pleased that we are able to address this today.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TONKO. As I earlier mentioned in my comments, one of the key participants in putting this effort together was Representative WELCH from the State of Vermont.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH), a good friend and a fellow Energy and Commerce Committee member.

Mr. WELCH. I thank the gentleman from New York.

Mr. Chairman, we are lucky we have Dr. BUCSHON, a good Member, a good friend, and a great Energy and Commerce Committee person, who, with his experience as a physician, is able to give us the benefit of this bill. I thank the gentleman from Indiana for that.

The Medicaid program is an incredibly important program to get health care to poor Americans who need it. The vast majority of our providers use the Medicaid program to provide those services, but some fraudulent providers use that program to rip off taxpayers. It has got to stop.

One of the things that Dr. BUCSHON observed and brought to our attention was that when States are aggressively monitoring for fraud and when they identify a fraudulent provider, they write that person off the rolls so that that provider can't keep ripping off the taxpayers. But that information doesn't get disseminated to other States, so that fraudulent provider simply steps across the State line, sets

up another operation, and starts ripping off taxpayers all over again.

This legislation addresses that rip-off. I am glad it does because we can debate about lots of things, but there is unity here about wanting to make certain that any taxpayer dollar is well spent and that it is not ripped off by a fraudulent provider. This sets up practical mechanisms for States that have identified a fraudulent provider so they may share that information with other States so they don't find themselves digging the same hole.

We have bipartisan support for this. It is a money-saving bill. The CBO estimates that it would save approximately $28 million over 10 years.

That may sound like small money; but do you want to know something?

That is real money. It is about the money, but it is also about constant vigilance so as to make sure that the programs we design for good intentions work.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

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

Mr. WELCH. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Chairman, it is just what we should be doing here so we can look at things that have good intentions, like the Medicaid program, and find where there are holes in it and try to close them so that the program runs better so that taxpayer money is saved and so that the efficiency of government is enhanced.

□ 1315

And that is a mutual responsibility that we have so that people can have confidence that the taxpayer dollars that they are spending, whether it is for Medicaid or the Pentagon or any other program, are spent for the intended purposes and are not wasted.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank the gentleman for his comments. It is true that when you find common ground and work together, good things happen, and this is one of those instances.

I think there are a lot of areas in health care. I was a healthcare provider before I was a heart surgeon. I took care of Medicaid and Medicare patients, private insurance patients, and patients that did not have the ability to pay. I think that we need to continue to look for ways to improve our safety net healthcare programs, mainly continue to look for ways to make sure that people have access to health care in the United States regardless of their ability to pay, regardless of their ZIP Code.

That said, we need to make sure that people have access to quality health care, and that is why bills like this are so important. It weeds out providers that are fraudulent and have other quality-related problems.

As a physician—and I will speak for some of my physician friends—this is the type of thing that we all want in our specialties. We want to make sure that the patients that we serve have access to physicians who are providing quality health care and are not defrauding the system.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. COLLINS).

Mr. COLLINS of New York. Mr. Chair, I thank both Congressman BUCSHON and Congressman TONKO for their help on this very important bill that we are debating today. Included in Congressman BUCSHON's bill, H.R. 3716, is a bill that Mr. TONKO and I put together, H.R. 3821, the Medicare Directory of Caregivers, or DOC, Act.

Our thought behind this bill came from the GAO report that identified access to care as one of the key issues facing Medicaid beneficiaries. There is nothing worse than someone saying: ''The good news is you have got medical insurance coverage through Medicaid. The bad news is they can't find a physician.''

So as a very good, commonsense government idea, what Representative TONKO and I came up with was the thought that we should be publishing on each State's Web site a list of the providers who have seen a Medicaid patient in the last 12 months, the name of the physician, the address, the telephone number, and their specialty, so at least these folks navigating the system to find a doctor have somewhere to go as a starting point: ''Here is a doctor that has seen a Medicaid patient in the last 12 months. Let me give them a call.'' So they are not just lost going through the phonebook, so to speak, or Google.

What our bill would do, it would require that States that operate a fee-for-service or primary care case management program set up an online directory of physicians who have seen these Medicaid patients. We believe that this kind of access to caregivers will keep people out of the emergency rooms. They will have coordinated care by a physician, which is the best and most inexpensive way to treat them.

Representative BUCSHON's bill combined with our bill, H.R. 3821, does save $15 million over the 10-year period, as scored. The bill went through regular order and passed out of the Energy and Commerce subcommittee and full committee by voice vote with no objections.

We are also encouraged to know the White House has signaled that they do support passage of this important access to care legislation.

Again, I thank Chairmen UPTON and PITTS, and Ranking Members PALLONE and GREEN for their support. I encourage my colleagues to vote in favor of this bipartisan legislation.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), the ranking member of the standing Committee on Energy and Commerce, who has shown great leadership for the Democrats at the Energy and Commerce table. He is very much supportive of this effort here, and we thank him for that.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chair, I am pleased to support H.R. 3716, the Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers Act. This legislation is the compilation of two bills, H.R. 3821 and H.R. 3716, which are true efforts to improve program integrity in Medicaid in ways that will strengthen the Medicaid program. Both bipartisan bills passed out of the Energy and Commerce Committee through regular order and were favorably reported by voice vote.

Part of the new compiled bill reflects H.R. 3821, the Medicaid DOC Act. This bipartisan initiative, introduced by Representatives COLLINS of New York and TONKO, would require States that participate in fee-for-service Medicaid to publish electronic provider directories. This is critical information for patients so they can more easily find doctors in their area.

Currently, managed care plans in Medicaid are already required to maintain these directories, but there is no such requirement for fee-for-service Medicaid programs. While some States are already providing these directories, not every State does so. This commonsense and consumer-friendly legislation will require that all States provide their Medicaid patients with this information, and it does so quickly, requiring directories to be up and running in less than 1 year.

Now, while the bill includes minimum items that must be included in a provider directory, it also encourages States to go beyond these standards. While I am hopeful that States will take the initiative to provide other information, like whether doctors are taking new patients, the timeline set forth in this legislation is so accelerated, it is important that we build this foundation first before adding additional requirements to States. I look forward to continuing to work on this important issue with my colleagues.

The second part of the bill would provide CMS with critical tools to keep patients safe, protect taxpayer dollars, and protect the integrity of the Medicaid program.

This bipartisan bill, introduced by Representatives BUCSHON, WELCH, and BUTTERFIELD, implements previous OIG recommendations and builds on authorities originally authorized under the Affordable Care Act, which prohibited disqualified providers from Medicare or one State Medicaid program from simply crossing State lines and receiving payments in another State Medicaid program.

But the current law has been hard to implement because States don't have a consistent or standardized way of knowing when a specific provider has been terminated by Medicare or another State. Since States are not currently required to report this information or, if it is reported, it is in many

differing formats, it limits the data's usability.

This legislation being considered would require all States to report information on fraudulent providers to the Secretary for inclusion in an existing termination database that is accessible to all States. It also requires the Secretary to develop uniform criteria for States to use when submitting information and ensures those providers in managed care plans are enrolled with the State and also captured in the database.

Finally, the bill preserves and protects all existing provider appeal processes and changes nothing regarding the underlying standard for fraud in this part of the program, an important protection. This is smart policy that stakeholders and the administration agree will improve Federal and State efforts.

I urge Members to support the bill.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE).

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Chair, this is the way Congress should work, in a bipartisan capacity on an issue of importance to better the health of the American Nation.

As is so often true of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, we work in a bipartisan fashion. It is the committee of jurisdiction for so many of the issues that reach this floor, with the support in committee and in subcommittee of both Republicans and Democrats. Legislation coming out of our committee, the Energy and Commerce Committee, is legislation that passes here on the floor, goes over to the other House, and is eventually signed into law by the President of the United States. I am pleased that we are working closely with the other elected branch of government in this area.

I commend Congressman BUCSHON, Dr. BUCSHON, for his legislation that will so improve the issue we are discussing, and I think that Medicaid providers is an important matter for the entire Nation. I also compliment Congressman COLLINS of New York for his involvement on this issue.

With a program as large as Medicaid, it will always be a target for those who engage in fraud, but we can work to limit the impact of those who engage in fraud. The Congressman's bill is a positive step in that direction. It will save millions of dollars and send a message loud and clear that bad actors in one State should not be allowed to participate anywhere.

Medicaid-managed care plans already provide a network of doctors and nurses to care for patients. The requirement in this bill ensures that patients in fee-for-service Medicaid programs do not have to fend for themselves.

Research has shown that access to doctors can be a problem for Medicaid beneficiaries, so this commonsense step will help ensure beneficiaries are empowered with better information and that this happens across the board.

I thank Dr. BUCSHON and Mr. COLLINS, as well as the Health Subcommittee and its chairman, Chairman PITTS, and the full committee, including, of course, Chairman UPTON and Ranking Member PALLONE. Let's work together to ensure passage of this legislation on the floor of the House today.

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

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER).

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of H.R. 3716, the Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers Act.

A recent report by the HHS inspector general found that more than 1 in every 10 Medicaid providers who were terminated for fraud, integrity, or quality in one State were still participating in another State's Medicaid program.

To ensure that Medicaid patients are receiving their care from a qualified, licensed doctor, H.R. 3716 provides that disqualified providers be reported within 21 days to CMS, and each Medicaid provider must be enrolled with the State Medicaid agency.

H.R. 3716 also provides that State Medicaid programs include an electronic directory of physicians who serve Medicaid patients. Today, many Medicaid patients have a hard time finding a doctor and instead rely on the emergency room. With an established directory, Medicaid patients will be able to know which doctors are available to them and will ultimately get better care.

I encourage my colleagues to support the reforms in H.R. 3716 so we can make sure that Medicaid patients are receiving the care and attention they deserve.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Chair, again, I just would thank all who have been involved with the effort here—from my perspective, particularly Representative COLLINS, Dr. BUCSHON, Representative WELCH, and others who put together, I think, a good effort here to have a bipartisan, collaborative effort that speaks to sensitivity, speaks to compassion toward the patients, those requiring the access to health care, and certainly has great respect for the taxpayer and the ensuing outcomes.

With that, I would encourage my colleagues to support the legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chair, I would just like to echo the words of Mr. TONKO. This is good legislation. It improves the Medicaid program. It ensures access to quality providers for our Medicaid recipients in all of our States. Also, it helps our States to determine when people have been kicked off the program as a provider in another State and, therefore, helps them protect the patients in their own States.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Chair, today we are making a difference for the nation's most vulnerable. Republicans and Democrats working to strengthen Medicaid, and the White House has officially given its seal of approval to these commonsense reforms.

Today is an important day and underscores what we can accomplish when we work together.

Medicaid is an important lifeline for so many in Michigan and across the country. It is estimated the program will expand to cover 83 million people this year—to put that into perspective, that's one in four Americans. Given its rapidly growing size, it is imperative the program is working as it is intended—providing care for folks who need it most.

The Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers Act we are considering is the product of two bills authored by committee members Dr. LARRY BUCSHON and Rep. CHRIS COLLINS that unanimously cleared both the Health Subcommittee and full committee last fall.

Dr. BUCSHON led the effort to help cut down on fraud by eliminating bad actors. The bipartisan legislation ensures that providers terminated from Medicare or a state Medicaid program for reasons of fraud, integrity, or quality are terminated across the board from all other state Medicaid programs.

With a program as large as Medicaid, it will always be a target for fraudsters, but we can work to limit their impact, and this bill is an positive step that will save millions of dollars and send the message loud and clear that bad actors in one state should not be allowed to participate anywhere, period.

In addition to reducing fraud, we are helping increase access for those most in need. Finding a doctor is often a difficult task, and Mr. COLLINS led this effort to increase access to care beyond the emergency room. If a state is using a fee-for-service or primary case management system to deliver care to Medicaid patients, this bill requires they provide those patients with a directory of physicians.

Medicaid managed care plans already provide a network of doctors and nurses to care for patients. This requirement ensures that patients in fee-for-service Medicaid programs don't have to fend for themselves.

Research has shown that access to doctors can be a problem for Medicaid beneficiaries, so this commonsense step will help ensure beneficiaries are empowered with better information that is more readily available. And that's a good thing.

This bill doesn't solve all our problems, but it is a significant bipartisan step forward. And yesterday, the Office of Management and Budget announced the administration "supports House passage of H.R. 3716 because it improves program integrity for Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program."

We've got Republicans, Democrats, and the White House all in lockstep supporting meaningful, 21st century reforms for Medicaid. This bill shows that it's possible to work together on Medicaid.

I'd like to once again thank Dr. BUCSHON and Mr. COLLINS, as well as Helath Subcommittee Chairman PITTS and full committee Ranking Member PALLONE. Together, we are building upon the committee's proud bipartisan record of success. Let's keep the momentum going to help our most vulnerable folks.

The CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Energy and Commerce, printed in the bill, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114–45. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

The text of the amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 3716

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Ensuring Removal of Terminated Providers from Medicaid and CHIP Act''.

SEC. 2. INCREASING OVERSIGHT OF TERMINATION OF MEDICAID PROVIDERS.

(a) INCREASED OVERSIGHT AND REPORTING.—

(1) STATE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—Section 1902(kk) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(kk)) is amended—

(A) by redesignating paragraph (8) as paragraph (9); and

(B) by inserting after paragraph (7) the following new paragraph:

''(8) PROVIDER TERMINATIONS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Beginning on January 1, 2017, in the case of a notification under subsection (a)(41) with respect to a termination for a reason specified in section 455.101 of title 42, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on November 1, 2015) or for any other reason specified by the Secretary, of the participation of a provider of services or any other person under the State plan, the State, not later than 21 business days after the effective date of such termination, submits to the Secretary with respect to any such provider or person, as appropriate—

''(i) the name of such provider or person;

''(ii) the provider type of such provider or person;

''(iii) the specialty of such provider's or person's practice;

''(iv) the date of birth, Social Security number, national provider identifier, Federal taxpayer identification number, and the State license or certification number of such provider or person;

''(v) the reason for the termination;

''(vi) a copy of the notice of termination sent to the provider or person;

''(vii) the effective date of such termination specified in such notice; and

''(viii) any other information required by the Secretary.

''(B) EFFECTIVE DATE DEFINED.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'effective date' means, with respect to a termination described in subparagraph (A), the later of—

''(i) the date on which such termination is effective, as specified in the notice of such termination; or

''(ii) the date on which all appeal rights applicable to such termination have been exhausted or the timeline for any such appeal has expired.''.

(2) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR MANAGED CARE ENTITIES.—Section 1932(d) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396u–2(d)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(5) STATE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR MANAGED CARE ENTITIES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—With respect to any contract with a managed care entity under section 1903(m) or 1905(t)(3) (as applicable), beginning on the later of the first day of the first plan year for such managed care entity that begins after the date of the enactment of this paragraph or January 1, 2017, the State shall require that such contract include a provision that providers of services or persons terminated (as described in section 1902(kk)(8)) from participation under this title, title XVIII, or title XXI be terminated from participating under this title as a provider in any network of such entity that serves individuals eligible to receive medical assistance under this title.

''(B) NOTIFICATION OF TERMINATION.—For the period beginning on January 1, 2017, and ending on the date on which the enrollment of providers under paragraph (6) is complete for a State, the State shall provide for a system for notifying managed care entities (as defined in subsection (a)(1)) of the termination (as described in section 1902(kk)(8)) of providers of services or persons from participation under this title, title XVIII, or title XXI.''.

(3) TERMINATION NOTIFICATION DATABASE.—Section 1902 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(ll) TERMINATION NOTIFICATION DATABASE.—In the case of a provider of services or any other person whose participation under this title, title XVIII, or title XXI is terminated (as described in subsection (kk)(8)), the Secretary shall, not later than 21 business days after the date on which the Secretary terminates such participation under title XVIII or is notified of such termination under subsection (a)(41) (as applicable), review such termination and, if the Secretary determines appropriate, include such termination in any database or similar system developed pursuant to section 6401(b)(2) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (42 U.S.C. 1395cc note; Public Law 111–148).''.

(4) NO FEDERAL FUNDS FOR ITEMS AND SERVICES FURNISHED BY TERMINATED PROVIDERS.—Section 1903 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396b) is amended—

(A) in subsection (i)(2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking the comma at the end and inserting a semicolon;

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''or'' at the end; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(D) beginning not later than January 1, 2018, under the plan by any provider of services or person whose participation in the State plan is terminated (as described in section 1902(kk)(8)) after the date that is 60 days after the date on which such termination is included in the database or other system under section 1902(ll); or''; and

(B) in subsection (m), by inserting after paragraph (2) the following new paragraph:

''(3) No payment shall be made under this title to a State with respect to expenditures incurred by the State for payment for services provided by a managed care entity (as defined under section 1932(a)(1)) under the State plan under this title (or under a waiver of the plan) unless the State—

''(A) beginning on the applicable date specified in subparagraph (A) of section 1932(d)(5), has a contract with such entity that complies with the requirement specified in such subparagraph; and

''(B)(i) for the period specified in subparagraph (B) of such section, has a system in effect that meets the requirement specified in such subparagraph; and

''(ii) after such period, complies with section 1932(d)(6).''.

(5) DEVELOPMENT OF UNIFORM TERMINOLOGY FOR REASONS FOR PROVIDER TERMINATION.—Not later than January 1, 2017, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall, in consultation with the heads of State agencies administering State Medicaid plans (or waivers of such plans), issue regulations establishing uniform terminology to be used with respect to specifying reasons under subparagraph (A)(v) of paragraph (8) of section 1902(kk) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(kk)), as amended by paragraph (1), for the termination (as described in such paragraph) of the participation of certain providers in the Medicaid program under title XIX of such Act or the Children's Health Insurance Program under title XXI of such Act.

(6) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 1902(a)(41) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)(41)) is amended by striking ''provide that whenever'' and inserting ''provide, in accordance with subsection (kk)(8) (as applicable), that whenever''.

(b) INCREASING AVAILABILITY OF MEDICAID PROVIDER INFORMATION.—

(1) FFS PROVIDER ENROLLMENT.—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, not later than January 1, 2017, in the case of a State plan that provides medical assistance on a fee-for-service basis, the State shall require each provider furnishing items and services to individuals eligible to receive medical assistance under such plan to enroll with the State agency and provide to the State agency the provider's identifying information, including the name, specialty, date of birth, Social Security number, national provider identifier, Federal taxpayer identification number, and the State license or certification number of the provider;''.

(2) MANAGED CARE PROVIDER ENROLLMENT.—Section 1932(d) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396u–2(d)), as amended by subsection (a)(2), is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(6) ENROLLMENT OF PARTICIPATING PROVIDERS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Beginning not later than January 1, 2018, a State shall require that, in order to participate as a provider in the network of a managed care entity that provides services to, or orders, prescribes, refers, or certifies eligibility for services for, individuals who are eligible for medical assistance under the State plan under this title and who are enrolled with the entity, the provider is enrolled with the State agency administering the State plan under this title. Such enrollment shall include providing to the State agency the provider's identifying information, including the name, specialty, date of birth, Social Security number, national provider identifier, Federal taxpayer identification number, and the State license or certification number of the provider.

''(B) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in subparagraph (A) shall be construed as requiring a provider described in such subparagraph to provide services to individuals who are not enrolled with a managed care entity under this title.''.

(c) COORDINATION WITH CHIP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 2107(e)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397gg(e)(1)) is amended—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (B), (C), (D), (E), (F), (G), (H), (I), (J), (K), (L), (M), (N), and (O) as subparagraphs (D), (E), (F), (G), (H), (I), (J), (K), (M), (N), (O), (P), (Q), and (R), respectively;

(B) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following new subparagraphs:

''(B) Section 1902(a)(39) (relating to termination of participation of certain providers).

''(C) Section 1902(a)(78) (relating to enrollment of providers participating in State plans providing medical assistance on a fee-for-service basis).'';

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (K) (as redesignated by paragraph (1)) the following new subparagraph:

''(L) Section 1903(m)(3) (relating to limitation on payment with respect to managed care).''; and

(D) in subparagraph (P) (as redesignated by paragraph (1)), by striking ''(a)(2)(C) and (h)'' and inserting ''(a)(2)(C) (relating to Indian enrollment), (d)(5) (relating to reporting requirements for managed care entities), (d)(6) (relating to enrollment of providers participating with a managed care entity), and (h) (relating to special rules with respect to Indian enrollees, Indian health care providers, and Indian managed care entities)''.

(2) EXCLUDING FROM MEDICAID PROVIDERS EXCLUDED FROM CHIP.—Section 1902(a)(39) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)(39)) is amended by striking ''title XVIII or any other State plan under this title'' and inserting ''title XVIII, any other State plan under this title, or any State child health plan under title XXI''.

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as changing or limiting the appeal rights of providers or the process for appeals of States under the Social Security Act.

SEC. 3. REQUIRING PUBLICATION OF FEE-FOR-SERVICE PROVIDER DIRECTORY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1902(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (80), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in paragraph (81), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (81) the following new paragraph:

''(82) provide that, not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this paragraph, in the case of a State plan that provides medical assistance on a fee-for-service basis or through a primary care case-management system described in section 1915(b)(1) (other than a primary care case management entity (as defined by the Secretary)), the State shall publish (and update on at least an annual basis) on the public Website of the State agency administering the State plan, a directory of the providers (including, at a minimum, primary and specialty care physicians) described in subsection (mm) that includes—

''(A) with respect to each such provider—

''(i) the name of the provider;

''(ii) the specialty of the provider;

''(iii) the address of the provider; and

''(iv) the telephone number of the provider; and

''(B) with respect to any such provider participating in such a primary care case-management system, information regarding—

''(i) whether the provider is accepting as new patients individuals who receive medical assistance under this title; and

''(ii) the provider's cultural and linguistic capabilities, including the languages spoken by the provider or by the skilled medical interpreter providing interpretation services at the provider's office.''.

(b) DIRECTORY PROVIDERS DESCRIBED.—Section 1902 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a), as amended by section 2(a)(3), is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(mm) DIRECTORY PROVIDERS DESCRIBED.—A provider described in this subsection is—

''(1) in the case of a provider of a provider type for which the State agency, as a condition on receiving payment for items and services furnished by the provider to individuals eligible to receive medical assistance under the State plan, requires the enrollment of the provider with the State agency, a provider that—

''(A) is enrolled with the agency as of the date on which the directory is published or updated (as applicable) under subsection (a)(82); and

''(B) received payment under the State plan in the 12-month period preceding such date; and

''(2) in the case of a provider of a provider type for which the State agency does not require such enrollment, a provider that received payment under the State plan in the 12-month period preceding the date on which the directory is published or updated (as applicable) under subsection (a)(82).''.

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall not be construed to apply in the case of a State in which all the individuals enrolled in the State plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act (or under a waiver of such plan), other than individuals described in paragraph (2), are enrolled with a medicaid managed care organization (as defined in section 1903(m)(1)(A) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1396b(m)(1)(A))), including prepaid inpatient health plans and prepaid ambulatory health plans (as defined by the Secretary of Health and Human Services).

(2) INDIVIDUALS DESCRIBED.—An individual described in this paragraph is an individual who is an Indian (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603)) or an Alaska Native.

(d) EXCEPTION FOR STATE LEGISLATION.—In the case of a State plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.), which the Secretary determines requires State legislation in order for the respective plan to meet one or more additional requirements imposed by amendments made by this section, the respective plan shall not be regarded as failing to comply with the requirements of such title solely on the basis of its failure to meet such an additional requirement 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 enactment of this section. For purposes of the previous sentence, in the case of a State that has a 2-year legislative session, each year of the session shall be considered to be a separate regular session of the State legislature.

The CHAIR. No amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in House Report 114–440. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

□ 1330

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. BUCSHON

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in House Report 114–440.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 1, lines 2 and 3, strike ''Ensuring Removal of Terminated Providers from Medicaid and CHIP Act'' and insert ''Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers Act''.

Page 1, lines 15 and 16, strike ''January 1, 2017'' and insert ''July 1, 2018''.

Page 3, lines 1 and 2, strike ''the effective date of such termination specified in such notice'' and insert ''the date on which such termination is effective, as specified in the notice''.

Page 3, line 16, strike ''REPORTING REQUIREMENTS'' and insert ''CONTRACT REQUIREMENT''.

Page 3, line 20, strike ''STATE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR MANAGED CARE ENTITIES'' and insert ''CONTRACT REQUIREMENT FOR MANAGED CARE ENTITIES''.

Page 3, line 22, strike ''(A)'' and all that follows through ''With respect'' and insert ''With respect''.

Page 3, beginning on line 24, strike ''applicable), beginning on the later of the first day of the first plan year for such managed care entity that begins after the date of the enactment of this paragraph or January 1, 2017, the State shall require that such contract'' and insert ''applicable), no later than July 1, 2018, such contract shall''.

Page 4, strike lines 12 through 21.

Page 6, line 1, strike ''January 1, 2018'' and insert ''July 1, 2018''.

Page 6, line 17, strike ''the applicable date specified in subparagraph (A) of section 1932(d)(5)'' and insert ''July 1, 2018''.

Page 6, line 21, strike ''(i)''.

Page 6, line 21, strike ''for the period specified in subparagraph (B) of such section, has a system in effect that meets'' and insert ''beginning on January 1, 2018, complies with''.

Page 6, line 23, strike ''such subparagraph; and'' and all that follows through page 7, line 2 and insert ''section 1932(d)(6)(A).''.

Page 7, line 5, strike ''January 1, 2017'' and insert ''July 1, 2017''.

Page 10, line 15, strike ''paragraph (1)'' and insert ''subparagraph (A)''.

Page 10, line 21, strike ''paragraph (1)'' and insert ''subparagraph (A)''.

Page 10, lines 23 and 24, strike ''reporting requirements'' and insert ''contract requirement''.

Page 11, after line 15, insert the following:

(e) OIG REPORT.—Not later than March 31, 2020, the Inspector General of the Department of Health and Human Services shall submit to Congress a report on the implementation of the amendments made by this section. Such report shall include the following:

(1) An assessment of the extent to which providers who are included under subsection (ll) of section 1902 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a) (as added by subsection (a)(3)) in the database or similar system referred to in such subsection are terminated (as described in subsection (kk)(8) of such section, as added by subsection (a)(1)) from participation in all State plans under title XIX of such Act.

(2) Information on the amount of Federal financial participation paid to States under section 1903 of such Act in violation of the limitation on such payment specified in subsections (i)(2)(D) and subsection (m)(3) of such section, as added by subsection (a)(4).

(3) An assessment of the extent to which contracts with managed care entities under title XIX of such Act comply with the requirement specified in section 1932(d)(5) of such Act, as added by subsection (a)(2).

(4) An assessment of the extent to which providers have been enrolled under section 1902(a)(78) or 1932(d)(6)(A) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)(78), 1396u–2(d)(6)(A)) with State agencies administering State plans under title XIX of such Act.

Page 12, lines 1 and 2, strike ''180 days after the date of the enactment of this paragraph'' and insert ''January 1, 2017''.

Page 12, line 10, strike ''a directory'' and all that follows through line 13 and insert the following: ''a directory of the physicians described in subsection (mm) and, at State option, other providers described in such subsection that—''

Page 12, after line 13, insert the following: ''(A) includes—''.

Page 12, line 14, strike ''(A)'' and insert ''(i)''.

Page 12, line 14, insert ''physician or'' before ''provider''.

Page 12, line 15, strike ''(i)'' and insert ''(I)''.

Page 12, line 15, insert ''physician or'' before ''provider''.

Page 12, line 16, strike ''(ii)'' and insert ''(II)''.

Page 12, line 16, insert ''physician or'' before ''provider''.

Page 12, line 17, strike ''(iii)'' and insert ''(III)''.

Page 12, line 17, strike ''of the provider'' and insert ''at which the physician or provider provides services''.

Page 12, line 18, strike ''(iv)'' and insert ''(IV)''.

Page 12, line 18, insert ''physician or'' before ''provider''.

Page 12, line 20, strike ''(B)'' and insert ''(ii)''.

Page 12, line 20, insert ''physician or'' before ''provider''.

Page 12, line 23, strike ''(i)'' and insert ''(I)''.

Page 12, line 23, insert ''physician or'' before ''provider''.

Page 13, line 1, strike ''(ii)'' and insert ''(II)''.

Page 13, line 1, insert ''the physician's'' before ''provider's''.

Page 13, line 3, insert ''physician or'' before ''provider''.

Page 13, line 5, strike ''provider's office.'' and insert ''physician's or provider's office; and''.

Page 13, after line 5, insert the following:

''(B) may include, at State option, with respect to each such physician or provider—

''(i) the Internet website of such physician or provider; or

''(ii) whether the physician or provider is accepting as new patients individuals who receive medical assistance under this title.''.

Page 13, line 6, strike ''PROVIDERS'' and insert ''PHYSICIAN OR PROVIDER''.

Page 13, line 10, strike ''PROVIDERS'' and insert ''PHYSICIAN OR PROVIDER''.

Page 13, line 10, strike ''A'' and insert ''A physician or''.

Page 13, line 12, insert ''physician or'' before ''provider of''.

Page 13, line 15, insert ''physician or'' before ''provider''.

Page 13, line 17, strike ''provider with the State agency, a'' and insert ''physician or provider with the State agency, a physician or''.

Page 14, line 1, insert ''physician or'' before ''provider of''.

Page 14, line 3, insert ''physician or'' before ''provider''.

Page 14, beginning on line 10, strike ''in which all the individuals enrolled in the State plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act'' and insert ''(as defined for purposes of title XIX of the Social Security Act) in which all the individuals enrolled in the State plan under such title''.

Page 15, line 3, insert ''of Health and Human Services'' after ''Secretary''.

Page 15, line 12, strike ''section'' and insert ''Act''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 632, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUCSHON) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana.

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

This bipartisan amendment makes a few technical changes to the bill.

First, this amendment modifies the short title to better reflect the policies of both sections of the bill.

Second, this amendment updates the effective dates throughout the bill to ensure that States and HHS have the time necessary to correctly implement the provisions.

Next, it includes a requirement that the Office of the Inspector General at HHS review the implementation of the requirements in this bill regarding terminated providers and report back to Congress on what they find. This is an important feedback loop to ensure appropriate oversight.

Finally, the amendment clarifies that the fee-for-service provider directory is required to include physicians and, at a State's option, other providers. The amendment also clarifies the information that could be included in the directory.

MODIFICATION TO AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. BUCSHON

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chair, I ask unanimous consent to modify the second instruction relating to page 13, line 1, as provided at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will report the modification.

The Clerk read as follows:

Modification to amendment No. 1 offered by Mr. BUCSHON:

Page 13, line 1, insert ''physician's or'' before ''provider's''.

The CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

The CHAIR. The amendment is modified.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan amendment to H.R. 3716.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. Does any Member seek time in opposition to the amendment?

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to reclaim my time.

The CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Indiana is recognized.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO).

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of the manager's amendment.

This amendment provides a new bill name that incorporates the underlying policies from each of its component bills and reflects additional technical changes that have been outlined by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUCSHON), made in consultation with CMS.

This is a very targeted policy that went through extensive review through regular order in the committee. The manager's amendment reflects the final iteration of that hard work.

I would urge all my colleagues to support this simple refining amendment.

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

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment, as modified, offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUCSHON).

The amendment, as modified, was agreed to.

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in House Report 114–440.

It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in House Report 114–440.

It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in House Report 114–440.

The question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The CHAIR. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SMITH of Nebraska) having assumed the chair, Mr. HOLDING, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 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, and, pursuant to House Resolution 632, he reported the bill back to the House with an amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment to the amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole?

If not, the question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 38 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1715

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee) at 5 o'clock and 15 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4557, BLOCKING REGULATORY INTERFERENCE FROM CLOSING KILNS ACT OF 2016, AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM MARCH 4, 2016, THROUGH MARCH 11, 2016

Mr. BYRNE, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114–443) on the resolution (H. Res. 635) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4557) to allow for judicial review of any final rule addressing national emission standards for hazardous air pollutants for brick and structural clay products or for clay ceramics manufacturing before requiring compliance with such rule, and providing for proceedings during the period from March 4, 2016, through March 11, 2016, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages in writing from the President of the United States were communicated to the House by Mr. Brian Pate, one of his secretaries.

ENSURING REMOVAL OF TERMINATED PROVIDERS FROM MEDICAID AND CHIP ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on passage 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, 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 passage of the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 406, nays 0, not voting 27, as follows:

[Roll No. 105]

YEAS—406

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

NOT VOTING—27

Benishek
Black
Brady (PA)
DeLauro
Duffy
Ellmers (NC)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Green, Gene
Gutiérrez
Herrera Beutler
Hinojosa
Johnson (GA)
Larson (CT)
Lewis
Lofgren
Mulvaney
Napolitano
Pascrell
Pelosi
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rogers (KY)
Sanchez, Loretta
Scott, David
Smith (WA)
Westmoreland

□ 1733

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mrs. BLACK. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 105, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote No. 105 on March 2, 2016 (H.R. 3716), I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote No. 105 on March 2, 2016 (H.R. 3716), I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, March 2, 2016, I was absent during rollcall vote No. 105. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on final passage of H.R. 3716—Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on Wednesday, March 2, 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. 3716, the Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers Act, I would have voted "yea."

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO UKRAINE—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 114–112)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the

enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660 of March 6, 2014, is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2016.

The actions and policies of persons that undermine democratic processes and institutions in Ukraine; threaten its peace, security, stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity; and contribute to the misappropriation of its assets, as well as the actions and policies of the Government of the Russian Federation, including its purported annexation of Crimea and its use of force in Ukraine, continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. Therefore, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660 with respect to Ukraine.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, *March 2, 2016*.

NOTICE

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO UKRAINE

On March 6, 2014, by Executive Order 13660, I declared a national emergency pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701–1706) to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States constituted by the actions and policies of persons that undermine democratic processes and institutions in Ukraine; threaten its peace, security, stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity; and contribute to the misappropriation of its assets.

On March 16, 2014, I issued Executive Order 13661, which expanded the scope of the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660, and found that the actions and policies of the Government of the Russian Federation with respect to Ukraine undermine democratic processes and institutions in Ukraine; threaten its peace, security, stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity; and contribute to the misappropriation of its assets.

On March 20, 2014, I issued Executive Order 13662, which further expanded the scope of the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660, as expanded in scope in Executive Order 13661, and found that the actions and policies of the Government of the Russian Federation, including its purported annexation of Crimea and its use of force in Ukraine, continue to undermine democratic processes and institutions in Ukraine; threaten its peace, security, stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity; and contribute to the misappropriation of its assets.

On December 19, 2014, I issued Executive Order 13685, to take additional steps to address the Russian occupation of the Crimea region of Ukraine.

The actions and policies addressed in these Executive Orders continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, the national emergency declared on March 6, 2014, and the measures adopted on that date, on March 16, 2014, on March 20, 2014, and December 19, 2014, to deal with that emergency, must continue in effect beyond March 6, 2016. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing for 1 year the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660.

This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, *March 2, 2016*.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow.

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

There was no objection.

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO ZIMBABWE—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 114–113)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency originally declared in Executive Order 13288 of March 6, 2003, and renewed every year since then, is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2016.

The threat constituted by the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions, contributing to the deliberate breakdown in the rule of law, to politically motivated violence and intimidation, and to political and economic instability in the southern African region, has not been resolved. These actions and policies continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue this national emergency and to maintain in force the sanctions to respond to this threat.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, *March 2, 2016*.

NOTICE

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO ZIMBABWE

On March 6, 2003, by Executive Order 13288, the President declared a national emergency and blocked the property of certain persons, pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701–1706), to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States constituted by the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions. These actions and policies had contributed to the deliberate breakdown in the rule of law in Zimbabwe, to politically motivated violence and intimidation in that country, and to political and economic instability in the southern African region.

On November 22, 2005, the President issued Executive Order 13391 to take additional steps with respect to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13288, including the blocking of the property of additional persons engaged in undermining democratic processes or institutions in Zimbabwe.

On July 25, 2008, the President issued Executive Order 13469, which expanded the scope of the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13288 and authorized the blocking of the property of additional persons who were engaged in undermining democratic processes or institutions in Zimbabwe, facilitating public corruption by senior officials, or were responsible for committing human rights abuses related to political repression.

The actions and policies of these persons continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, the national emergency declared on March 6, 2003, and the measures adopted on that date, on November 22, 2005, and on July 25, 2008, to deal with that emergency, must continue in effect beyond March 6, 2016. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing for 1 year the national emergency originally declared in Executive Order 13288.

This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, *March 2, 2016*.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF OFFICER ASHLEY GUINDON

(Mr. WITTMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and service of Officer Ashley Guindon.

Officer Guindon was killed in the line of duty Saturday while responding to a call for help from a domestic violence victim.

She was 28 years old, and during her short life, Officer Guindon had done more for others than most of us will ever do. She spent 6 years in the Marine Corps Reserves before interning and ultimately working with the Prince William County Police Department.

At funeral services Tuesday, Officer Guindon was remembered as a policewoman and as a peace officer.

In Prince William County, the Police Department's stated mission is to ''enhance the quality of life by providing police services through shared responsibility with the public.''

As members of the public, it is incumbent upon us to respect the work that police officers do, the sacrifices that they make, and the lives that they touch across the Commonwealth and the United States of America.

God rest you and keep your family, Officer Guindon. Thank you for your service.

CONGRATULATING NAVY SEAL EDWARD BYERS

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I want to add the congratulations and commendations from the people of Ohio's Ninth District to Navy SEAL Edward Byers for his incredible valor, and I thank the President of the United States for awarding him this week the Medal of Honor.

Born in Toledo, Ohio, and raised in Grand Rapids, Ohio, SEAL Team Member Byers is a credit, not only to his service, but to the patriotic people who raised him, and for his enlistment in the U.S. military.

The bravery that he exhibited and the training and readiness that he exemplified through his valorous service in Afghanistan will go down in the annals of American history.

He is only one of a handful of SEALs who have been awarded the Medal of Honor. He handled the ceremony with great dignity, and we send our love and congratulations to his wife, to his family, and to all those who have the pleasure of knowing this really great American.

Congratulations, SEAL Team Member Edward Byers. You distinguished yourself on behalf of the people of your country and for freedom-loving people around our world.

Mr. Speaker, I will include in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD two articles about this Toledo native.

[From The Plain Dealer, Feb. 26, 2016]

TOLEDO NATIVE EDWARD BYERS WILL BE AWARDED MEDAL OF HONOR

(By Brian Albrecht)

CLEVELAND, OHIO.—The rescue of an American hostage in Afghanistan in 2012 will result in Toledo native and Navy SEAL Edward C. Byers Jr. being awarded the Medal of Honor by President Barack Obama in a ceremony at the White House on February 29.

The Senior Chief Special Warfare Operator is only the 11th living service member to be awarded the Medal of Honor for bravery displayed in Afghanistan.

According to Navy information, Byers was born in Toledo in 1979 and grew up in Grand Rapids, Ohio. After graduating from Otsego High School, where he played varsity soccer, he joined the Navy in 1998.

Byers attended hospital corpsman school and also completed a basic underwater demolition/SEAL course and special operations combat medic course in 2003.

He went on 11 overseas deployments, including nine combat tours.

The Medal of Honor is awarded to members of the armed forces who distinguish themselves conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of their own lives above and beyond the call of duty.

The mission that lead to his Medal of Honor award involved the rescue of Dr. Dilip Joseph, an American who was abducted with his driver and Afghan interpreter in December of 2012.

U.S. intelligence located Joseph in a remote mountainous area in a small, single-room building, and Byers was part of the team assigned to the recovery mission.

In a subsequent Navy Interview, Byers detailed his role in that mission:

''So that night was December 8 in Eastern Afghanistan, it was a cool night, we got off the helicopters, did a four- or five-hour pretty arduous hike through the mountains, and upon getting to our target building where we assumed the American hostage was at, our point man Nick Cheque, he was right in front of me, he saw a guard come out of the door, he engaged that guard and we started sprinting towards the door.

''Nick made his way in, and I made my way in right behind him, and I went down by the wall, and I engaged an enemy by the backside of the wall. And then I saw another person moving across the floor, so by the time I got to him he was on his back and I was able to get down on top of him and straddle him with my knees, and I had to adjust my night vision to try to get some facial recognition.

''At the same time this is happening I'm calling out trying to find the location of the American hostage. And finally he spoke up and it was at that time I engaged the person I was on top of and jumped off, and jumped off of the guy I was on and jumped onto the doctor who was about three or four, maybe five feet to my right.

''The reason I did that is because I was wearing body armor, so I wanted to protect him from any other potential threats in the room.

''Anyone who's been in combat knows that in those moments you either react, or you get killed.

''When I did that there was a guy that was right behind him within arm's reach, who was armed, and I was able to pin that guy to the wall by his throat, kind-of holding the doctor, and waiting for my teammates to come in and take care of the threat that was right next to us. When I was done, I still laid on top of him, and kept asking him 'hey can you walk,' you know, and 'is there anything medically wrong with you,' because our goal is to bring this guy back alive.

So, he said he was fine, and once we got outside, I noticed that our medics were working on Nick, and you know, being a medic myself I passed off the American hostage off to our other teammates and I went over to work on Nick, and did resuscitative efforts on him all the way to the hospital, where he was announced dead there.''

The official citation noted: ''Chief Petty Officer Byers displayed superior gallantry, extraordinary heroism at grave personal risk, dedication to his teammates, and calm tactical leadership while liberating Dr. Dilip Joseph from captivity.''

Byers said that when he found out he was being awarded the Medal of Honor, ''I felt very honored and very humbled because I'm gonna be a representative for the Navy and the naval special warfare community, and there's a weight that's carried with that.

''And that weight is the sacrifices that everybody has made within this community. Guys like Nick Cheque and all of our other brothers that have fallen, is it's an affirmation of the job that we do, and an appreciation of the job we do.''

In the interview, Byers also credited the support of his family, and noted that when he told his mother about the award ceremony, ''the first question out of her mouth is 'Do you think I can come to it?' And I said of course, mom, I think you'll be able to come to it.''

He also noted that his daughter ''knows that I'm daddy, and she loves me just for that. If you talk to her one-on-one, she'll tell you all the five nicknames she has for me, and none of them includes 'hero.' ''

He concluded, ''I'm gonna continue to be a SEAL. And I'm gonna take whatever job or mission is next for me, and just continue doing that. I don't have any plans on changing my job at this time. I still love what I do, and as long as I love what I do I'll continue doing it.''

Byers' personal decorations include the Bronze Star with Valor (five awards), the Purple Heart (two awards), the Joint Service Commendation Medal with Valor, the Navy Commendation Medal (three awards, one with Valor), the Combat Action ribbon (two awards), and the Good Conduct Medal (five awards).

He is one of only eight living Navy Medal of Honor recipients. There are 78 living recipients total.

Ohio has had 319 other Medal of Honor recipients with a connection to this state, dating back to the Civil War.

SUMMARY OF ACTION

SENIOR CHIEF SPECIAL WARFARE OPERATOR (SEAL) EDWARD C. BYERS JR.: FOR ACTIONS DURING OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM ON DEC. 8, 2012

Chief Special Warfare Operator (SEAL) Edward C. Byers Jr., United States Navy, distinguished himself by heroic gallantry as an Assault Team Member attached to a Joint Task Force in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM on 8 December 2012.

SPECIFIC ACCOMPLISHMENT

Dr. Dilip Joseph is an American citizen, who was abducted with his driver and Afghan interpreter on 5 December 2012. Intelligence reports indicated that Dr. Joseph might be transported to another location as early as 9 December 2012. Dr. Joseph was being held in a small, single-room building.

The target compound was located in a remote area beside a mountain in the Qarghah'i District of Laghman Province, Afghanistan. Chief Byers was part of the rescue team that planned to make entry into the room of guards where the hostage was believed to be located. Success of the rescue operation relied upon surprise, speed, and aggressive action. Trading personal security

for speed of action was inherent to the success of this rescue mission. Each assaulter in the rescue force volunteered for this operation with full appreciation for the risks they were to undertake.

With the approval of the Commander of all International Security Assistance Forces in Afghanistan, the rescue force launched from its forward operating base. The infiltration was an exhaustive patrol across unimproved trails and mountainous terrain. After nearly four hours of patrolling, the rescue force was positioned to make its assault on the target compound.

As the patrol closed to within 25 meters of the target building, a guard became aware of the rescue force. The forward-most assaulter shot at the guard and ran towards the door to make entry as the guard disappeared inside. Chief Byers was the second assaulter in a sprint towards the door. Six layers of blankets securely fastened to the ceiling and walls served as the Afghan door. While Chief Byers tried to rip down the blankets, the first assaulter pushed his way through the doorway and was immediately shot by enemy AK–47 fire. Chief Byers, fully aware of the hostile threat inside the room, boldly entered and immediately engaged a guard pointing an AK–47 towards him. As he was engaging that guard, another adult male darted towards the corner of the room. Chief Byers could not distinguish if the person may have been the hostage scrambling away or a guard attempting to arm himself with an AK–47 that lay in the corner. Chief Byers tackled the unknown male and seized control of him. While in hand-to-hand combat, Chief Byers maintained control of the unknown male with one hand, while adjusting the focus of his night vision goggles (NVGs) with his other. Once his NVGs were focused, he recognized that the male was not the hostage and engaged the struggling armed guard.

By now other team members had entered the room and were calling to Dr. Joseph to identify himself. Chief Byers heard an unknown voice speak English from his right side. He immediately leaped across the room and selflessly flung his body on top of the American hostage, shielding him from the continued rounds being fired across the room. Almost simultaneously, Chief Byers identified an additional enemy fighter directly behind Dr. Joseph. While covering the hostage with his body, Chief Byers was able to pin the enemy combatant to the wall with his hand around the enemy's throat. Unable to fire any effective rounds into the enemy, Chief Byers was able to restrain the combatant enough to enable his teammate to fire precision shots, eliminating the final threat within the room.

Chief Byers quickly talked to Dr. Joseph, confirming that he was able to move. He and his Team Leader stood Dr. Joseph up, calmed him, and let him know he was safe with American Forces. Once Dr. Joseph was moved to the helicopter-landing zone, Chief Byers, a certified paramedic and 18D medic, assisted with the rendering of medical aid to the urgent surgical assaulter. Chief Byers and others performed CPR during the 40-minute flight to Bagram Airfield where his teammate was declared deceased.

Chief Petty Officer Byers displayed superior gallantry, extraordinary heroism at grave personal risk, dedication to his teammates, and calm tactical leadership while liberating Dr. Dilip Joseph from captivity. He is unquestionably deserving of the Medal of Honor.

OFFICIAL CITATION

CHIEF SPECIAL WARFARE OPERATOR (SEA, AIR, AND LAND) EDWARD C. BYERS, JR. UNITED STATES NAVY

For service as set forth in the following citation:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty as a Hostage Rescue Force Team Member in Afghanistan in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM from 8 to 9 December 2012. As the rescue force approached the target building, an enemy sentry detected them and darted inside to alert his fellow captors. The sentry quickly reemerged, and the lead assaulter attempted to neutralize him. Chief Byers with his team sprinted to the door of the target building. As the primary breacher, Chief Byers stood in the doorway fully exposed to enemy fire while ripping down six layers of heavy blankets fastened to the inside ceiling and walls to clear a path for the rescue force. The first assaulter pushed his way through the blankets, and was mortally wounded by enemy small arms fire from within. Chief Byers, completely aware of the imminent threat, fearlessly rushed into the room and engaged an enemy guard aiming an AK–47 at him. He then tackled another adult male who had darted towards the corner of the room. During the ensuing hand-to-hand struggle, Chief Byers confirmed the man was not the hostage and engaged him. As other rescue team members called out to the hostage, Chief Byers heard a voice respond in English and raced toward it. He jumped atop the American hostage and shielded him from the high volume of fire within the small room. While covering the hostage with his body, Chief Byers immobilized another guard with his bare hands, and restrained the guard until a teammate could eliminate him. His bold and decisive actions under fire saved the lives of the hostage and several of his teammates. By his undaunted courage, intrepid fighting spirit, and unwavering devotion to duty in the face of near certain death, Chief Petty Officer Byers reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.

BIOGRAPHY

SENIOR CHIEF SPECIAL WARFARE OPERATOR (SEAL) EDWARD C. BYERS JR.

Senior Chief Edward C. Byers Jr. was born in Toledo, Ohio in 1979. He grew up in Grand Rapids, Ohio. In 1997, he graduated from Otsego High School where he played varsity soccer. Byers joined the Navy in September 1998, and subsequently attended Recruit Training and Corpsman ''A'' School in Great Lakes, Illinois.

Byers started his naval career as a Hospital Corpsman. In 1998, he was assigned to Great Lakes Naval Hospital. In 1999, he served with 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marines in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, where he deployed with the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit aboard USS AUSTIN (LPD 4). During deployment he earned his Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist (ESWS) badge and Fleet Marine Force (FMF) warfare device.

In 2002, Byers attended Basic Underwater Demolition SEAL (BUD/S) training and graduated with Class 242. After graduation, he attended the Special Operations Combat Medic (SOCM) course. SOCS Byers has been assigned to East Coast SEAL Teams. He was promoted to the rank of Senior Chief Petty Officer in January of 2016.

Byers has deployed overseas 11 times with nine combat tours. His personal decorations include the Bronze Star with Valor (five awards), the Purple Heart (two awards), the Joint Service Commendation Medal with Valor, the Navy Commendation Medal (three awards, one with Valor), the Combat Action ribbon (two awards), and the Good Conduct Medal (five awards).

Byers holds a National Paramedics License, and has studied Strategic Studies and Defense Analysis at Norwich University. Byers is married and has a daughter.

NAVY MEDAL OF HONOR FACTS

Senior Chief Byers is the 6th Navy SEAL in history to receive the Medal of Honor.

Senior Chief Byers is one of only eight living Navy Medal of Honor recipients. There are 78 living recipients total.

There have been 745 Medals of Honor awarded to Navy personnel. (308 of those were for actions during the Civil War)

Only two Navy service members have received the Medal of Honor for actions subsequent to the Vietnam War, and both of those awards were posthumous. (Lieutenant Michael Murphy and Petty Officer Michael Monsoor, both SEALs)

The most recent Navy recipient of the Medal of Honor was Petty Officer 2nd Class Michael Monsoor, who was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor by President George W. Bush on Apr. 8, 2008.

The most recent living Navy recipient of the Medal of Honor was Robert Ingram, who left the Navy in 1968, and was later awarded the Medal of Honor by President Bill Clinton on Jul. 10, 1998 for actions during the Vietnam War.

Senior Chief Byers is the first living active duty member of the U.S. Navy to receive the Medal of Honor since Apr. 6, 1976, the late Rear Admiral James Stockdale and Lieutenant Thomas Norris (also a SEAL) each received the decoration from President Gerald Ford.

Senior Chief Byers is the first living active duty enlisted member of the U.S. Navy to receive the Medal of Honor since Petty Officer Michael Thornton (also a SEAL) was awarded the Medal of Honor by President Richard Nixon on Oct., 15 1973.

This is the 14th Medal of Honor awarded for actions in Afghanistan. Including Senior Chief Byers, 11 of those 14 awards were to living recipients. Four Medals of Honor were awarded posthumously for actions in Iraq.

CLOSING GUANTANAMO BAY

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the cold-blooded, calculating terrorists sitting in Guantanamo murdered and plan to continue killing Americans.

Since President Obama took office, he has released 150 terrorists back to their home countries. In fact, Spanish and Moroccan police just arrested four suspected members of a jihadi cell who recruited fighters for the Islamic State. One is described as a former Gitmo detainee who formerly fought with militants against Americans in Afghanistan.

The 91 high-security prisoners remaining at Guantanamo committed some of the most repulsive crimes known to all of us.

Severely lacking in detail, the plan to close Gitmo fails to describe where, under what authority, and at what cost the relocation of these terrorists will be.

Mr. Speaker, it is against the law to transfer terrorist detainees to American soil without congressional approval.

The United States should do everything it can to keep terrorists out of our country, not purposely bring them here.

Closing Gitmo endangers our U.S. national security, and it is a bad idea.

And that is just the way it is.

□ 1745

SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES NOMINATION PROCESS

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

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, when our Founders wrote the Constitution, they had the wisdom to create a system of checks and balances among the three branches of government. They knew this would limit power, protect against abuses, and promote liberty.

Under our Constitution, the President has the right to nominate Justices to the Supreme Court, but one House of the Congress, the Senate, has the coequal right to consent to such an appointment. One branch has a power, another has a check.

Today, with a vacancy on the Supreme Court, we have a chance to see this system of checks and balances in action. In deciding whether to consent to an appointment to the Supreme Court, the Senate should assess whether the President has been acting consistent with the Constitution.

The chart to my left highlights just a few of President Obama's unconstitutional actions since he was reelected in 2012. These actions have been frequent, repeated, and grave. These actions have poisoned the well of deliberation for any appointment by this President.

In that light, why wouldn't the Senate withhold consent? It is a game the President chose to play, and withholding consent to his appointment is an appropriate consequence.

GUANTANAMO BAY

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, once again, Congress acted to stop the transfer of GTMO detainees to the United States. Guantanamo Bay is a much better venue to hold these known terrorists than to have them on American soil. Yet the President wants to defy Congress and the American people, who desire not to have this happen, and bring them onto American soil.

It endangers our courts, our system of government, and our people by bringing them here or even ultimately releasing them. We need to have the President, if he tries this and loses in court, once again, take a lesson in the final 10 months of his term that he needs to uphold the law that we passed and that he signed.

THE TEXAS WAR OF INDEPENDENCE AGAINST MEXICO

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ALLEN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today is March 2, 2016. 180 years ago, on March 2, 1836, in a little place called Washington-on-the-Brazos down in Texas, people of what is now Texas declared their independence from the nation of Mexico—March 2, 1836. Tonight I am here to talk a little bit about those folks 180 years ago and the cause and the result of the Texas War of Independence against Mexico.

We have to back up a little bit. For a long time, almost 300 years, what is now Texas was controlled by the Spanish. They claimed the land in Texas. It was sparsely populated: some Indian tribes, but not very many folks. At some point, Spain also controlled what is now Mexico.

Mexico, the nation of Mexico, chose to declare independence from that European country of Spain and went to war with Spain to secure their independence back in 1820. That revolution—they called it the War of Independence—was successful. Mexico set up an independent nation, a democracy. They formed a government and a constitution very similar to the United States. Texas was a part of Mexico at that time and was part of a state called Coahuila. It was the Coahuila de Texas, two areas of northern Mexico that were one state in Mexico.

Things were fine until Mexico elected a President by the name of Santa Anna. When he became President of Mexico, this particular President abolished the democracy, abolished the constitution of 1824 that set up the Government of Mexico, and declared himself the dictator of Mexico. In fact, he destroyed the Republic of Mexico, the democracy of Mexico, and put himself as dictator-in-charge.

Throughout the history of the world, we know of a lot of dictators, but they all seem to have one thing in common: they take away the rights—the civil rights—of the people.

Some people in Mexico didn't like this, and therefore they started their own secession movement, their own revolution, their own independence. Now, most Americans know that Texas was one of those areas in Mexico that declared its independence from Mexico, and that independence, that revolution, was successful. But there were other areas of northern Mexico—and here on this map I have some of those areas—that also declared their independence for the reason they wanted to be free. They wanted independence from the dictatorship.

There was the Republic of the Yucatan, there was the Republic Coahuila, and there were three or four other republics, and the Republic of the Rio Grande. Several areas of population in Mexico declared their independence.

So what happened? Santa Anna not only was the dictator, but he was the commander in chief, and he was the general. He was the guy. He moved his army from Mexico City into these areas of revolution, areas where people were fighting against the government, the republic, or the dictatorship of Santa Anna. He had squelched, really, all of these revolutionary movements; although, portions of these areas did declare independence and appeared to have independence for a period of time.

So that brings us to 1835, several months before Texas declared independence. Here is what started the Texas War of Independence:

While all of these other movements—some were going on, some would go on a few months later. But during this period, there was insurrection in northern Mexico because people were trying to seek independence. It started on October 2, 1835, at Gonzales, Texas, a small little community in Gonzales, Texas.

Remember, Texas is a part of Mexico at this time. The Mexican Government, when it was a free government, had encouraged immigration into this part of Texas—not just from the United States, but from Mexico and from European countries.

But this town of Gonzales, Texas, was in possession of a cannon. The cannon was to protect themselves from the people who lived in the area that were hostiles, as they were called in those days. Native Americans are who they were. And that cannon was for that purpose.

The Mexican Government said: We want the cannon back. You cannot have the cannon in Gonzales, Texas. We don't want you having it.

The Mexican Government made the demand on October 2 to the folks in Gonzales, Texas: Return the cannon to the Mexican military.

The people, the settlers of Gonzales, said: No. We are not going to do it. We are not giving you back the cannon. We need it.

So they resisted. They even made a flag. They called it the Come and Take It flag. You may have seen that recently. It is still popular with a lot of folks. It was a flag that said, ''Come and take it,'' with a cannon on it. They hoisted this, and they had a skirmish with the Mexican Army, who came to take the cannon. Shots were fired on both sides, multiple shots. Apparently, most of the people shooting weren't great marksmen. A couple of Mexican soldiers were wounded, and they retreated without the cannon. But that event started the actual shooting war in the War of Independence.

Months before that, there had been complaints. There had been letters written to the Mexican Government. Stephen F. Austin, the Father of Texas, had been imprisoned in Mexico City trying to get some civil rights for people who lived in what is now Texas. But it all came to a head at this event in October of 1835.

It is interesting what started the Texas War of Independence, the shooting war, is very similar to what started

the shooting war between the colonists and Great Britain. You remember the British were in Boston. We have all heard about the march through Lexington and Concord.

The purpose the British Army marched through Lexington and Concord in the 1770s was to take the firearms, the weapons, away from the colonists, out of the armories in Lexington and Concord. Of course, the colonists refused. They fired back, and it started the shooting war with the British Empire, later a successful War of Independence.

It is interesting that both of them started when government showed up to take the weapons, the firearms, of the people who lived in that area.

The shooting war started, and, quite frankly, it was successful up until about this time in 1836. An army of Texans had entered a place called the Alamo in February of 1836—February 23, 1836—because of the approaching army of Santa Anna that was coming north into Texas—Tejas, as it was called.

The men that assembled at the Alamo to try to stop the invading army coming in were an interesting bunch. There were 100 to 187 of them. They came from almost all of the then-States of the United States. They came from several foreign countries, including Great Britain, Scotland, Ireland, France, Germany, and Austria. Many of them were from what we call Mexico, and they had come into the Alamo.

An interesting name that is unique to Texas history is that Texans of Spanish Mexican descent were called Tejanos, a unique name for Texans, Tejanos of Spanish Mexican or Hispanic descent. There were eleven of them at the Alamo.

The 180 to 187 were from all walks of life. I told you they were from all different countries. They were not only Anglos and Tejanos, but there were two African Americans, two Blacks, at the Alamo, we understand. They were lawyers; they were frontiersmen; they were shopkeepers; they were young, and they were old.

There was even a United States Congressman at the Alamo. His name was David Crockett. He was a former Congressman from the State of Tennessee. He had gone to Texas to help in the revolution and also to see the fortunes that he could make as an individual.

There were a lot of reasons why people came to Texas, but 180 to 187 of them were in the Alamo to defend and to protect that concept of freedom.

This is a painting of what the Alamo looked like at the time those men were in the Alamo.

So they entered the Alamo—let's get the sequence of events correct—February 23. They are in the Alamo on March 2 when Texas declared independence. They were in the Alamo for 13 days. The final battle at the Alamo was on March 6, 1836.

While they were in the Alamo, they were led by the commander of the Alamo, who is really my most favorite person in all of history. He was a 27-year-old lawyer from South Carolina by way of Alabama. He had come to Texas to settle in the 1830s, and his name was William Barret Travis. He was placed in command of the Alamo, of all 180, 187 of the folks that were there. While he was in the Alamo—he entered on February 23—he realized that the enemy was going to be a superior force.

□ 1800

In the cold, damp Alamo, a blue norther, as we called it in those days, had come. It was cold. The Alamo is near San Antonio, Texas. He wrote a letter asking for help. I have a copy of his letter on my wall in my office.

Here is what it said. To me, it is one of the most passionate letters ever written about freedom. It is dated February 24, 1836, in Bexar.

> To the People of Texas and All Patriots and Fellow Citizens. I am besieged by a thousand or more of the enemy under Santa Anna. The enemy is receiving reinforcements daily and will no doubt increase to 3,000 or 4,000 in 4 or 5 days. The enemy has demanded surrender at its discretion. Otherwise, the fort will be put to the sword. I have answered that demand with a cannon shot, and the flag still waves proudly over the wall. I ask that you come to my aid with all dispatch. If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible and die like a soldier who never forgets what is due his own honor and his country—victory or death. William Barret Travis, Commander.

That is a portion of the letter that he wrote that he sent out throughout the area of Texas asking for help. The courier was Jim Bonham, another South Carolinian that had come to Texas. He was William Barret Travis' boyhood friend. He would take this letter to different areas of Texas asking for help.

Only one group of folks answered that letter, and it was the men in Gonzales, Texas, where this all started. They decided that they would leave Gonzales, which is near San Antonio, march to the Alamo and help defend the Alamo. There were 32 of them.

When they arrived at the Alamo—some historians have said as they walked into the Alamo—Travis said they came here to die. That brought the total up to about 180 to 187.

If you will, Mr. Speaker, think about what those 32 men left behind. This is a rough area of the world in Texas, just the weather. But the people they left behind were their wives and their kids because the men had gone to defend the Alamo.

After the Alamo fell and all of those men were killed, it was then left up to those wives and children to make an existence in frontier Texas. They, in their own right, were amazing people that went ahead and forged an existence after Texas independence was declared.

So they are in the Alamo. On March 2, Texas declares independence. Probably the men in the Alamo never knew that Texas declared independence.

Finally, on March 6, after 13 days, Santa Anna and his superior army stormed the Alamo. All 187 Texans were killed. If any surrendered, they were executed.

The Mexican casualties, according to Santa Anna, were about 1,000 casualties on the Mexican side. The Tejanos that were in the Alamo, all 11, were also killed in the attack.

Travis made the comment in a later letter that was sent out of the Alamo before this March 6 attack that defeat will cost the enemy more than victory. It turns out he was right.

Anyway, the Alamo fell. The flag that flew over the Alamo—I don't know if you can see it, Mr. Speaker—was not the Lone Star flag. A lot of people think it was the Lone Star flag, which is our Texas State flag.

It is the flag of Mexico with the Mexican eagle removed from the flag. And the date of 1824 was placed on that flag. Most historians think that was the flag that flew over the Alamo.

What is the significance of this? 1824 was the year that the constitution was written for the Republic of Mexico. The defenders of the Alamo wanted a constitutional government.

That is why they flew this flag, the 1824 constitution flag, to let the world know that is why they were defending the concept of liberty, freedom, and a constitutional government as opposed to a dictatorship.

But the Alamo fell. Santa Anna then started moving northeast through Texas. The Alamo is in San Antonio, Bexar County. It was just called Bexar in those days.

Meanwhile, an individual by the name of Sam Houston, who was the commander of all Texas armies, the few that there were, had been preparing an army while the men in the Alamo were at the Alamo.

He was assembling more volunteers—everybody was a volunteer—not only from Texas, but other Tejanos. Other folks from other States formed an army to defeat or to take on Santa Anna.

Santa Anna had actually split his army into three different columns. He was moving his three columns up through northeast Texas from Mexico.

Sam Houston and his army weren't ready; so, he didn't attack Santa Anna. In fact, he moved east. It is called the Runaway Scrape.

Not only was the army moving east away from Santa Anna's invaders, but the people who lived there were leaving, too, because they were afraid of the Mexican Army.

They were afraid of Santa Anna, is who they were afraid of. So you have the army, you have the settlers, and you have everybody moving northeast, called the Runaway Scrape.

Sam Houston continued to move. He would not engage the Mexican Army. In fact, some Texas folks—politicians—were irritated with Sam Houston because he wouldn't go to battle.

They kept moving east. They went through San Antonio, what is now

Interstate 10 between San Antonio and Houston. They went right through that area, right through what is now Houston. The Mexican Army is following him. Santa Anna is following him.

They go to a place called Harrisburg, which is just east of Houston, on the marshes of the San Jacinto River, a marshy area, to a peninsula, and Sam Houston stopped on April 20, 1836.

Santa Anna continued to march and came on the peninsula. Both armies are on the peninsula. On April 21, here is what happened.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, most battles throughout history, no matter where they are, no matter who they are—the Greeks, the Romans, everybody—start at sunup or right before sunup. But that didn't happen on April 21, 1836.

The Texans went to battle in the middle of the afternoon. They weren't going to wait until the next day. The soldiers were ready to do battle. Sam Houston really had no choice but to lead them into battle. And so he did.

In the middle of the afternoon, just one column—there were only a handful of them, more than at the Alamo—a single column, single file, was led by an individual playing a flute, another person carrying the flag, and a third individual beating the drums.

The flutist didn't know any songs. So he played an old—we would call it a house of ill repute song, ''Come to the Bower.'' I don't know the lyrics of it, Mr. Speaker, but you can look it up.

He played on his flute ''Come to the Bower,'' which was the song they marched into battle with, carrying a flag of Lady Liberty, a semi-clothed individual on the flag. Then you had the drummer.

Then you had all of these really scary-looking folks going into battle, the Texas Army. Most of them didn't have any kind of uniforms. They dressed like frontiersmen. They had a shotgun, a long rifle, a tomahawk, knives, well-armed individuals.

Also with them was Juan Seguin. Juan Seguin was a captain in the Texas Army. He was a Tejano. He led this cavalry of Tejanos to protect one of the flanks when the Texans were marching down. He, like the rest of the Texas Army, did not have uniforms. They wore their normal clothes.

Sam Houston wanted to make sure that the Texans and the foot soldiers didn't mix up the Mexican Army with the Tejanos that were in the cavalry.

So he had all of the Tejanos put a playing card in their sombrero. In those days, apparently, the cards weren't small like they are today. They were big.

They stuck this 4x6 card—or something like that—in their hats, their sombreros, so that everybody would know that they were on the side of liberty, not part of the Mexican Army, a unique part of Texas history.

So, in the middle of the day, what had happened was Santa Anna was taking a nap. It was siesta time. Now, some say historically—modern revisionists—that this isn't exactly true, but I believe it because I want to believe it.

Santa Anna was preoccupied with an individual that was loyal to the Republic of Texas, an individual that we fondly call the Yellow Rose of Texas now. Therefore, he wasn't prepared to go into battle when the Texans were coming down this small hill.

In any event, they were caught by surprise. This battle lasted 18 minutes. Eleven Texans were killed, 600 of the enemy were killed, and the rest were captured. In fact, more were captured later than in the Texas Army.

The battle lasted 18 minutes. Military historians studied this battle because of its decisiveness. So General Houston led one battle. It was successful. Santa Anna was captured.

Texas claims independence from Mexico—that was April 21, 1836—and goes ahead and forms a government, forms a republic and, in September of the same year, elects a president and a vice president.

From October of 1835 to September of 1836 was the War of Independence. Declaration of independence was on March 2. April 21 the battle was successful. Texas is a free and independent country and remains so for 9 years.

The battle cry at the Battle of San Jacinto, as you have heard in history, was ''Remember the Alamo.'' ''Remember Goliad.'' That was another place where Texans were massacred that fought Santa Anna's army.

This is what Texas looked like when Texas declared independence from Mexico. Maybe you can see it, Mr. Speaker. I don't know.

You see what is now Texas over here, but you see a lot of other land. You see Oklahoma, part of Kansas, part of New Mexico, part of Colorado. It even goes up to part of Idaho, almost to the Canadian border. All of this area here, Texas claimed all of—that is the Republic of Texas—and claimed it for 9 years.

Texas periodically would try to join the United States as the 28th State. Two times Texas tried to join the Union, and two times Congress rejected Texas' approval into the Union.

On the third time, rather than have a treaty with Texas—because Texas was an independent country—a joint resolution was filed.

It passed the House of Representatives and it passed the Senate, because you didn't need two-thirds vote then. We still have those discussions today, don't we? A joint resolution.

By one vote, Texas was admitted to the Union in 1845 and, in 1846, actually came into the United States as the 28th State.

It was a republic once. A lot of people in Texas still think we are a republic, and we seem to act like it sometimes. But we have a unique history.

The history of Texas, why I like it so much, is because everybody wanted to live in Texas, wanted to come to Texas, of all races, of all nationalities, from all States.

They fought in a war against another nation, a dictator, for the same reason that the 13 colonies fought for independence against Great Britain: for freedom and for liberty.

□ 1815

There is an independent streak that runs through all Texans. It is a state of mind for Texas.

Mr. Speaker, how much time remains?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 34 minutes remaining.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we are of an independent mind, of an independent philosophy. March 2 is an important day for us because our ancestors and people we don't even know about decided that it was worth their lives to fight against tyranny—against a totalitarian government run by a dictator. They were volunteers. They were normal people who just had that flame of liberty in their souls, and they refused to have it taken away from them.

So we remember those folks who created Texas, who fought for independence for Texas, those men at the Alamo—William Barret Travis, Davy Crockett, Jim Bowie, Jim Bonham, and 187 more individuals. The youngest was 15, Tapley Holland from Ohio. The oldest was 68—who fought and died for that liberty.

When Texas became part of the United States, it had great depth because of the War of Independence. Part of the deal for Texas to be admitted to the Union, even by one vote, was this land that I mentioned to you that was all sold to the Federal Government, to the Union, to pay off the debts of the Republic of Texas. Thus, as we know now, Texas looks like this. All of these other areas became other States that were later admitted to the United States.

When there was the agreement between Texas and the United States to join the Union, it was agreed—and it is still possible—that Texas may divide now the State of Texas into five different States. Now, that is not going to happen, because nobody is going to be able to agree on what should be called ''Texas''; but we can divide into five States, and that is the decision of the people who live in Texas.

One of the other provisions of the joint resolution was that Texas may fly its flag, the Lone Star Flag—the flag of the one star, the Lone Star, the Lone Republic—even with the American flag. When you go to Texas, you will see a lot of American flags, and you will see a lot of Texas flags, but most of the Texas flags are flying level with the American flag. They can do that by law. Texas does that because of its agreement and admission into the Union.

Our country has a great history, Mr. Speaker, with 50 States, with all of our territories. Our history is unique. No place on Earth is like the United

States. It is because of our history, because of the diversity of the peoples and cultures in this country. The diversity of Texas, the diversity of the United States is what gives it strength. It is not a weakness. It is a strength.

It is, I think, quite important that we as Members of the House of Representatives, who represent the 50 States of the United States, make sure that we talk about our history—how we are a unique Nation among peoples, how we have always been a unique Nation among peoples—and preserve what those folks at the Alamo fought for and what our folks fought for in the Colonies in wars since then, which are freedom and liberty. Those are not trite words. They are core words. The concept of liberty lives in every person ever born in history. Most people never see it. Most people in the world today aren't free, but there are a few, and those few—some of those few—are in what we call the United States of America.

I thank all of those Texans back in Texas for honoring Texas Independence Day, March 2, 1836. Especially, we should always honor those people who lived in our history who gave their lives for the rest of us, because they were good folk.

And that is just the way it is.

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

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DONOVAN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, this week, we open Women's History Month—an opportunity for us to celebrate the progress women have made and the amazing contributions that we are responsible for.

We have more women in Congress now than ever before. Women are now the leading breadwinners or are the only breadwinners in 40 percent of households. We have more women who lead major companies and who are in prominent positions, like on the Supreme Court. Women today are more likely to earn college degrees and to attend graduate school than are their male counterparts, and more women are entering traditionally male-dominated fields. That progress has been incredibly swift. We are talking about gains that have really only happened in the past 60 years. Still, there are many, many milestones that women have yet to reach.

Even with the most women Congress has ever seen, this body, supposedly elected to both represent and reflect the United States, is still overwhelmingly 80 percent male, in fact. Women still make 78 cents for every dollar a man earns, particularly troubling when you think about the 40 percent of women I just mentioned who are supporting their families. Black women make even less at 64 cents on the dollar while Latina women make just 66 cents on the dollar. If this week is any indicator, there are still great numbers of people, primarily men, who feel we are incapable of making our own decisions about our health care.

We have got a long way to go, Mr. Speaker. Part of the reason we can't get all the way there is that we have not passed the Equal Rights Amendment. We have been avoiding ensuring protection for women in the Constitution for almost 100 years. Quite frankly, there is only so much we can do until we offer that basic level of protection.

Mr. Speaker, the ERA was first drafted and introduced in the 1920s. It finally passed in 1972 and was sent to the States for ratification, where it received 35 of the 38 approvals that it needed. Unfortunately, time ran out. One of the reasons we have yet to solve some of the greatest challenges facing our Nation's women is the lack of true protection in the Constitution.

What better way to ensure the right to fair pay for women? What better way to ensure equal treatment in the workplace? What better way to protect against laws that inherently limit women? What better way to protect all of the progress we have made and to ensure that women can continue to excel?

The Equal Rights Amendment would provide the foundation for legislation that protects women from discrimination at every level—legislation that is more necessary now than it has ever been with more and more women leading at home and in the workplace.

We will spend a lot of time in the coming weeks talking about what we need to do for women—from the passage of the Fair Pay Act to ensuring paid leave for women and men. Yet there is one thing that we should have done long ago, and my colleagues are here tonight, on the floor with me, to call for action where we have failed before.

It is now my pleasure to yield to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY), the primary sponsor of the ERA bill.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, Representative BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN, and the Congressional Progressive Caucus for dedicating this time to talk about passing the Equal Rights Amendment—a cause I have fought for my entire time in Congress.

March is Women's History Month, and we have many accomplishments to celebrate and to be proud of, but we must remain focused on the continued struggle for full equality for women. Without the ERA, this goal will not be fully realized, and half of Americans will not realize their full potential. All of us, men and women, stand to benefit from true gender equality.

Consider, for instance, some laws that are being proposed across the Nation that have disparate negative impacts on women:

In Illinois, a bill sponsored by men is pending that would deny a birth certificate to a newborn of a single mother unless a father is listed on the birth certificate. This would make it impossible for a single mother to enroll her child in a public school, for her child to obtain a driver's license, or for her to collect child support and other benefits for the child. The law is silent on single fathers.

In Kentucky, the State senate has passed a bill sponsored by a man that would force all women who are seeking to terminate pregnancies to undergo ultrasounds, whether they want to or not, and to have doctors describe the images to them. While we cannot know for sure how an ERA would affect the outcome of future Supreme Court cases, we have seen that its absence leaves women vulnerable to discrimination without their having legal recourse.

These legislative efforts to roll back hard-won progress and to curtail rights are directed squarely at women. You will not find equivalent examples of bills that roll back or constrain the rights of men—and men only. Unfortunately, that noble and empowering declaration in our founding document that ''all men are created equal'' left some of us out. In fact, it leaves about half the population of America out.

Many people are actually surprised when they realize that the United States Constitution does not mention women. That omission has, unfortunately, become a glaring problem when it comes to achieving full equality—and not just a problem for women but for families as well—for everyone. For instance, when women make less than men just because they are women, it is an issue that affects their entire families.

We saw that in the case of Lilly Ledbetter. The Supreme Court found that she had been paid less for doing the very same job as her male counterparts. This not only meant that, for years, she made less money than her male colleagues in order to support her family and to provide for her children throughout her working life, but it meant that she would also spend her entire retirement being less financially secure.

Such unfair and unequal treatment should certainly be prohibited under our Constitution. Yet the late Supreme

Court Justice Antonin Scalia famously told an interviewer for the California Lawyer Magazine that he believed that the Constitution does not outlaw this kind of discrimination because, in his view, the 14th Amendment does not apply to women.

The 14th Amendment reads that no State shall ''deny to any person . . . the equal protection of the laws.''

To most people, that would seem to be pretty simple and straightforward; but Justice Scalia argued that the word ''person'' should not apply to women. In his view, when it was written, it was only meant to apply to the recently emancipated slaves.

The problem here is that there is ambiguity about whether or not gender discrimination is explicitly prohibited by the Constitution. The only solution to this challenge is to plainly include women in the Constitution. So between the State and congressional legislators who believe it is permissible to roll back hard-won rights and to pass legislation that unfairly and unequally burdens women—and the idiosyncratic views of Supreme Court Justices who declare women are not people—it is essential to pass the Equal Rights Amendment in a brief amendment that simply reads:

''Women shall have equal rights in the United States and every place subject to its jurisdiction. Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.''

□ 1830

Let's put women in the Constitution at long last.

Research shows that 75 to 90 percent of Americans mistakenly believe that the ERA has already passed and that men and women are equal under the law. In 2012, a poll asked: Do you think the Constitution should guarantee equal rights for men and women? And 91 percent said yes, including 86 percent of Republicans.

The way things stand now, the Supreme Court has ruled that the Constitution provides strict guidelines against discrimination based on race and national origin, but it is silent on issues of gender discrimination.

When it comes to gender discrimination, the Court has applied a lesser standard that makes it easier to get away with discriminating against women. Plain old common sense and your basic sense of fairness should tell you that the same strict scrutiny, protection against discrimination based on race and national origin, should also apply to discrimination based on sex.

So the ERA would establish unequivocally, once and for all, that women are entitled to equal treatment under the law. Equal treatment means equal treatment. Equal means equal for all, women included. The ERA would, once and for all, provide clear, constitutional guidance on gender equity issues. The ERA would lend the force of the Constitution to existing prohibitions against sex discrimination in the workplace or schools. The ERA would stop bias in wages, benefits, hiring practices, and other conditions of employment.

If America wants to be a world leader in the promotion of human rights, it needs to lead by example on women's rights. Sadly, in this area, America is exceptional only in a bad way.

The U.S. stands out as one of the few nations that does not even address gender equality in its Constitution. As the world's leading democracy, we are falling behind on women's equality. At a time when we seek to champion democracy around the world, we must guarantee equality here at home. It is time for the United States to secure equal rights for women across our Nation by ratifying the ERA.

Progress can all too easily be rolled back. Laws can be repealed, and judicial attitudes can shift, turning women into second class citizens. It seems like I spend a majority of my time here in Congress just fighting to hold on to what we already have, trying to keep it from being rolled back. An ERA would protect the progress made on women's rights from any shifting political trends.

Women are still not receiving equal pay for equal work. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, women still earn 78 cents for every dollar earned by a man, and this has contributed to older women being the largest segment of poverty in our great Nation. Because when you are paid less, your pension is less, your 401(k) is less, your Social Security is less, and that happens to have profound effects on women.

Just this past week there was an article in The Wall Street Journal that talked about the largest group of people that are growing in the workforce are older women, and this is because they cannot afford to retire. They have to continue working because of the discrimination in pay and because of having taken times when they weren't in the workforce to take care of a sick parent or to nurse and raise a child.

Sex and pregnancy discrimination persists in the workforce. Governmental programs, such as Social Security, still unequally provide benefits to men and women.

An ERA would be a woman's best defense against harmful practices that punish her simply because she is a woman. We cannot keep fighting discrimination against women one battle at a time, constantly playing defense. Passing the ERA will put women on equal footing in the legal system of all 50 States, particularly in areas where women have historically been treated as second class citizens.

We have 186 bipartisan cosponsors of H.J. Res. 52 in the House, which I proudly introduced with Representative CYNTHIA LUMMIS of Wyoming—just 32 shy of a majority. It reflects the strength of the belief that women should be included in the Constitution and guaranteed equal treatment under the law.

It is time to stop making excuses. Women and like-minded men have to demand that Congress and State governments get this done. Equal means equal.

I thank the gentlewoman for yielding, and I thank her from the bottom of my heart for really organizing this important Special Order.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for being with us this evening.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. GRAHAM).

Ms. GRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, first I want to thank Congresswoman WATSON COLEMAN for holding this special session and bringing attention to the Equal Rights Amendment.

When I was born in 1963, we lived in a different world. It was legal to openly discriminate against hiring women; it was legal to discriminate against women in lending and credit; it was legal to pay women substantially less than men; and it was legal to fire a woman just for becoming pregnant.

Fortunately, when I was born, things were beginning to change. Women were fighting for and gaining greater equality.

Today, women are better protected from those forms of discrimination. We have made great strides, but we haven't yet been able to recognize our equality in the Constitution. There is nothing more sacred, nothing more important to America than our Constitution.

I support the Equal Rights Amendment because I grew up in a changing world, but I want my daughter and the next generation to grow up in a changed world. I want my daughter to live in a country where her and every woman's equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

To illustrate why I believe we should and still can ratify the Equal Rights Amendment, I want to specifically speak about the history of the ERA in my home State of Florida.

Our House of Representatives voted for ratification of the ERA three separate times—in 1972, 1975, and 1979—but our Senate remained more divided on the issue.

Bill Cotterell, a columnist for the Tallahassee Democrat, recently opined:

> It was still a very different world, where a Member of the legislature walked around with a toy pig under his arm, proudly proclaiming himself a male chauvinist.

It was a different world, one still changing, but I am proud to say there were men who stood up for the women of our State in the State senate. One of them was my father, Bob Graham, who bucked his own Democratic Party leadership to support the ERA, a move that helped earn him the title of a doghouse Democrat.

After repeated failures in the Senate, some thought the ERA was dead, but it resurfaced in Florida in 1982. That summer, just a few weeks remaining before

the ratification deadline, more than 10,000 men and women marched on our State capitol in support of the amendment.

Hearing their call and supporting their cause, my father, who had moved out of the doghouse into the Governor's mansion, called our legislature into special session. For the fourth time, the House voted in favor of the amendment, but unfortunately the senate blocked ratification. That was 34 years ago.

And today I believe our State is better than that. I believe, given another chance to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment, Democrats and Republicans in Florida could be united to support equality for women.

I am proud to have grown up in a changing world, but it is time for our daughters and the next generation of women to grow up in a changed world. It is time to recognize their equality in our Constitution.

I thank the Congresswoman for bringing attention to this issue and for all that you do on behalf of women.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER), the sponsor of legislation that would retroactively lift the deadline for the ratification of the ERA.

Ms. SPEIER. I thank the gentlewoman from New Jersey for bringing us together tonight to talk about one of the most fundamental issues facing women in this country. I would hope that we would do these Special Orders on a monthly basis or maybe even more frequently to kind of beat the drum about how important it is for us to address this issue.

Today we see everything we need to see to convince us of the need to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment and put women's equality into the Constitution. We have a pay gap that has not closed where women are making 79 cents for every dollar that men make. For African American women that is 63 cents, and for Latina women it is 54 cents for every dollar earned by a man.

In fact, women in this country have to work until April 15 of the following year—tax day, ironically—to make as much money as their male counterparts. We can't afford that. We can't afford that in a country that speaks of equality.

Meanwhile, we have a Congress and State legislators who are focused like a laser beam on attacking women's health. We just spent 5 hours today in a hearing of a special committee designed specifically to attack women's health. Since the start of 2016—merely 2 months ago, and for the last 2 months—there have been more than 201 anti-choice bills introduced in State legislatures across this country, efforts to undermine a woman's right to choose.

We have a Supreme Court seat at stake and issues of gender equality hanging in the balance. It is important to quote what the late Justice Scalia said about discrimination against women. He was a constitutional expert, an originalist, and he said the following:

''Certainly the Constitution does not require discrimination on the basis of sex. The only issue is whether it prohibits it. It doesn't.''

When I read that quotation by Justice Scalia—may he rest in peace—I had shivers up and down my spine because it was so direct. It was so clear. It makes the point that the Constitution of this country does not prohibit discrimination based on sex, even though the vast majority of Americans believe it is already in the Constitution.

Ninety-six percent of U.S. adults believe that male and female citizens should have equal rights, and 72 percent mistakenly believe it is already in the Constitution. As Justice Scalia pointed out, it is not.

So what does that mean?

That means that every single woman in this country can be subject to discrimination and not have a legal foot to stand on.

Probably one of the most obvious cases is the case of Peggy Young. Peggy Young worked for United Parcel Service for 10 years. She was a good worker, a hard worker. And then, lo and behold, she gets pregnant. She gets pregnant. She goes to her supervisor and she says: I am pregnant.

He says: Okay. Go to your doctor and find out what accommodations you will require.

□ 1845

She went to her doctor, and her doctor said: Well, you can do anything except you can't lift more than 10 pounds.

So she came back to her supervisor and said: I can do anything except I can't lift more than 10 pounds.

He said: Oh, my gosh, that is a terrible liability.

For all intents and purposes, she was fired from her job. She was told she will have to take a leave of absence, that she will not be paid, and that she would not be eligible for health benefits. So her entire pregnancy she had no prenatal care and no health insurance.

Now, what makes this story particularly insidious is that during that same timeframe, men at the United Parcel Service who had heart disease, heart attacks, had had a DUI, or had diabetes were asked to go to their doctors and find out what accommodations they should propose. Some of them came back with the exact same accommodation: that they could not lift more than 10 pounds.

What did United Parcel Service do? United Parcel Service accommodated them. That is profound discrimination.

But guess what. Peggy Young filed a lawsuit. It went all the way to the Supreme Court, and it got remanded. It got remanded in part because not only did she have to prove that there was discrimination, which clearly there was; she had to prove that it was intentional discrimination by United Parcel Service, and she couldn't prove that.

Now, in all the other forms of discrimination, whether it is based on race or religion, you only have to prove that there was discrimination, not that there was intentional acts of discrimination. So that is why it is so important that we get this in the Constitution.

We have a new generation of women who are more independent, more able to support themselves, and more politically empowered than ever. I just read an article that shows single women are now our most potent political force in this country. Single women—whether they are single never been married, single divorced, single separated, single—are our most potent electoral force. They deserve the right to full legal equality under our Constitution. How can this body, of all bodies, not recognize the importance of equality among men and women?

So I have introduced H.J. Res. 51. It is very simple.

The ERA was introduced first in 1923 by Alice Paul, and introduced every Congress since then, and then it was introduced and actually passed the House and passed the Senate. It then had to be ratified by three-quarters of the States. Unfortunately, when that was drafted, in the preamble they put a timeline. It was ratified by 35 States, but not 38. So it came back to Congress, and they amended the preamble and extended the length of time in which the ERA could be passed by other States. And then nothing happened.

What this resolution does—and it would only require a majority of the Members of this body to pass it—is basically use the precedent and take the preamble and the time deadline and just strike it.

There is no need for a deadline in a constitutional amendment. Most constitutional amendments have not been subject to a deadline. There is precedent that they were willing to change it as it relates to the ERA, and I say let's make it yet another precedent and just take the timeline out of it. That would give us the opportunity to get three more States to pass the ERA, to ratify it.

We already know in Virginia it has been passed by the senate, and we are waiting for action in the house. As my good friend from Florida said, in Florida they could pass it, conceivably, now.

So why not do what is fundamentally right? Why not do what is so simple? Twenty-four simple words, that is all the ERA is. It is on one page, and it is simply: ''Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.''

The time has come, Members, and I applaud my good colleague from New Jersey for bringing us together. We

should do it again. I enjoy working with you on any number of issues.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman, and I want to say tonight that we definitely will be coming back here again on a Special Order hour and addressing this issue. We will just continue to do it until we can see some movement. I thank you for that.

Mr. Speaker, the women tonight, the Members of the House, have spoken so eloquently and so compellingly on this issue and the urgency with which we need to take this issue up. But the women of this Nation, they are very strong and intelligent and capable citizens as well.

As our laws in our society have given women a turn at bat, we have stepped up to the plate, and we have proven time and again that we can do what men do just as well as they do it, and often even better.

Although expectations and stereotypes are changing, women are still lacking in equal footing. Last year the United States fell to 28th place in the annual world equality rankings, behind even Rwanda and the Philippines. We are one of only a few nations that fails to specifically affirm the legal equality of men and women in our governing documents, a failure we would hold any other nation accountable for.

The ERA is the biggest and most basic step we can take to ensure equality for every woman. We need it, and we need it now. So let us work together to give women equal rights once and for all.

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

BILLS PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on February 12, 2016, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bills:

H.R. 757. To improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes.

H.R. 907. To improve defense cooperation between the United States and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

H.R. 1428. To extend Privacy Act remedies to citizens of certified states, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 52 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, March 3, 2016, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

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

4518. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Bennet S. Sacolick, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1370(c)(1); Public Law 96-513, Sec. 112 (as amended by Public Law 104-106, Sec. 502(b)); (110 Stat. 293); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4519. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility; Massachusetts: Boston, City of, Suffolk County; [Docket ID: FEMA-2015-0001] [Internal Agency Docket No.: FEMA-8421] received February 29, 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 Financial Services.

4520. A letter from the Under Secretary, Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's intent to sign a Project Agreement Concerning Small Intelligent Unmanned Aerial Systems with the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of India, Transmittal No.: 03-16, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2767(f); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 27(f) (as amended by Public Law 113-276, Sec. 208(a)(4)); (128 Stat. 2993); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4521. A letter from the Principal Deputy Under Secretary, Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Cooperative Threat Reduction Program Annual Report to Congress for Fiscal Year 2016, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 3715; 50 U.S.C. 3741 — 3743; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4522. A letter from the Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs, United States Agency for International Development, transmitting the Agency's formal response to the GAO report entitled, ''Foreign Aid: USAID Has Taken Steps to Safeguard Government-to-Government Funding but Could Further Strengthen Accountability'' (GAO-15-377), pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 720; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4523. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Maritime Commission, transmitting the Commission's Annual Report to Congress on EEO Complaint Activity for Fiscal Year 2015, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4524. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program Reports for Fiscal Years 2013 and 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 7201(e); Public Law 89-554 (as amended by Public Law 95-454, Sec. 310); (92 Stat. 1153); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4525. A letter from the Senior Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Management, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (RIN: 1505-AC48) received February 29, 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.

4526. A letter from the President and Chief Executive Officer, Amtrak, National Railroad Passenger Corporation, transmitting Amtrak's Fiscal Year 2017 General and Legislative Annual Report, pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 24315(b); Public Law 103-272, Sec. 1(e); (108 Stat. 918); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4527. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Acushnet River, New Bedford and Fairhaven, MA [Docket No.: USCG-2016-0058] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4528. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's interim rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Lake Pontchartrain, Slidell, LA [Docket No.: USCG-2015-0814] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4529. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Closure of Morro Bay Harbor Bar Entrance; Morro Bay, CA [Docket No.: USCG-2015-1083] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4530. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; New Years Eve Firework Displays, Chicago River, Chicago, IL [Docket No.: USCG-2015-1074] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4531. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's interim rule — Regulated Navigation Area; Reporting Requirements for Barges Loaded with Certain Dangerous Cargoes, Illinois Waterway System located within the Ninth Coast Guard District; Expiration of Stay (Suspension) and Administrative Changes [Docket No.: USCG-2013-0849] (RIN: 1625-AA11) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4532. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Security Zone; Kailua Bay, Oahu, HI [Docket No.: USCG-2015-1030] (RIN: 1625-AA87) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4533. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Missouri River, Atchison, KS [Docket No.: USCG-2014-0358] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4534. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Duwamish Waterway, Seattle, WA [Docket No.: USCG-2015-0285] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4535. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland

Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Moving Security Zone; Escorted Vessels; MM 90.0 — 106.0, Lower Mississippi River; New Orleans, LA [Docket No.: USCG-2014-0995] (RIN: 1625-AA87) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4536. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's interim rule — Moving Security Zone; Escorted Vessels; MM 90.0 — 106.0, Lower Mississippi River; New Orleans, LA [Docket No.: USCG-2014-0995] (RIN: 1625-AA87) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4537. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Intracoastal Waterway; Lake Charles, LA [Docket No.: USCG-2015-1086] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4538. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Richland, Apra Harbor/Philippine Sea, GU [Docket No.: USCG-2015-1101] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4539. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Bayou Chene beginning at mile 130.0 on the Atchafalaya River extending through the Bayou Chene ending at Mile 85.0 on the Intercoastal Waterway Morgan City, LA [Docket No.: USCG-2016-0016] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4540. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Transit Restrictions, Lower Mississippi River Mile Marker 311.0 — 319.0 [Docket No.: USCG-2016-0023] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4541. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Transit Restrictions, Lower Mississippi River Mile Marker 365.0 — 361.0 [Docket No.: USCG-2016-0014] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4542. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Bayou Petite Caillou, Boudreaux Canal Floodgate; Chauvin, LA [Docket No.: USCG-2015-1125] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); ; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4543. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; James River, Newport News, VA [Docket No.: USCG-2016-0044] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4544. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Hudson River, Anchorage Ground 19-W [Docket No.: USCG-2016-0028] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4545. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Civil Works, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Edisto Beach interim final integrated feasibility report and environmental assessment for March 2014 (H. Doc. No. 114—109); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and ordered to be printed.

4546. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Civil Works, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Bogue Banks final integrated report and environmental impact statement for August 2014 (H. Doc. No. 114—110); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and ordered to be printed.

4547. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Civil Works, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Flagler County hurricane and storm damage reduction final integrated feasibility study and environmental assessment for September 2014 (rev. October 2014) (rev. April 2015) (H. Doc. No. 114—111); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and ordered to be printed.

4548. A letter from the Secretary and the Attorney General, Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Justice, transmitting the Departments' Annual Report to Congress on Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control Program for FY 2015, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1395i(k)(5); Aug. 14, 1935, ch. 531, title XVIII, Sec. 1817(k)(5) (as added by Public Law 104-191, Sec. 201(b)); (110 Stat. 1996); jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

4549. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's First Quarterly Report for FY 2016 on the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994, pursuant to 38 U.S.C. 4332(b)(1); Public Law 103-353, Sec. 2(a) (as added by Public Law 110-389, Sec. 312(c)); (122 Stat. 4165); jointly to the Committees on the Judiciary and Veterans' Affairs.

4550. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's determinations and the associated report, pursuant to Public Law 112-239, Secs. 1244(c)(1), 1246(a), and 1247(a); jointly to the Committees on Foreign Affairs, the Judiciary, Oversight and Government Reform, and Financial Services.

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. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 4119. A bill to authorize the exchange of certain land located in Gulf Islands National Seashore, Jackson County, Mississippi, between the National Park Service and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–441). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 482. A bill to redesignate Ocmulgee National Monument in the State of Georgia and revise its boundary, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–442). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BYRNE: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 635. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4557) to allow for judicial review of any final rule addressing national emission standards for hazardous air pollutants for brick and structural clay products or for clay ceramics manufacturing before requiring compliance with such rule, and providing for proceedings during the period from March 4, 2016, through March 11, 2016 (Rept. 114–443). 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. KING of New York (for himself, Mr. OLSON, Mr. BLUM, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. VALADAO):

H.R. 4660. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow an increased work opportunity credit with respect to recent veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. FUDGE (for herself, Mr. HINOJOSA, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. PLASKETT, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. COURTNEY, and Mr. TAKANO):

H.R. 4661. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to include Parent PLUS loans in income-contingent and income-based repayment plans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee (for himself and Mr. HOYER):

H.R. 4662. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to increase the preference given, in awarding certain asthma-related grants, to States that allow trained school personnel to administer asthma-related rescue medications, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. JOLLY:

H.R. 4663. A bill to forbid Federal agencies from buying Apple products until Apple provides the Federal Government with technical support necessary to access encrypted information sought by a warrant that may be materially relevant to the commission of terrorism; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, and House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. NADLER (for himself, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. POE of Texas, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. GRAYSON, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. MENG, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. KING of New York, and Mr. DONOVAN):

H.R. 4664. A bill to direct the President to submit to Congress a report on actions the Department of State and other relevant Federal departments and agencies have taken regarding steps to ensure that a just, comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace accord also finds resolution of the issue of Jewish refugees from Arab countries and Iran; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. BEYER (for himself, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. WELCH, and Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS):

H.R. 4665. A bill to require the Secretary of Commerce to conduct an assessment and analysis of the outdoor recreation economy of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN:

H.R. 4666. A bill to require State educational agencies that receive funding under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to have in effect policies and procedures on background checks for school employees; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. CLAWSON of Florida (for himself, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. BUCHANAN, and Mr. HASTINGS):

H.R. 4667. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Army to expedite the completion of repairs to the Herbert Hoover Dike, Florida, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. HANNA, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. NORTON, Mr. NADLER, and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN):

H.R. 4668. A bill to affirm that Federal employees are protected from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity and to repudiate any assertion to the contrary; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. FOSTER:

H.R. 4669. A bill to support the establishment of a Standards Coordinating Body in Regenerative Medicine and Advanced Therapies; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. HECK of Nevada (for himself, Mr. HARDY, and Mr. AMODEI):

H.R. 4670. A bill to adjust the boundary of the Mojave National Preserve; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan (for himself and Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York):

H.R. 4671. A bill to amend title 18, Unites States Code, to eliminate Federal Prison Industries advantages over the private sector and small business in the procurement of commercially available goods and services; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. JENKINS of Kansas:

H.R. 4672. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the exception for marginal production from the taxable income limit on percentage depletion for oil and natural gas wells; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LOEBSACK (for himself, Mr. WALZ, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. POCAN, and Mrs. BUSTOS):

H.R. 4673. A bill to amend the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 to establish a competitive grant program for renewable fuel infrastructure, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. MENG (for herself, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. SALMON, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. CROWLEY, and Mr. POLIS):

H.R. 4674. A bill to support the sustainable recovery and rebuilding of Nepal following the recent, devastating earthquakes near Kathmandu; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4675. A bill to direct the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to prohibit the use of leaded fuel by aircraft operating within United States airspace; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. ROONEY of Florida (for himself and Mr. DEUTCH):

H.R. 4676. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide an additional tool to prevent certain frauds against veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ASHFORD (for himself, Mr. CUELLAR, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. COSTA, and Mr. COOPER):

H.J. Res. 83. A joint resolution proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PERRY (for himself and Mr. SALMON):

H.J. Res. 84. A joint resolution to authorize the use of United States Armed Forces against organizations that support Islamist extremism, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. PEARCE (for himself, Mr. COLE, and Ms. MCCOLLUM):

H. Con. Res. 122. Concurrent resolution supporting efforts to stop the theft, illegal possession or sale, transfer, and export of tribal cultural items of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians in the United States and internationally; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Foreign Affairs, and Natural Resources, 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. SALMON (for himself, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. BERA, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. CICILLINE, and Mr. ROHRABACHER):

H. Res. 634. A resolution recognizing the importance of the United States-Republic of Korea-Japan trilateral relationship to counter North Korean threats and nuclear proliferation, and to ensure regional security and human rights; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

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. KING of New York:

H.R. 4660.

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

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1

The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

By Ms. FUDGE:

H.R. 4661.

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

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, otherwise known as the Commerce Clause.

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.R. 4662.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. JOLLY:

H.R. 4663.

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

Article I. Section 8

By Mr. NADLER:

H.R. 4664.

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

Article I, Section 8, clauses 1, 3, and 18.

By Mr. BEYER:

H.R. 4665.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN:

H.R. 4666.

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

The Commerce Clause: Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution gives Congress the power ''to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.''

By Mr. CLAWSON of Florida:

H.R. 4667.

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

Article 1 Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Ms. DUCKWORTH:

H.R. 4668.

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

Clause 18, Section 8, Article 1 of The Constitution of the United States

By Mr. FOSTER:

H.R. 4669.

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

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. HECK of Nevada:

H.R. 4670.

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

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2:

''The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitutions shall be construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any particular State.''

By Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan:

H.R. 4671.

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

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3—To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

Amendment X—Nothing in the Constitution authorizes the Federal government to do anything other than those things enumerated (coin money, enter into treaties, conduct a Census—which are inherently governmental). Thus, under Amendment X, the right to carry out commercial activities is reserved to the States, respectively, or to the people.

By Ms. JENKINS of Kansas:

H.R. 4672.

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

Article I, Section 8:

The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States.

By Mr. LOEBSACK:

H.R. 4673.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution.

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 4674.

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

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4675.

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

clause 3 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. ROONEY of Florida:

H.R. 4676.

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

Article I, section 8—to make rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and Naval Forces.

By Mr. ASHFORD:

H.J. Res. 83.

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

Article V of the Constitution, that grants Congress the authority, whenever two thirds of both chambers deem is necessary, to propose amendments to the Constitution.

By Mr. PERRY:

H.J. Res. 84.

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

Section 8 of Article 1 of the Constitution

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

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

H.R. 140: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 228: Mrs. BLACKBURN and Mr. BARR.
H.R. 239: Mr. GRAYSON and Mr. SERRANO.
H.R. 244: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 292: Mr. GRAYSON.
H.R. 333: Mr. PETERSON.
H.R. 359: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.
H.R. 448: Mr. POLIS.
H.R. 563: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
H.R. 605: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey and Mr. TONKO.
H.R. 616: Mr. DEUTCH.
H.R. 624: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
H.R. 654: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, and Mr. POMPEO.
H.R. 699: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.
H.R. 775: Mr. BLUM.
H.R. 793: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 802: Mr. SCHRADER.
H.R. 845: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.
H.R. 863: Mr. GOODLATTE.
H.R. 923: Mr. KING of Iowa.
H.R. 932: Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 953: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan and Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.
H.R. 986: Mr. ROSS and Mr. KING of Iowa.
H.R. 989: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.
H.R. 999: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 1093: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.
H.R. 1333: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.
H.R. 1431: Mr. PALAZZO.
H.R. 1432: Mr. PALAZZO.
H.R. 1486: Mr. BABIN.
H.R. 1550: Mr. SESSIONS.
H.R. 1598: Mr. NORCROSS.
H.R. 1625: Mrs. DAVIS of California.
H.R. 1655: Mr. CARNEY.
H.R. 1769: Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. FORBES, and Mr. STEWART.
H.R. 1811: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 1923: Mr. RENACCI.
H.R. 1941: Mr. MCKINLEY and Mr. RUSH.
H.R. 2016: Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 2054: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 2058: Mr. WOMACK.
H.R. 2090: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 2121: Mrs. COMSTOCK.
H.R. 2170: Mr. NEWHOUSE.
H.R. 2215: Mr. LAMALFA.
H.R. 2355: Mr. ISRAEL.
H.R. 2399: Mr. GIBSON.
H.R. 2430: Mr. PERLMUTTER.
H.R. 2461: Mr. ROSS.
H.R. 2536: Mr. FOSTER.
H.R. 2646: Mr. DONOVAN.
H.R. 2747: Mr. NOLAN and Mr. EMMER of Minnesota.
H.R. 2799: Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. POLIS, Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mrs. DAVIS of California, and Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.
H.R. 2802: Mr. RIGELL.
H.R. 2844: Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H.R. 2846: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 2894: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.
H.R. 2896: Mr. ROTHFUS and Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H.R. 2901: Mr. ROTHFUS.
H.R. 2911: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.
H.R. 3099: Ms. MATSUI, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, and Mr. DENHAM.
H.R. 3137: Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia.
H.R. 3183: Mr. JONES.
H.R. 3222: Mrs. LUMMIS and Mr. GRAVES of Georgia.
H.R. 3326: Mr. ROONEY of Florida and Mr. GUINTA.
H.R. 3351: Mr. NORCROSS.
H.R. 3377: Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 3381: Mr. GUINTA and Ms. MATSUI.
H.R. 3406: Mr. POLIS and Ms. LEE.
H.R. 3446: Mr. PETERS.
H.R. 3516: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.
H.R. 3520: Ms. TSONGAS and Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois.
H.R. 3637: Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 3660: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 3687: Mr. WESTERMAN.
H.R. 3706: Ms. ADAMS, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. WELCH, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. NORCROSS, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, and Mr. CAPUANO.
H.R. 3713: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
H.R. 3779: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 3808: Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. TROTT, and Mr. HARDY.
H.R. 3817: Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, and Mr. RUSH.
H.R. 3880: Mr. TROTT.
H.R. 3886: Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 3913: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.
H.R. 3952: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 3977: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 4055: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 4062: Mr. ZINKE.
H.R. 4063: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 4073: Ms. SLAUGHTER and Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.
H.R. 4096: Mr. MESSER.
H.R. 4126: Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois and Mr. JOYCE.
H.R. 4137: Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 4167: Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, and Mr. VELA.
H.R. 4262: Mr. BOST, Mr. OLSON, Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H.R. 4264: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 4277: Mr. ZINKE and Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 4305: Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 4336: Mr. EMMER of Minnesota, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, and Mr. NADLER.
H.R. 4380: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. SINEMA, and Ms. EDWARDS.
H.R. 4381: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 4396: Mr. TAKANO, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. CÁRDENAS.
H.R. 4399: Mr. LEVIN.
H.R. 4447: Mr. LEWIS.
H.R. 4448: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 4451: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 4456: Ms. DUCKWORTH.
H.R. 4472: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 4479: Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 4480: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4488: Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. ENGEL, and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 4499: Mr. TONKO and Mr. DOLD.
H.R. 4505: Mr. FINCHER, Mr. HINOJOSA, and Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 4535: Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. KEATING, and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 4544: Mr. BRAT.
H.R. 4552: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4555: Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. BABIN, Mr. HARPER, Mr. ALLEN, and Mr. BISHOP of Utah.
H.R. 4570: Ms. ESHOO, Ms. STEFANIK, and Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 4584: Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. BABIN, Mr. MCCAUL, and Mr. PALAZZO.
H.R. 4592: Mr. LYNCH, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. WELCH, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. TONKO, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. KING of New York, and Ms. PLASKETT.
H.R. 4603: Mr. RICHMOND and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 4612: Mr. PALAZZO and Ms. MCSALLY.
H.R. 4617: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 4625: Mr. RANGEL, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. ESTY, Ms. KUSTER, and Mr. LOBIONDO.
H.R. 4636: Mr. CRAMER, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mrs. LOVE, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, and Mr. SMITH of Missouri.
H.R. 4640: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 4642: Mr. HASTINGS.
H.R. 4651: Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. KING of New York, and Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.
H.R. 4653: Ms. MATSUI, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. RUSH, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. NORTON, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. LEE, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, and Mr. ISRAEL.
H.R. 4655: Mr. SENSENBRENNER.
H.R. 4657: Mr. WELCH.
H.J. Res. 22: Mr. NADLER.
H.J. Res. 55: Mr. GARRETT, Mr. GUINTA, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, and Mr. LOUDERMILK.
H. Con. Res. 36: Mr. NORCROSS.
H. Con. Res. 40: Mr. KING of New York.
H. Con. Res. 89: Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. FARENTHOLD, and Mr. SENSENBRENNER.
H. Con. Res. 121: Mr. PAULSEN.
H. Res. 245: Ms. MENG.
H. Res. 377: Mr. EMMER of Minnesota.
H. Res. 436: Ms. MENG.
H. Res. 518: Ms. MENG.
H. Res. 551: Mr. SERRANO, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. KING of New York, and Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.
H. Res. 613: Mr. RENACCI.
H. Res. 616: Mr. RYAN of Ohio and Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.
H. Res. 617: Mr. PEARCE, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. YOHO, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. BRAT, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. ABRAHAM, and Mr. BYRNE.
H. Res. 626: Ms. MENG.
H. Res. 629: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr.

SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. MCNERNEY.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

47. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the Jackson County Board of Supervisors, relative to a resolution to join with coast cities and counties in requesting the legislature to appropriate at least 80% of the $750 million in economic damages from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill to the local governments of the three coastal counties to be used for strategic, economic development to create new jobs, and expand the state's tax base from sales and income taxes generated from Mississippi coast businesses; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services.

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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Our Father in Heaven, shower our Senators with Your marvelous grace this day and always. Make them sufficient for these grand and challenging times. Teach them to make the most of their time, for the night comes when no one can work.

Lord, refresh them with Your might so that they will face vicissitudes with an equanimity of temperament and an absolute trust in the power of Your providence. Keep a protective eye on them so that they may dwell in safety.

Today, shine the light of Your presence upon us all, filling us with Your joy.

We pray in Your Holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY AND COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the current Senate Democratic leader once stated that ''nowhere in [the Constitution] does it say the Senate has a duty to give presidential nominees a vote.'' The incoming Senate Democratic leader, the one we will have next year, did not even wait until the final year of the last President's term to declare that the Senate should ''not confirm a Supreme Court nominee except in extraordinary circumstances.'' And we all know what Vice President BIDEN said when he chaired the Judiciary Committee. Here is what he said: ''It would be our pragmatic conclusion that once the political season is underway, and it is, action on a Supreme Court nomination must be put off until after the election campaign is over.''

That is the essence of the Biden rule. Yesterday, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee and I personally reiterated to President Obama that we will observe the Biden rule.

The American people deserve to be heard on this matter. That is the fairest and most reasonable approach today. Voters have already begun to choose the next President, who in turn will nominate the next Supreme Court Justice. It is an important decision.

Justice Scalia himself reminded us that setting aside one's personal views is ''one of the primary qualifications for a judge.'' His aim was to follow the Constitution wherever it took him, even if he disagreed politically with the outcome. We saw that when he sided with the constitutional right of protestors to burn the American flag. ''If you're going to be a good and faithful judge,'' he said, ''you have to resign yourself to the fact that you're not always going to like the conclusions you reach.''

I think Americans agree that judges should be fair, impartial arbiters who apply the law and the Constitution equally to all and as actually written, not as they wish it were. I think most Americans agree a judge should be committed to an evenhanded interpretation of the law and the Constitution so that everyone who walks into a courtroom knows he or she will have a fair shake.

But there is another view of the role of a judge. Under the view promoted by the current President, the so-called ''empathy standard,'' judges prioritize their political ideology above the law. The problem with that approach to judging is that empathy is only good in the courtroom if you are lucky enough to be the person the judge actually has empathy for. It is not so good if you are the other guy.

This is something the American people should decide. President Obama still has every right to nominate someone on his way out the door. The Senate also has every right to withhold its consent. That is what the Biden rule reminds us of this election year. We will appropriately revisit the matter after Americans elect their new President.

Now, this is not the only issue we discussed down at the White House yesterday. We also had a constructive discussion about other legislative issues, such as the prescription opioid and heroin epidemic sweeping our country and the important bill we will continue to consider today to help address it.

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, or CARA, is bipartisan legislation that targets this crisis at every level. The bill has a host of supporters, including 42 bipartisan cosponsors and more than 130 groups dedicated to combating the epidemic.

And while this is an important authorization bill, I would also note that Congress has already appropriated $400 million to opioid-specific programs. All $400 million of those funds still remain available to be spent today. That is right. These funds are still available, and we will have more opportunities to address funding through the appropriations process later this spring.

Michael Botticelli, the Obama administration's Director of National Drug Control Policy, testified at a hearing just a few months ago and thanked Congress for including funding in the fiscal 2016 spending bill, saying: ''We appreciate that Congress provided more than $400 million in funding in

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

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the fiscal 2016 appropriations act, specifically to address the opioid epidemic, an increase of more than $100 million from the previous year.''

Botticelli went on to say there is ''clear evidence that a comprehensive response,'' such as that of CARA, is ''tremendously important.'' He said that the provisions in CARA are ''critically important to make headway in terms of this epidemic.''

Let's not allow this issue to get tangled up in politics. It is really too important to each of our States. Let's do our part today to help those in recovery take their lives back. Let's help keep families together and kids safer and help prevent more Americans from suffering at the hands of addiction.

Let's put politics aside and continue to work to pass the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, which would be an important step forward in the fight against our national opioid and heroin crisis.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

RELATIONSHIPS IN THE SENATE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, people who watch us on television should understand that everything we do is not dour and kind of frowny. There are times, when we are away from the cameras, that we get along well and have a good time.

There is no better example of that than this morning. Every week at 8 o'clock in the morning on Wednesday we meet downstairs for the Senate Prayer Breakfast. I go there as often as I can. It is really very stimulating, and I am always glad I go every time I do go. But today was especially good because AL FRANKEN, the junior Senator from Minnesota, was making the presentation. Even though there is an opening prayer and a closing prayer, there is some talk in between that, and his presentation was terrific. And of course we all know AL FRANKEN, and so a lot of it was funny.

But I just want everyone watching us this morning to know we are not always—I used the word—dour. There are times when we smile and have a good time.

Everyone knows the Presiding Officer and I have total disagreement on policy, but I so admire the Presiding Officer. Without reservation, I can say we are friends—not just political friends, but we are friends. A year ago, when I was injured, because he is an ophthalmologist, he reached out to me and gave me his advice and mostly his concern, for which I am grateful.

I think if we stopped and looked around at each other, we would find many such relationships such as the one with the Presiding Officer and the senior Senator from Nevada, and I appreciate that.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we now have a new rule called the Biden rule, which I guess was invented this morning. What happens when my friend the Republican leader, as he did yesterday, talks about what Senator BIDEN has said is that he never completes the little presentation Senator BIDEN made. Senator BIDEN did not say there wouldn't be any nominations. Here is what he said in ending his presentation. At the end of his speech in 1992, Senator BIDEN said:

> Compromise is the responsible course both for the White House and for the Senate. If the President consults and cooperates with the Senate or moderates his selections absent consultation, then his nominees may enjoy my support as did Justices Kennedy and Souter.

That is what this is all about. Senator BIDEN never said there wouldn't be any nominations approved, and that was evident in the oval office yesterday. Vice President BIDEN told the story of a Republican President calling him down—he was chairman of the Judiciary Committee—and said: OK, we are having some problems here. I have 10 names on a piece of paper. I want you to look at it and give me your rough estimate. I will not bind you to this, but which of these do you think would work?

These were people that a Republican President presented to the Democratic chair of the Judiciary Committee saying: Give me your impression of these people. So they went over them—yes, yes, yes, no. They had 10 names.

That is the same thing that happened yesterday in the White House. President Obama said: Do you have any names for me? Give them to me. I will be happy to take a look at them.

So there is no Biden rule, unless the Biden rule is that we will continue doing what we have always done here in the Senate. And what is that? We approve in any Presidential election year—in a Presidential election year we always take care of a nomination. We have never in the history of the country not done that, until now.

Now, the other thing is we keep talking about a lot of political things, but we have an obligation based on the Constitution of the United States to do something about these nominations we get from the President. We have a constitutional duty to do our jobs, and that duty is to give advice and consent to the President when he sends a nomination up here, which we will have in a matter of a week or so.

And we do it quickly. We don't spend months and months doing this. The Republicans' unprecedented call to block any nominee is more of the obstruction that we have had here too often. This has never ever been done before.

As for my friend the Republican leader to talk about statements I made and the senior Senator from New York made, of course we made statements. It didn't affect what we did around here. I hoped people listened. I hoped it slowed down what President Bush was going to do. But the fact is President Bush did what he wanted, and he, in the process, was able to present nominations to us and we looked them over.

Now we have a new standard. We are not going to meet with whomever this person is. We don't know who it is, but we are not going to meet with him. We are not going to hold hearings, and we are not going to vote. That is wrong.

REPUBLICAN PARTY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, here is a headline of an article that appeared in the Washington Post: ''Trump is the GOP's Frankenstein monster.'' This was the headline in the Washington Post article authored by Robert Kagan, a former official in the Reagan State Department who is now a senior fellow at the Brookings Institute.

It is true, Donald Trump is the Republican Party's Frankenstein monster. Republicans have spent the last 8 years stoking the fires of resentment and hatred, building Trump piece by piece. Today the Republican establishment acts like it is surprised by Donald Trump's victories around the country. They feign outrage that a demagogue spewing vile xenophobia is somehow winning in a party which spent years telling immigrants they are not welcome in America. They act surprised that Republican voters are flocking to a birther candidate, even as Republican congressional leaders continue to support a man who refuses to distance himself from the Ku Klux Klan.

They express shock and outrage that Republican voters cheer Trump's schoolyard taunts, even as they trounce the most common courtesies extended to every President, even as they deny a fair hearing to a President's Supreme Court nominee for the first time ever—the first time—in history. Republicans shouldn't be surprised. They spent 8 years laying the groundwork for the rise of Donald Trump.

The reality is that Republican leaders are reaping what they have sown. As Mr. Kagan said in his Washington Post opinion piece yesterday, ''The party's own political crimes are being punished in a bit of cosmic justice fit for a Greek tragedy.''

Seven years ago the Republican leader and his party decided that President Obama was an illegitimate President. They decided his Presidency was unworthy of their basic respect and good-faith efforts. Congressional Republicans decided that whatever policies this President proposed, they would reflexively oppose them—regardless of the merits. Instead, congressional Republicans had only one objective—to keep President Obama from being reelected.

In order to do that, the Republican leader and his party refused to engage the President or Democrats on policy. No matter how dire the crisis for the

American people, Republican leaders decided it was more important to deny President Obama an achievement than help people in need. Think about that. No matter how dire the crisis for the American people, Republican leaders decided—I repeat—it was more important to deny President Obama an achievement than to help people in need.

Think about the monumental legislation Republicans refused to even engage in, let alone work on:

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, known as the stimulus, when our economy was in a nosedive—in a nosedive. Remember, when Obama was elected, that month he was elected the country lost 800,000 jobs in 1 month. We were in the throes of the great recession, and yet it took an effort to get a mere three Republicans to work with us on that legislation. Very important. They were strong, they were courageous—Specter, COLLINS, and Snowe. Republican leadership made it clear they didn't want their Senators working with President Obama on the stimulus, but we got it done.

Health care. Before ObamaCare, there were nearly 50 million Americans with no health insurance. Since then, almost 20 million more Americans have health coverage. Today, if you have a preexisting disability, you are covered with insurance. Today the rate of no insurance is below 10 percent. This is all in spite of congressional Republicans who would not work with Democrats despite our best efforts. They refused to do anything to engage in any way. When the debate over health care started, three Republicans—Senators Snowe, GRASSLEY, and ENZI, very important Members of the Finance Committee—acted interested in fixing our Nation's health care system, but Republican leadership twisted their arms to convince them—whatever words we want to use—to get them in line with the Republican leader's wishes and abandoned any hope of bipartisanship on the issue. So there was none. Senator Snowe brought up a bill in the Finance Committee, but the Republican leadership turned it into a ''no'' vote on the Senator floor, and the senior Senator from Iowa went back to Iowa and started talking about death panels. Doesn't that sound like something Donald Trump would do?

Wall Street and Dodd-Frank legislation, when Wall Street crashed. I can remember being in the White House with the Republican Secretary of the Treasury, a wonderful man. Secretary Paulson was on his knees begging NANCY PELOSI to work with him. The country was in deep trouble. Democrats controlled the body. We had a Republican President, and we worked with a Republican President.

In the shadow of economic ruin created by Wall Street's unhinged greed, Republicans would not work with us to rein in the big banks and financial institutions. They had been warned by Republican leadership. In the end, only one Republican voted for that bill—only one.

Time and time again, congressional Republicans went to the extreme to block any positive legislation to improve our Nation. The tactics Republicans used to obstruct this President were unprecedented. In effect, the Republican leader told the President that none of his policies would get a fair hearing from Republicans, and that is basically true. Republicans denied the Office of the President the respect it deserves, and their shoddy and disrespectful treatment became the norm.

In 6 years, the Republican leader launched more than 500 filibusters. During the same 6-year period, Lyndon Johnson, in 6 years, had overcome 2 filibusters—500 to 2. This is far more than anyone ever imagined could happen in this great body.

Actions speak louder than words. Automatically filibustering the President's policies for years on end sends a clear and simple message: Republicans think this President's proposals are illegitimate. Instead of working for the American people, Republicans decided that making the extreme rightwing happy was more important. Republicans blocked legislation to prevent criminals and suspected terrorists from buying guns, even background checks. Republicans blocked commonsense campaign finance reform. We had 59 votes to allow some disclosure of all these huge amounts of money; not a single Republican voted with us—not a single Republican. Republicans voted to deport DREAMers. Republicans blocked an increase in the minimum wage. Republicans blocked equal pay for women. Republicans blocked efforts to do something about student loan debt. Now Republicans are blocking the nominee of the Supreme Court before that person has even been nominated. This is just a short list of what they have blocked.

From this rhetoric to their actions, the Republicans have set the Trump standards. The Republican Party has long used Islam to fearmonger. Now Donald Trump is doing the same thing. The Republican Party has spent years railing against Latinos and immigrants, trying to incite fear and panic. Congressman STEVE KING called immigrants drug dealers and described their bodies in a very negative, ugly way. Now Donald Trump is saying the same thing. Donald Trump is the ultimate fulfillment of the Republicans' legacy of obstruction and resentment, but to be frank, it is not only Trump. Senator CRUZ, Senator RUBIO, and Ben Carson are saying basically the same thing—maybe a little more subtle, but they are saying the same thing. After all, this is the same party—the Republican Party—that just yesterday saw nine of its Members vote against naming a post office after world-famous poet and civil rights activist Maya Angelou. It is hard to believe.

Even as the establishment condemns what Donald Trump says and does, the Republican leadership is still supporting him. The Speaker of the House yesterday affirmed that he will vote for Donald Trump if he is the Republican nominee for President. The Senate Republican leader has not said he will not vote for Donald Trump if he is the nominee. Publicly, at least, Republicans are supporting a man who refused to denounce the KKK—a man who continues to denigrate immigrants, Muslims, and the disabled.

Donald Trump is the standard bearer for the Republican Party. Republicans created him by spending 7 years appealing to some of the darkest forces in America. It is up to Republicans to try and undo what they have done by denouncing Donald Trump. It is time for Republicans to stop the Frankenstein they created. Trump is the GOP's Frankenstein monster. If Republicans fail to stop Donald Trump, it will tear the party apart even more than it is now.

Will the Chair announce the business of the day?

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to proceed to S. 524 is agreed to.

The clerk will report the bill.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 524) to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on the Judiciary, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

S. 524

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 use 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 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 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 crashes 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 prescription opioid users have turned to heroin as a cheaper or more easily obtained alternative to prescription drugs.

(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 multi-pronged 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 great 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.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act—

(1) 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;

(2) 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

(3) 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 USE 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 Inter-Agency Task Force convened under subsection (b).

(b) INTER-AGENCY 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 Inter-Agency 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; and

(I) the Office of National Drug Control Policy;

(2) physicians, dentists, and non-physician 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;

(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);

(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.

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 Attorney General (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 Attorney General (including appropriate consideration of the results of the surveys described in clause (i)), over a sustained period of time; and

''(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.

''(b) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Attorney General, 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 Attorney General at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Attorney General may require.

''(2) CRITERIA.—As part of an application for a grant under this section, the Attorney General shall require an eligible entity to submit a detailed, comprehensive, multi-sector 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 pursuant to subsection (i) for a fiscal year may be used by the Attorney General 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 16 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 a current—

(i) substance use disorder; or

(ii) co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorder; and

(C) has been approved for participation in a program funded under this section by, as applicable depending on the stage of the criminal justice process, the relevant law enforcement agency or prosecuting attorney, defense attorney, probation or corrections official, judge, or 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) pre-trial 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 desiring 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;

(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 shall carry out this section using funds made available to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration for Criminal Justice Activities.

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; and

''(4) 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 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 on-site 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.

''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 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 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 'Secretary' means the Secretary of Health and Human Services; and

''(4) 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; 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 shall carry out this section using funds made available to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration for Criminal Justice Activities.

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 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 as a second language instruction at the basic, secondary, or post-secondary levels, for adult and juvenile populations;

''(2) screening and assessment of inmates to assess education level, 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 as a second language 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 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 desiring 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 the 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 substance abuse or addiction and are in recovery; and

(II) not fewer than 1 one 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 from 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.

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. IMPROVING TREATMENT FOR PREGNANT AND POSTPARTUM WOMEN.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services (referred to in this section as the 'Secretary'), acting through the Director of the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, may carry out a pilot program under which the Secretary makes competitive grants to State substance abuse agencies to—

''(1) 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;

''(2) 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 non-residential based settings; and

''(3) 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.

''(b) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out the pilot program under this section, the Secretary—

''(1) shall require State substance abuse agencies to submit to the Secretary applications, in such form and manner and containing such information as specified by the Secretary, to be eligible to receive a grant under the program;

''(2) shall identify, based on such submitted applications, State substance abuse agencies that are eligible for such grants;

''(3) 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;

''(4) shall not require that services furnished through such a grant be provided solely to women that reside in facilities; and

''(5) shall not require that grant recipients under the program make available all services described in section 508(d) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb–1(d)).

''(c) REQUIRED SERVICES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall specify minimum services required to be made available to eligible women through a grant awarded under the pilot program under this section. Such minimum services—

''(A) shall include the requirements described in section 508(c) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb–1(c));

''(B) may include any of the services described in section 508(d) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb–1(d));

''(C) may include other services, as appropriate; and

''(D) shall be based on the recommendations submitted under paragraph (2).

''(2) STAKEHOLDER INPUT.—The Secretary 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 paragraph (1).

''(d) DURATION.—The pilot program under this section shall not exceed 5 years.

''(e) EVALUATION AND REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

''(1) 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 section, shall conduct an evaluation of the pilot program, beginning 1 year after the date on which a grant is first awarded under this section. 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.

''(2) CONTENTS.—The report to Congress under paragraph (1) 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.

''(f) STATE SUBSTANCE ABUSE AGENCY DEFINED.—For purposes of this section, 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 of the Public Health Service Act.''.

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)) 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 drug use.''.

TITLE VI—INCENTIVIZING STATE COMPREHENSIVE INITIATIVES TO ADDRESS 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 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;

(3) the term ''prescriber'' means a dispenser who prescribes a controlled substance, or the agent of such a dispenser; 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) AMOUNT.—A planning grant under this section may not exceed $100,000.

(D) 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; 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.

(E) AMOUNT.—The amount of an implementation grant under this section may not exceed $5,000,000.

(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 appropriations 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 and subsection (i) of such section (42 U.S.C. 1396d).

(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 501, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 2999F. FUNDING.

''There are authorized to be appropriated to the Attorney General and the Secretary of Health and Human Services to carry out this part $77,900,000 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. 2999G. 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; and

(C) the term ''covered official'' means—

(i) the Attorney General; and

(ii) the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(2) ACCOUNTABILITY.—All grants awarded by a covered official under section 201, 302, or 601 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 grants awarded by the applicable covered official under section 201, 302, or 601 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 grant funds under section 201, 302, or 601 that is found to have an unresolved audit finding shall not be eligible to receive grant funds under those sections during the first 2 fiscal years beginning after the end of the 12-month period described in clause (i).

(iv) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under section 201, 302, or 601, 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 such section.

(v) REIMBURSEMENT.—If an entity is awarded grant funds under section 201, 302, or 601 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 grant programs under sections 201, 302, and 601, 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 grant under this section 201, 302, or 601

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 grant under section 201, 302, or 601 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 section 201, 302, or 601 may be used by the covered official, or by any individual or entity awarded discretionary funds through a cooperative agreement under those sections, 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 grant to an applicant under section 201, 302, or 601, the covered official shall compare potential grant awards with other grants awarded under those sections 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 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.

COMMITTEE-REPORTED SUBSTITUTE AMENDMENT WITHDRAWN

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the committee-reported substitute is withdrawn.

The Senator from Iowa.

AMENDMENT NO. 3378

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute.)

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I call up the substitute amendment No. 3378.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Iowa [Mr. GRASSLEY] proposes an amendment numbered 3378.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

(The amendment is printed in the RECORD of March 1, 2016, under ''Text of Amendments.'')

AMENDMENT NO. 3362 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3378

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I call up the Feinstein-Grassley amendment No. 3362.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Iowa [Mr. GRASSLEY], for Mrs. FEINSTEIN, proposes an amendment numbered 3362 to amendment No. 3378.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide the Department of Justice with additional tools to target extraterritorial drug trafficking activity, and for other purposes)

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).''.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I am pleased we are considering the bill before us entitled the ''Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act''—acronym CARA—and that we are on the floor discussing this very important issue.

Since I spoke about the bill earlier this week, I will not have any more opening remarks at this point. I look forward to a bipartisan process where we are able to consider many amendments and move this bill forward.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

OBAMACARE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to discuss more of the troubling news that has come out on how the health care law has affected the people of this country. A new poll just came out from National Public Radio as well as the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. This is what they found: According to the poll, 26 percent of Americans are telling us that the health care law—ObamaCare—has directly hurt them. Twenty-six percent of Americans say that ObamaCare, the health care law, has directly hurt them. Only 14 percent of the people in the poll said that their personal health care has gotten better under ObamaCare. So it is just one in seven who say it is better; over one-quarter say they have personally been hurt. So almost twice as many people have been directly hurt by the law compared to the people who have been helped.

American taxpayers are also being hurt by ObamaCare because of the waste and the fraud in the health care system. There is a new report just out from the Government Accountability Office. It came out last week. It found that the Obama administration is still failing to stop the fraud in health care subsidies.

Here is how the law was designed to work: People must have government-approved insurance because of the law. It is a mandate. There are a lot of people who have been forced to buy very expensive insurance to comply with the law, and in many cases it is far more coverage than they want, that they need, or that they can afford. So the health care law, which the Democrats voted for and the Republicans voted against, said that the government will give subsidies to people to help them pay for this Washington-mandated, expensive insurance.

To get the subsidy, people are supposed to be able to prove they are eligible for the subsidy. There are various criteria to make sure people are eligible. That means things like proving they make a certain income or how many people are in their family or that they are citizens of the United States or that they are here legally.

Washington then pays the subsidy directly to the insurance company. Then later, the government comes around and tries to figure out if the person even qualified for the money, so there is a huge potential for fraud and for wasting taxpayer dollars.

This new report from the Government Accountability Office found that, despite the billions of dollars at stake, the Obama administration has taken what they describe as a ''passive approach'' to identifying and preventing the fraud. The Obama administration has taken a ''passive approach.'' It says the Obama administration has struggled—struggled to confirm the eligibility of millions of people who applied for subsidies. This is a report from the Government Accountability Office. We want accountability in government.

The report found that there are 431,000 people who still had unresolved issues with the subsidy paperwork more than a year after they first applied. The cases amount to over $1.7 billion in taxpayer subsidies. Now, the insurance coverage that these people had for that year has already ended. The Obama administration still did not know if they should have gotten the money that was sent out to the insurance companies on their behalf.

There are another 22,000 cases where it still is not clear if the person who got the subsidy was serving time in prison. How can Washington not even know if someone is in prison? This should be one of the easiest things to find out. But there are millions of cases where the administration is taking this passive approach to figuring out if there is fraud occurring with these subsidies.

People all around the country are asking: Where is the accountability from the Obama administration? They are spending billions of taxpayer dollars. Where is the accountability to make sure that it is being spent properly and not wasted? There is no accountability because the Obama administration does not seem to care about protecting taxpayer money. It cares more about getting a large number of people enrolled in insurance. That is what they want, no matter what the law says, no matter how much money they waste to do it.

This report from the Government Accountability Office came out last Wednesday. The very next day, there was more bad news for taxpayers because of the health care law. There was an article in the Wall Street Journal on Thursday, February 25, under the headline ''Insurance Fight Escalates.'' It goes on to say: ''Health co-op leaders say the effort to recoup Federal loans will come up short.''

This is taxpayer money. Remember, the health care law gave out billions of dollars—billions of dollars in loans to set up these health insurance co-ops across the country. They set up 23. Already, more than half of them have collapsed and have gone out of business, 12 out of 23 have gone bust, and 700,000 Americans lost their insurance because these co-ops failed.

Now it looks as if hard-working taxpayers are going to lose the money that the government loaned to these failed insurance businesses. According to this Wall Street Journal article, leaders of the co-ops say that taxpayers are going to lose more than $1 billion in the failed co-ops. They say it is because most of the money has already been spent.

The article quotes the head of the co-op in New Mexico as saying: ''Will there be any money left?''

''Yeah, maybe.'' That is what he said. That is his answer: ''Yeah, maybe.'' Maybe there will be a little money left out of more than $1 billion in taxpayer loans. It is outrageous. It was not supposed to be a bailout of the insurance company. These were supposed to be loans.

Is that how the administration thinks loans are supposed to work? Does the Obama administration think that if they lend out money and people borrow it from the taxpayers and spend it, then they don't have to pay it? Where is the accountability from these co-ops for the American people? Where is the accountability for the Obama administration to make sure that they loan this money responsibly and don't waste it? Reports like this paint a very bad picture of health care and the health care law in this country.

We talked about these 23 co-ops and half of them have failed. This was headlined yesterday: ''Losses deepen for remaining ObamaCare co-ops.''

Losses snowballed in the fourth quarter at four co-op health plans [that have now reported their numbers for 2015].

The article says:

The nonprofit startups based in Illinois, Wisconsin, Ohio and Maine lost about $270 million last year. . . . That's more than five times the level of losses those plans recorded in 2014.

That was the first year they operated. They are still waiting for the updated financial reports on the other seven remaining co-ops that have not yet posted their returns.

Here we are. Six years ago, there was a debate in Congress about the Americans' health care system. Everyone in this body agreed we had a problem. Everybody agreed we needed to do something to help Americans. Republicans presented our ideas on the floor of the Senate. We went to meetings at the White House. We offered President Obama solutions. Democrats and the President rejected our ideas, and they came up with their own massive plan.

Washington took on too much power over the health care decisions of American families. More Washington control, less Washington accountability—they are never the right answers for our country. If Washington can't protect taxpayer dollars, it shouldn't be collecting so many of these dollars in the first place.

Republicans warned that ObamaCare would be bad for patients, bad for providers, and terrible for the taxpayers. The news keeps coming out, showing that we were exactly right. Republicans are going to continue to talk about our health care ideas and will continue to talk about ideas that will actually hold Washington accountable as Washington spends taxpayers' dollars. We will continue to talk about ideas such as giving families more control over their health care and their health care decisions and giving Washington less control. That is what Americans want.

This new report out from the National Public Radio poll showed 26 percent of Americans say that the health care law, ObamaCare, has directly hurt them. They didn't want this kind of health care reform that directly hurts them, instead of helping them; they wanted to be helped. They don't want an approach like we have; they want an approach that gives them control and, certainly, not a passive approach to preventing fraud. The American people do not want ObamaCare.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

AMENDMENT NO. 3345 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3378

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I wish to call up amendment No. 3345, which is my supplemental amendment to address the heroin and opioid epidemic.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New Hampshire [Mrs. SHAHEEN] proposes an amendment numbered 3345 to amendment No. 3378.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To make appropriations to address the heroin and opioid drug abuse epidemic for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016)

At the end, add the following:

TITLE VIII—ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016

SEC. 801. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.

(a) STATE AND LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to any amounts otherwise made available, there is appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for fiscal year 2016, $230,000,000, to remain available until expended, to the Department of Justice for State law enforcement initiatives (which shall include a 30 percent pass-through to localities) under the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant program, as authorized by subpart 1 of part E of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3750 et seq.) (except that section 1001(c) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 3793(c)) shall not apply for purposes of this Act), to be used, notwithstanding such subpart 1, for a comprehensive program to combat the heroin and opioid crisis, and for associated criminal justice activities, including approved treatment alternatives to incarceration.

(2) EMERGENCY REQUIREMENT.—The amount appropriated under paragraph (1) shall be designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(A)(i)).

(b) HEROIN AND METHAMPHETAMINE TASK FORCES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to any amounts otherwise made available, there is appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for fiscal year 2016, $10,000,000, to remain available until expended, to the Department of Justice to carry out section 2999 of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as added by section 204 of this Act, to be used to assist State and local law enforcement agencies in areas with high per capita levels of opioid and heroin use, targeting resources to support law enforcement operations on the ground.

(2) EMERGENCY REQUIREMENT.—The amount appropriated under paragraph (1) shall be designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(A)(i)).

SEC. 802. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.

(a) SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to any amounts otherwise made available, there is appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for fiscal year 2016—

(A) $300,000,000, to remain available until expended, to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the Department of Health and Human Services, for ''Substance Abuse Treatment'', to address the heroin and opioid crisis and its associated health effects, of which not less than $15,000,000 shall be to improve treatment for pregnant or postpartum women under the pilot program authorized under section 508(r) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb–1), as amended by section 501 of this Act; and

(B) $10,000,000, to remain available until expended, to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the Department of Health and Human Services, for grants for medication assisted treatment for prescription drug and opioid addiction under section 2999A of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as added by section 301 of this Act.

(2) EMERGENCY REQUIREMENT.—The amount appropriated under paragraph (1) shall be designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(A)(i)).

(b) CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to any amounts otherwise made available, there is appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for fiscal year 2016, $50,000,000, to remain available until expended, to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the Department of Health and Human Services, for prescription drug monitoring programs, community health system interventions, and rapid response projects.

(2) EMERGENCY REQUIREMENT.—The amount appropriated under paragraph (1) shall be designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(A)(i)).

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am not going to speak to this amendment right now because I hope to do it later. I spent a fair amount of time yesterday talking about the need to provide the resources to address the heroin and opioid epidemic, but I am very pleased to see my colleague from Maine on the floor to speak to it. He has been a cosponsor of the legislation and a huge advocate for addressing the challenge that Maine—like New Hampshire and so many other States—is facing from the heroin and opioid epidemic. I look forward to his remarks and to the opportunity for us to vote on this amendment later today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, this week, this body is talking about one of the most serious problems facing our country. The word ''epidemic'' really isn't strong enough to represent what we are seeing in terms of drug addiction—opioids and heroin, in particular. The bipartisan support for the bill that is on the floor this week is an indication of the belief of Members of both parties, of all parties of all parts of the country, that this is a critically important question.

We have heard the appalling figures in committees and caucuses and on the floor. In the State of Maine, there are 200 deaths a year from overdoses. This is an eightfold increase in the last 3 years. The figure that got my attention most dramatically was that a year ago in Maine, we had 12,000 babies born, and of that number over 950 were addicted to a substance. That is almost 1 in 12 babies born in my State.

Nationally, the figures are just as shocking and as bad. In my neighboring State of New Hampshire, the number of overdose deaths is now over 380 a year. It is more than one a day. Nationally, there are 47,000 overdose deaths—more deaths than are caused by automobiles.

If this were Ebola or ISIS or any other kind of national crisis, we would be in 24-hour session to find a solution. We would be doing everything the equivalent of the Manhattan Project to deal with something that is killing so many of our citizens, particularly our young people.

Like any other problem that gets to this body, this is complicated. There isn't any single solution. It involves law enforcement. It involves national security—stopping drugs at the border. It involves treatment of mental illness. It involves treatment of drug addiction and figuring out what works. It involves figuring out prevention. It involves dealing with the overwhelming number of opioid prescription drugs that we now know lead to heroin and other addictions.

It is a very complex problem. There is no single answer, but there are some things we do know about this problem:

The first thing we know is that law enforcement alone isn't enough. Essentially, we have tried that for 25 years. Law enforcement alone isn't enough. It is important. It is a critical part of our defense against the scourge, but it is not the entire answer.

The second thing we know is that this epidemic is directly related to the dramatic rise of prescription painkillers based upon opioids. The data is that four out of five new heroin users started with prescription drugs. This is something we need to discuss. We need to discuss it with the medical community. We need to discuss it with the educational community, and we need to understand that when these drugs are prescribed, there are risks—serious, undeniable, dangerous risks that are taking an enormous toll on our society.

Four out of five new heroin users started with prescription drugs. I met a young man in Maine who was in treatment, who was trying to recover, who had become an addict. He got there starting with a high school sports injury, and he was prescribed opioid treatment—opioid pills—and he ended up in the drug culture that was destroying his life.

That is the second thing we know. We know that law enforcement isn't enough. We know that a big part of our focus has to be on opioids and prescription drugs.

The third thing we know is, there are some treatments that appear to work. We don't know for sure. One of the things that I think we need to do in this body is to provide for the research and the data sharing and the data collection from around the country so we can find out what works. It appears that medication and counseling together are something that works, but we need more research and more data.

The fourth thing we know is that treatment resources are grossly inadequate. This epidemic has exploded in the last few years, but the resources in terms of treatment have, in some cases, actually diminished. There are fewer beds today than there were 3 years ago because of budget cuts, because of policy changes, and we end up

with young people and people generally that have this terrible problem eating up their lives with no place to go.

The greatest tragedy is when we have someone who is suffering from addiction and wants treatment and is ready to take the step and say ''I need it,'' and there is no place to go. The estimates are that among teenagers who are caught in this trap, only 20 percent have treatment available to them.

All these numbers and statistics and policy prescriptions aren't really my subject today. I don't want to talk about politics or even policy. I want to talk about people. In particular, I want to talk about this little boy. This picture is of a young man from Maine named Garrett Brown. There was an extraordinary story about Garrett in the Bangor Daily News late last week. A reporter, Erin Rhoda, an editor at the Bangor Daily News—one of our great newspapers—got to know this young man named Garrett Brown and spent a lot of time interacting with him over the last 3 years and recounted it in this extraordinary piece of journalism. It is the story of this young man's attempts to survive and what happened in his life.

This isn't politics. It isn't policy. It is people. In reading this story as I sat in my darkened office late last week—as my staff went home, they thought there was something wrong with me. The lights were dimmed, the sun was setting, and I read this story. It was like reading the story of the Titanic or of the Lincoln assassination. You knew how it was going to come out, but you hoped it wouldn't happen. You kept seeing moments when it could have been avoided; the tragic end could have been avoided, but it didn't happen. That was what was so gripping to me about this story. It was so real, and it was so close to home.

I have four boys of my own. I venture to say that every family in America that has a son has a picture like it or just like it somewhere in their family scrapbooks or stored on their telephone or in their computer. This is a wonderful Maine kid—a smiling 8-year-old, happy, and ready to go to school with his backpack. Then, about 15 years later, he is with his mom, and he is on his way out. He had a mom who loved him, but he had a system that failed him.

He took responsibility, by the way. He said: It's not that my mom or my stepdad didn't care. They tried. My grandparents tried everything they could. They were devout Christians. There was nothing they would have done to change it.

He took responsibility. But when he took responsibility, we didn't provide the means for him to effectuate that and save his own life. He had to want to beat it, but he also had to have the means, the resources to take that step.

The Bangor Daily News quite accurately laid out the issue: ''Opioid addiction like Garrett's requires treatment.'' We have this idea in our society that it is just a choice. You make the choice; you don't have to take that pill. Well, the way these drugs work on your brain, they hijack the very parts of your brain that enable you to make that decision. They actually go to the parts of the brain that deal with executive function, decisionmaking, and fear, and derail those parts of the brain. It requires treatment. I am sure that occasionally there are people who can do this by themselves, but that is very rare. Most people require treatment, and odds are that those with an addiction to drugs or alcohol won't get any treatment at all. As I mentioned, only one out of five teenagers who needs treatment has it available to them. If they do go through treatment, they are likely to get the wrong treatment. There is a world of different theories on treatments options, and that is why I say we need to have the research so we can understand what works and put our resources into the things that will actually bring results. Often it means they die, and that is what happened to young Garrett.

Between 2010 and 2014, the number of overdose deaths in Maine involving heroin overdose increased eightfold. This is Maine. This could have been any State in the country. It seems to be striking rural States now as strongly or even worse than urban areas of the country.

I didn't know Garrett Brown, but he was a brave kid. I could tell by his conversations with Erin Rhoda and by his conversations with us. He knew he was talking to us. He knew this was going to be public. He knew he was communicating with us, and here is what he said:

> If this changes one kid's life, saves one kid from being in jail, saves his family the pain of seeing him go through it—

This is a guy with an addiction saying this. It is extraordinary.

He continued:

> If this . . . saves one kid from overdosing and dying, then all that I've done hasn't been in vain. I guess that's why I keep doing this with you?

This is a tragedy. It is not a tragedy of numbers. It is a tragedy of real people. It is a tragedy of young lives lost, of treasures squandered, and of hearts broken. I have never in my adult life seen a problem like this that is facing my State and every State in this country. We can't solve it all at once. There is no magic wand. But if we find young people like Garrett who are ready to take a step toward a cure—if not a cure, at least have an ongoing recovery—we need to meet them halfway. We need to meet them halfway through the support of treatment, the support of creating options that are available, by understanding the relationship between addiction and the criminal justice system, and ultimately by loving our neighbors as ourselves.

People sometimes ask me: What is so special about Maine? I tell them Maine is a small town with very long streets. We know each other, care about each other, think about each other, and we try to help each other. I think this country can also be a community—should be a community where we think about and care about each other.

Young lives lost, treasures squandered, and hearts broken. I hope we can start to change that tragic trajectory that is breaking so many hearts in this country this week so we can make a difference, not for Garrett but for the young people to whom he was desperately sending this message. We can, we should, and we shall.

I thank the Presiding Officer and yield the floor.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. 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.

COMMEMORATING TEXAS INDEPENDENCE DAY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I rise to speak about a very important day in the history of my State of Texas, a day that inspires pride and gratitude in the hearts of all Texans. I rise to commemorate Texas Independence Day.

In a moment, I wish to read a letter that was written 180 years ago from behind the walls of an old Spanish mission called the Alamo—a letter written by a 26-year-old lieutenant colonel in the Texas Army, William Barret Travis—and in doing so, I carry on a tradition that was started by the late Senator John Tower, who represented Texas and this body for more than two decades. This tradition was upheld by his successor, Senator Phil Gramm, and then by Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison after him. So it is an honor today to carry on this great tradition.

On February 24, 1836, with his position under siege and outnumbered nearly 10-to-1 by the forces of the Mexican dictator Antonio Lopez de Santa Ana, Travis penned the following letter:

> To the people of Texas and all Americans in the world:
>
> Fellow citizens and compatriots, I am besieged by a thousand or more of the Mexicans under Santa Ana. I have sustained a continual bombardment and cannonade for 24 hours and have not lost a man.
>
> The enemy has demanded a surrender at discretion. Otherwise, the garrison are to be put to the sword if the fort is taken.
>
> I have answered the demand with a cannon shot, and our flag still waves proudly from the walls. I shall never surrender or retreat. Then, I call on you in the name of Liberty, of patriotism and everything dear to the American character, to come to our aid, with all dispatch.
>
> The enemy is receiving reinforcements daily and will no doubt increase to 3,000 or 4,000 in 4 or 5 days. If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible and die like a soldier who never forgets what is due to his own honor and that of his country. Victory or death.

Signed:

William Barret Travis.

Of course, we know in the battle that ensued, all 189 defenders of the Alamo lost their lives, but they did not die in vain. The Battle of the Alamo bought precious time for the Texas revolutionaries allowing General Sam Houston to maneuver his army into position for a decisive victory at the Battle of San Jacinto.

With this victory, Texas became a sovereign nation, and so today we celebrate the adoption of the Texas Declaration of Independence on March 2, 1836. For 9 years, the Republic of Texas thrived as a separate nation. In 1845, it was annexed to the United States as the 28th State. Many Texan patriots who fought in the revolution went on to serve in the U.S. Congress, and I am honored to hold the seat of one of them, Sam Houston. More broadly, I am honored to have the opportunity to serve 27 million Texans, thanks to the sacrifices made by these brave men 180 years ago.

RETURN FROM SPACE OF COMMANDER SCOTT KELLY AND MANIFEST FOR HUMAN SPACE FLIGHT ACT

Mr. President, on a separate matter, one thing William Barret Travis and the other early settlers of Texas had in common was a thirst for adventure and a hunger for the great next frontier. It is an attitude of optimistic perseverance that has become a trademark of Texans for generations. So I think it is fitting today that we also celebrate a man who has devoted his life to expanding our footprint in space.

Last night Scott Kelly returned to Earth after almost a year in space—one of the longest lasting space flights of all time. By tomorrow Scott should be back in Houston, home to the Johnson Space Center.

In June I was able to tour the Johnson Space Center and meet some of the men and women who made Scott Kelly's mission possible. They make their work look easy. They literally have a hand in sending someone to space, ensuring their safety, and executing multiple projects all at the same time. Yet for them it is all in a day's work. They are doing an outstanding job, not only for Houston but for Texas and the United States. As you might expect, Texans view the space center with a particular pride. The world has turned to it as a leader in space exploration and research for more than 50 years. As one of NASA's largest research centers, it continues to keep the United States in the forefront of innovation and research related to science, technology, engineering, and medicine as well.

Importantly, the Johnson Space Center also leads our commercial space partnerships—a growing sector in my State—and helps design and test the next generation of exploration capabilities and systems. The space center also trains members of our brave astronaut corps, people such as Scott Kelly, to ensure they are prepared for the incredible challenge they face.

A real highlight of my most recent visit to the Johnson Space Center was my ability to actually speak to Scott Kelly while he was in space in the International Space Station. As you can tell from his social media presence—and I follow him on Twitter; he publishes pictures of his incredible view from space on his Twitter feed—he is an optimistic guy, and it is easy to see that he loves his job, but I am sure he is looking forward to being back home.

Scott's mission aboard the International Space Station was about something much bigger than just he, which I am sure he would say if he were here. It was about an investment in the next generation and a commitment to new discoveries and exploring new frontiers. The research he was a part of, included studies to evaluate the effects of living in space on the human body. Scott is actually a twin. His twin brother was here on Earth while he was in space for a year, and I am sure there will be a lot of extensive studies, given the fact that they are twins, on what changes Scott experienced in his own metabolism, body, and the like. They also grew plants in zero gravity in space and much more, which will lay the groundwork for preparing future Americans to go farther, explore more places, and push the outer limits of human space exploration safely without endangering their health and well-being.

The work Scott Kelly accomplished, along with all of the men and women at the Johnson Space Center and with NASA, is so important because it secures America's position as the global leader in space exploration. As important, this research and development impacts more than our space program. It helps applications in the medical field, for our military, and other scientific endeavors. I remember growing up, when we landed the first astronaut on the Moon and what an inspiration it was to me as a young person. I think space exploration has a way of opening the eyes and the imaginations of young people even today about the future—a future perhaps in space exploration or other fields of science, lured as they are to work in the forefront of discovery or help engineer the next great innovation.

Developments like this don't occur automatically and they don't occur overnight. We have to task our space program with taking on new challenges to reap the full benefits, technological breakthroughs, and scientific advancements, and that is why we needed a long-term strategy for the U.S.-manned space mission.

Today I am introducing legislation called the Manifest for Human Space Flight Act that would require NASA to provide Congress with a clear goal and thoughtful strategy. This would include outlining our exploration goals and selecting destinations for future manned space missions that fully utilize our existing assets, provide opportunities to work with commercial and international partners, and position our overall space program on a more focused and stable trajectory. This legislation would also, for the first time, designate a human presence on Mars as a long-term goal of NASA.

Lieutenant Watley was perhaps an American on Mars in a great movie ''The Martian,'' but I believe actually establishing a human presence on Mars would be a worthy goal that would then necessitate the strategy to accomplish that goal. With this bill, I hope we can rightly prioritize space exploration and confirm our commitment to discovering the next great frontier.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, while the distinguished senior Senator from Texas is still on the floor, he mentioned the astronaut and his year in space. As one who has a hobby of photography, I was envious as I looked at all those. I am sure the distinguished Senator from Texas has the same feeling I had seeing these photographs and seeing what an amazing country we are in all times of days and nights and seasons. So I thank him for raising that issue.

Mr. President, this week we are considering the Comprehensive Addiction Recovery Act or as they call it CARA. There are few problems in this country that have had more of a devastating impact on American families than opioid abuse. Communities across the country are struggling and they are seeking help. Vermont is no exception, and I found this as I held hearings around the State.

Finally, after years of a misguided approach, Congress now sees addiction for what it is, a public health crisis. We have before us a bipartisan bill we are considering that demonstrates strong bipartisan support by Senators for addressing addiction.

CARA authorizes a critical public health program that I helped create to expand access to medication-assisted treatment programs. Some Vermonters who have been struggling with addiction have had to wait nearly a year to receive treatment. In fact, several died waiting. Unfortunately, the story is not unique.

The bill also includes my provision to support rural communities with the overdose reversal drug naloxone. Rural locations have the highest death rates in the country from opioid poisoning, talking about my small State of Vermont, but every State, no matter how large or how small, has rural areas. I want people to know that rural locations have the highest death rate. Now, if we can get naloxone into more hands, we can save lives.

Last week, the police in Burlington, VT, were equipped with naloxone, and they were able to save a man's life with this impactful treatment. In fact, the man was unconscious. They saved his life, and Police Chief Brandon del Pozo

called it ''a textbook case of how police save lives using naloxone.''

Now, CARA recognizes that law enforcement will always play a vital role. That is why I worked to include an authorization for funding to expand State-led anti-heroin task forces.

These are important efforts, but I can't emphasize enough that one authorization bill alone is not going to pull our communities out of addiction—not the communities in my State, in the distinguished Presiding Officer's State or in anybody else's State. We can't pretend that solving a problem as large as opioid addiction does not require more resources.

That is why the amendment proposed by Senator SHAHEEN is so essential. It puts real dollars behind the rhetoric. It is going to ensure that the important programs authorized in CARA can actually succeed.

We can all feel good about going on record saying we are against the problem and that we want to solve the problem of opioid addiction. But if we say we are not going to give you any money to do it, it sounds more like empty rhetoric.

In fact, Congress has approved much larger emergency supplemental bills addressing Ebola and swine flu. Even though we didn't have a single Ebola case in this country, we had supplemental funds addressing it, while we have thousands of opioid addiction cases across the country. These efforts were appropriate—but for Ebola and swine flu. Now we have a public health crisis that is here in our own country, and we must respond. Of course, we have responded to epidemics in other countries, but this is an epidemic here at home.

I think everybody agrees that opioid addiction is an epidemic. We should start treating it like one. The Shaheen amendment provides that commitment. I urge every Member who supports CARA—and that is a strong bipartisan group in this body—every Member who is concerned about addiction in their community—and I have to assume that includes every Senator—to put real resources behind CARA.

I think of the different hearings I have held around our State. In one city, where some had suggested maybe we shouldn't have a hearing yet because we shouldn't talk about what is going on, the mayor of that city took just the opposite view. He said: We have a problem; so we should talk about it to see what we can do about it. He was happy I came there. Although he is a Republican and I am a Democrat, we both said there is no politics and partisanship in this and we ought to face it.

But here is what happened. We scheduled that hearing, and we thought we could use a hall of such-and-such a size. As the days toward the hearing kept coming, we found we needed a bigger and bigger hall because more and more people wanted to come there. We found we had the faith community, law enforcement, the medical profession, mothers and fathers, addicts, and educators. All of these people came together and said: We have a problem, and we need the resources to work together. Law enforcement can't do it alone. The medical profession can't do it alone. The faith community can't do it alone. Educators can't do it alone. But together, with the resources, we might be able to do something.

For another hearing I held—again, the very same thing in a small town—we had to keep enlarging the place where we were going to meet. I recall several people testifying, but one was a now-retired but highly respected, decorated pediatrician. He told us about talking to a couple. He didn't identify them for obvious reasons. But he said: You know, we have this opioid problem here in our city. We have young teenagers who come from very good families—families that are well educated, prosperous, have good income, nice homes. But these teenagers are addicts, and they are getting some of this right from their home medicine cabinet. In this hall with hundreds of people, you could hear a pin drop. He stopped and paused for a moment, and he said: The parents thanked me and said: This is something we should watch out for. He said: No, I am talking about your daughter. Your 14-year-old daughter is an addict. I am talking about her. There are a lot of others in this community, but I am talking about her. I am talking about her.

To this day, I can hear the collective gasp in that room.

I later had the opportunity to meet the parents and the doctor and see the things they were doing. They had the ability, and to the extent that there were things available, they could pay for them, but most people couldn't.

Yes, we should pass CARA, but we should also acknowledge that we have this problem in every single State in the Union, across every demographic, every income level, every area of education. Let's pass some appropriations so that we are not just giving empty words and we are not addressing a terrible problem with just empty words. But the Senate is saying: We will stand up for a problem in our own country, as we have in other countries when we have helped other countries, and we will stand up for a serious problem right here at home, and we have the courage to spend the money to do it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The Senator from New Jersey.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I appreciate the distinguished ranking member of the Judiciary Committee for yielding at this time. I agree with him on the issue of the legislation before us, but I felt compelled to come to the floor to speak about the vacancy in the U.S. Supreme Court.

I rise to support this President's obligation—any President's obligation—to name a Supreme Court nominee to fill a vacancy, no matter when that vacancy occurs—election year or not. We should rightfully expect any President to fulfill his or her constitutional duty and send an eminently qualified nominee to the Senate. All logic, all reason, and the Constitution itself dictates that every President has the duty to do so, under any interpretation of constitutional law. Likewise, we should rightfully expect the Senate to do its job and send that name to the Judiciary Committee, hold a hearing, debate the nomination on the floor, and take a vote.

We are not talking about a vague clause that invites interpretation. We are talking about a very clear and concise clause—article II, section 2, clause 2—that states: ''The President. . . . shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint . . . Judges of the Supreme Court. . . . ''

It does not say: except in an election year. It does not say: except when it does not suit the political agenda of the majority party in the Senate. It does not say: No appointments can be made in the final year of a President's term. And it does not say: The Senate can arbitrarily and preemptively choose to obstruct the President's responsibility to make appointments.

The point is, the Constitution is clear. In fact, in the last 100 years, the Senate has taken action on every Supreme Court nominee, regardless of whether the nomination was made in a Presidential election year.

But this goes far beyond the filling of a Supreme Court vacancy. This goes to the very heart of the constant and continuous attacks this President has had to endure. For more than 7 years, some Republicans have, time and again, questioned the legitimacy of this President. From his election, beginning with the legitimacy of his birth certificate to accusing the President of lawlessness, having a Republican Member of Congress shout ''liar'' during the State of the Union to questioning his legitimate authority in his final year in office to fill the vacancy left by the death of Justice Scalia. It begs the question of why this President is being denied the opportunity to fulfill his constitutional obligation.

Why are constitutional standards, backed by history and precedent, being questioned for this President's Supreme Court nominee? If we were to rely on pure logic and simple consistency, the question to ask is, Would our friends on the other side deny a President of their own party the right to make that appointment? I think not.

The only conclusion we can draw is that this is yet another validation of their strategic decision 7 years ago at a Republican retreat to make Barack Obama a one-term President and obstruct this President at every turn, and then claim political victory for their own misguided inaction and refusal to govern.

What is most astonishing is that they claim, like Justice Scalia, that the

Constitution is carved in stone, that it is undeniable and impervious to interpretation. Yet, somehow, they can completely ignore what it clearly states in yet another effort to obstruct this President's ability to govern.

So I say to my friends on the other side: This President was elected twice to serve two full terms. It has only been 7 years. It is time to accept it and move away from obstructionism and on to governing.

The President and I may have differences on certain policies, but we are in complete agreement that he should not be denied the ability to fill this vacancy on the Court. Democrats did not deny President Reagan the ability to confirm Justice Kennedy in an election year, and the Republicans should not deny this President the same ability under the same circumstances. We should have the decency and respect for the Constitution to let the unambiguous wisdom of article II, section 2, clause 2 to determine our actions today, as we did then.

So let's stop the political posturing. Let the President fulfill his constitutional responsibility and the Senate fulfill its advice and consent role. Let's fulfill one of the most basic and solemn duties we have. Let's have a hearing and take a vote. The American people deserve a fully functioning Supreme Court.

There is a bipartisan tradition of giving full and fair consideration to Supreme Court nominees. Even when a majority of the Senate Judiciary Committee has not supported the nominee, the committee has still sent the nominee to the full Senate for a floor vote. And it should be noted that at no time since World War II has the Court operated with fewer than nine Justices because of the Senate simply refusing to consider a nominee.

Now, every day when I come to work, I pass the Supreme Court, and the words over the portal of the Supreme Court say: ''Equal Justice Under Law.'' Equal justice under law demands that the judicial branch be fully functional.

When we have a Supreme Court deadlocked in a decision, the decision in the lower court stands and the highest court in the land has no precedential value. Let's be clear. When there is a difference between different Federal courts in our country in different jurisdictions, it is the Supreme Court that determines what is the law of the land so that Federal law is not different in New Jersey than it is in Texas. But if the Court is deadlocked in two similar cases and the decision reverts to the finding of the lower court, there could be differences in how a person in New Jersey is treated than a person is in Texas under the same Federal statute. It is not equal justice under the law.

To have equal justice under the law, the Nation needs the Supreme Court to be fully functioning. Justice Scalia himself spoke of the problems with an eight-Justice Court. In 2004, in explaining why he would not recuse himself in a case involving former Vice President Dick Cheney, he said:

> With eight Justices, [it raises] the possibility that, by reason of a tie vote, the Court will find itself unable to resolve the significant legal issue presented by the case. Even one unnecessary recusal impairs the functioning of the Court.

So I believe that in life, Justice Scalia, as a textualist, would say the President has an obligation to nominate a Supreme Court Justice. In 1987, before the Democratic Senate confirmed Justice Kennedy, it was President Reagan who said: ''Every day that passes with the Supreme Court below full strength impairs the people's business in that crucially important body.''

I ask my Republican colleagues: How long are you willing to impair the people's business? How long are you willing to stick to a strategy of obstructionism over good governance? How long are you willing to deny this President his constitutional authority and obligation to appoint a nominee to satisfy your political agenda? How long are you willing to deny equal justice under the law?

It was John Adams who reminded us that this is ''a government of laws, not of men.''

It was Justice Felix Frankfurter who said: ''If one man can be allowed to determine for himself what is law, every man can. That means first chaos then tyranny. Legal process is the essential part of the democratic process.''

Let's not in this Chamber be the ''one man.'' Let's respect the Constitution and do our jobs. In this case, the Constitution is settled law. Let's not unsettle it through a misguided determination to score political points to undermine the legitimacy of this President.

The American people understand that our obligation in this process is to advise and consent, not neglect and obstruct. The American people will see the harm to our country and our courts if the majority continues these political tactics. Let's do the right thing. Let's do our jobs and respect this institution and the Constitution by holding hearings and voting on a Supreme Court nominee.

Let's provide for equal justice under the law.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, we just heard some very legitimate questions from the previous speaker that ought to be answered, and I am going to go back to the familiar to answer that—to the so-called Biden rules.

By now everyone is pretty familiar with the Biden rules, so I am not going to take time to go over all of them again, but they boil down to a couple basic points.

First, the President should exercise restraint and ''not name a nominee until after the November election is completed,'' or, stated differently, the President should let the people decide. But if the President chooses not to follow this model, but instead, as Chairman BIDEN said, ''goes the way of Fillmore and Johnson and presses an election-year nomination,'' then the Senate shouldn't consider the nomination and shouldn't hold hearings.

It doesn't matter, he said, ''how good a person is nominated by the President.'' So the historical record is pretty clear. But we haven't talked as much about one of the main reasons Chairman BIDEN was so adamant that the Senate shouldn't consider a Supreme Court nominee during a heated Presidential election. It is because of the tremendous damage such a hyperpolitical environment would cause the Court, the nominee, and the Nation. In short, if the Senate considered a Supreme Court nominee during a heated Presidential election campaign, the Court would become even more political than it already is.

That is a big part of what was driving Chairman BIDEN in 1992 when he spoke these strong words. Here is how Chairman BIDEN described the problem in an interview—not the speech on the floor that I have quoted in the past—about a week before his famous speech of 1992:

> Can you imagine dropping a nominee . . . into that fight, into that cauldron in the middle of a Presidential year?

He continued:

> I believe there would be no bounds of propriety that would be honored by either side. . . . The environment within which such a hearing would be held would be so supercharged and so prone to be able to be distorted.

As a result, Chairman BIDEN concluded:

> Whomever the nominee was, good, bad or indifferent . . . would become a victim.

My friend the Vice President—but a friend when he was in the Senate—then considered the tremendous damage that thrusting a Supreme Court nominee into a frenzied political environment would cause and weighed it against the potential impact of an eight-member Court for a short time. He concluded that the ''minor'' cost of the ''three or four cases'' that would be reargued were nothing compared to the damage a hyperpoliticized fight would have on ''the nominee, the President, the Senate, and the Nation, no matter how good a person is nominated by the President.''

The former chairman concluded that because of how badly such a situation would politicize the process, and based on the historical record, the only reasonable and fair approach—or as he said, the ''pragmatic'' approach—is to not consider a nominee during a Presidential election.

He said.

> Once the political season is underway . . . action on a Supreme Court nomination must be put off until after the election campaign is over. That is what is fair to the nominee and is central to the process. Otherwise, it seems to me, Mr. President, we will be in deep trouble as an institution.

He concluded:

Senate consideration of a nominee under these circumstances is not fair to the President, to the nominee, or to the Senate itself.

This, in part, is why Chairman BIDEN went to such lengths to explain the history of the bitter fights that occurred in Presidential years. He said: ''Some of our Nation's most bitter and heated confirmation fights have come in Presidential election years.''

I will state this about the discussion we are having today and will probably have every day for the next several months: Everyone knows that this nominee isn't going to get confirmed. Republicans know it, Democrats know it, the President knows it, and, can you believe it, even the press knows it. That is why the Washington Post called the President's future nominee a ''judicial kamikaze pilot,'' and the New York Times noted that the nominee would need an ''almost suicidal willingness to become the central player in a political fight that seems likely to end in failure.''

So the only question is, Why would the other side come to the floor to express outrage about not having a hearing? It is because they want to make this as political as possible.

The press has already picked up on it. For instance, CNN reported that the other side hopes to use the fight over a Supreme Court nominee to ''energize the Democratic base.'' They are already using the Supreme Court and the eventual nominee as a political weapon. They want nothing more than to make the process as political as possible. That is why the President wants to push forward with a nominee who won't get confirmed. That is why the other side is clamoring for a hearing on a nominee everyone knows won't get confirmed. Making the Court even more political is absolutely the last thing the Supreme Court needs.

The Court has been politicized enough already. A recent Gallup poll documents the frustration I hear expressed even at the grassroots of my State of Iowa. In the 6 years since President Obama has appointed two Justices, the American people's disapproval of the Supreme Court jumped from 28 percent disapproval in 2009 to 50 percent disapproval in 2015. That is what happens when Justices legislate from the bench. This Senator might say there is even a Republican nominee sitting on that bench that has legislated from the bench as well.

That is what happens when Justices make decisions based on their personal political preferences or what is in their heart rather than what is in the Constitution and the law. The last thing we need is to further politicize that process and the Court.

I just want to make sure that everyone understands what all of this outrage is really about. It is about making this process as political as possible.

We aren't going to let that happen to the Court, the nominee or the Nation, to follow the suggestion of then-Senator BIDEN. We are going to have a debate—a national debate—between the Democratic nominee and the Republican nominee about what kind of Justice the American people want on the Supreme Court. That is what the American people deserve, and that is why we are going to let the people decide.

But beyond one Justice, there is an even more basic debate occurring. At my town meetings, often somebody will come in very outraged about why I won't impeach Supreme Court justices. They say: ''They're making law, instead of interpreting law. How come you put up with that?''

So we can have a debate between the Republican nominee and the Democrat nominee on what the constitutional role of the Court is. And we can have a debate about whether we want a Justice who expresses empathy and understanding of people's problems—the President's standard. As we all know, that is not the purpose of the judicial branch of government. That branch of government isn't supposed to let their personal feelings be involved whatsoever. And the President should not encourage the Justices he appoints to let their feelings decide cases. Their job is to look at what the law says, what the Constitution says, what the facts of the case are, and to make an impartial judgment.

Consider a Justice appointed to the Supreme Court by a Republican president, who wrote that the Affordable Care Act didn't fit into what Congress could do in regards to regulating interstate commerce—because that reasoning could not be upheld under the Constitution. Instead, that Justice decided the Court could uphold the Act under the Congressional taxing power and found a way to sustain this President's legacy. It was also a Republican Justice who said: Find all kinds of ways to do what you want to do as opposed to what the Constitution requires or what Congress intends in legislation.

It would be nice to have a debate between a Democratic nominee and a Republican nominee, whether we have two, three, or four national debates or whether they have hundreds of appearances around the country, to have these basic constitutional issues discussed. And then we should let the people decide not only who appoints the next Justice but who will decide the direction of the Supreme Court for generations to come.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I found this interesting. When my children were little, I would read fairy tales to them, and they especially loved ''Through the Looking-Glass'' and ''Alice in Wonderland.'' And listening to this speech, I thought of ''Through the Looking-Glass'' and ''Alice in Wonderland.''

It is interesting how President Obama gets blamed for everything. ''Oh, the approval rating of the Supreme Court has gone down.'' The majority of the Supreme Court Justices have been appointed or nominated by Republican Presidents. And we are going to blame President Obama because the Republican Justices, nominated by Republican Presidents, are bringing down the approval rating of the U.S. Supreme Court? According to my dear friend from Iowa—he is saying President Obama should be blamed for what those Republican Justices on the Supreme Court did. This is ''Alice in Wonderland.''

I don't care what happens; President Obama has to get blamed for it. Even if we have a hurricane or something, it must be President Obama's fault. But this is about as far a stretch as I've ever heard. If the approval rating of the court goes down because of the five Republicans who constitute the majority of it, it is about as farfetched as ''Alice in Wonderland'' to blame President Obama for it.

Let's talk about facts. I like to talk about facts. It's the way Democrats have handled Republicans' nominees. What my distinguished friend doesn't point out, even though it has been pointed out to him by the Vice President and by the President personally, certainly in my presence, Vice President BIDEN's speech—you should read the whole speech—he is talking about what happens after the election. Vice President BIDEN as Chairman BIDEN put through, in an election year, a Republican nominee to the Supreme Court and got a unanimous vote of Democrats and Republicans in this body. Those are the facts. The fact is that we now use a different standard, it appears. In President Bush's final 2 years, Democrats controlled the Senate. I was chairman. We confirmed 68 of his nominees. In President Obama's final years in office, Republicans have allowed only 16. These are facts. This isn't rhetoric, these are facts. We allowed 68 for a Republican President and Republicans allowed only 16 for a Democratic President, and then they are going to blame the state of the judiciary on President Obama?

Then he talked about Vice President BIDEN when he was chairman and what he might have said during President H.W. Bush's last year in office. Do you know what Vice President BIDEN did? They tried to imply that he blocked judges. He put through 11 Republican nominees for the circuit court and 53 Republican nominees for the district court—11 for the circuit court, 53 for the district court. Do you know what Republicans have allowed? Five lower court nominees this year. So if you say we want to follow the Biden rule, I wish we would. We put through 53 district court nominees and 11 circuit court nominees, and during a Democrat President's last year in office the Republican-controlled Senate has allowed only five. Come on, let's be fair.

The fact is, in a Presidential election year, we have never blocked a Supreme

Court nominee because it was a Presidential election year. In fact, since the Judiciary Committee began holding confirmation hearings for Supreme Court nominees in 1916, it has never denied a nominee a hearing.

I tell you this because the Constitution requires the President to make a nomination—it is very clear—and then it says that we shall advise and consent. Well, they are saying: ''No, we won't advise; we won't consent; we won't even have a hearing.''

Mr. President, I have taken the oath of office here seven times. It is a moving, thrilling moment. I am sure the distinguished Presiding Officer, when he was sworn in, knew it was a solemn moment. You promise to uphold the Constitution, so help me God. The Constitution says the President shall nominate. It says we shall advise and consent.

I took my oath very, very seriously. That is why—just as Vice President BIDEN did when he was chairman—I moved a significant number of Republican judges through, even in the last year that President Bush was in office. And that is so different from what we see now.

Just think about it. They criticize Vice President BIDEN. The last year President George H.W. Bush was in office, Vice President BIDEN was chairman of the Judiciary Committee. He put through 11 circuit court judges and 53 district court judges. If you want to talk about the Biden rule, the Republicans have allowed only five lower court judges. Come on, let's get this out of partisanship. By any standard whatsoever, when there has been a Republican President and a Democratically-controlled Senate, we have treated that Republican President far better than they have treated Democratic Presidents.

But then to hear that because the five Republican-appointed majority members of the Supreme Court are bringing down the approval rating of the Supreme Court for the American people, telling the American people it must be President Obama's fault—even if those five members were nominated and approved before President Obama's Presidency—that goes too far. That is ''Through the Looking-Glass.'' That is ''Alice in Wonderland.''

I see the distinguished senior Senator from Rhode Island on the floor.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I thank the distinguished ranking member of the Judiciary Committee very much. While he is on the floor, let me thank him for his leadership, support, and passion for the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, which was shepherded through the Judiciary Committee under his guidance and with his wise and benevolent support. I am very grateful.

I am on the floor to talk about the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act today because it has been said by several of my colleagues that there is funding to implement this bill and that that funding is already in the government's accounts, that if we pass the CARA bill, we will be able to fund it and put it to work right away. Let me say with regret that I disagree with that assertion.

I am sorry to have a disagreement with my colleagues over this funding question after all the very excellent bipartisan work we have done to get this bill to this point. This really has been a legislative model. For years we worked on the statute. We had five different full-on national seminars in Washington, bringing people in from all around the country to advise us on all the different aspects of the opioid problem. We had an advisory committee that supported us which was broadly represented from all the different interests that are affected by the opioid crisis. We came up with a bipartisan bill which came through committee in regular order, without objection from anyone, and which is now on the Senate floor awaiting passage. That is the way it is supposed to work. But on this question of whether it is funded, I must disagree, and I wish to explain why.

For openers, let me explain that in Congress, there are committees that authorize funding. In the case of this bill, the relevant committees are the HELP Committee and the Judiciary Committee. But it is the Appropriations Committee that actually determines what funding will go into which accounts. The Appropriations Committee, in turn, is broken up into subcommittees, which determine the funding of different accounts in different areas of government. So one subcommittee has jurisdiction in one set of accounts and another subcommittee has the appropriations authority over other accounts.

The funding my colleagues have referred to as the funding for this CARA bill was appropriated by what we call in the Senate the Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee. The Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee appropriates two accounts that generally correspond to the authorizing power of the HELP Committee. So there are three committees involved: Judiciary, HELP, and Appropriations. The subcommittee on Appropriations that appropriated this money generally correlates to the authorizing power and jurisdiction of the HELP Committee. There are other Appropriations subcommittees. For instance, there is one that we refer to as CJS. CJS appropriates to, among others, the accounts within the authorizing power of the Judiciary Committee. So that is the background.

Now let's go through the problems. One problem with my friend's argument that the bill is funded is that the funding measure to which they refer originally passed out of its Appropriations subcommittee last June. We didn't even take up the CARA bill in the Judiciary Committee until this February. So there is a timing problem. How could the appropriators last June have predicted this state of affairs on the floor right now? The appropriators would have had to have had an astonishing, wizard-like ability to read the future in order to fund back then an unpassed bill—indeed, a bill that then didn't even have a committee hearing scheduled, let alone markup, passage, and the choice to bring it to the floor. Clearly, in June the Labor-HHS appropriators were funding existing programs, and when the omnibus passed in December, these same programs were funded at an even higher level. In fact, Democrats demanded they be funded at nearly the identical level proposed in the President's budget. The President's budget goes even further back in time. The President's budget certainly could not have foreseen CARA, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. So there is a timing problem.

Second, this CARA bill, back when these appropriations were passed in June, was funded through different accounts than the accounts it is funded through now as we see it on the floor. When the appropriations were passed, it was funded through accounts that would be funded by CJS appropriators. So there is a committee mismatch as well as a timing problem to any claim that these funds were intended for the CARA bill.

The bulk of the CARA bill back then—in fact, 10 out of its 13 programs—authorized funding through Judiciary Committee programs, which is why the bill was sent by the Parliamentarians here to the Judiciary Committee. So if back then the intention was to fund CARA, it would have been CJS that would have funded 10 of those 13 programs. The appropriators for the funds my colleagues speak of were not the CJS appropriators but the Labor-HHS appropriators. Again, there is a committee mismatch.

Here is what happened that explains the shift. After the fiscal year 2016 omnibus had passed, we were informed—the sponsors and authors of the legislation—that in order to get our bill out of the Judiciary Committee, the CARA bill had to be rewritten so that it operated only through existing Federal programs. There are Republicans, as the Presiding Officer well knows, who live by the principle of no new Federal programs, even for new crises, and we were asked in the Judiciary Committee to accommodate them. So we accommodated them. We rewrote the bill in January to accommodate those concerns.

So this February, when CARA came before the Judiciary Committee, it had been revised to move the bulk of its new programs out of the Judiciary Committee accounts and into accounts under the jurisdiction of the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. Now, of the 10 programs remaining in the bill, 8 are located at

the Department of Health and Human Services, in the jurisdiction of the HELP Committee. But that move was long after these appropriations were made. You cannot connect them.

I should interject that this change created an intrusion by our Judiciary bill into the jurisdiction of the HELP Committee. All here today who support the CARA bill owe a great debt of gratitude and appreciation to Chairman ALEXANDER and to Ranking Member MURRAY for allowing this bill to proceed, even though it now involves a considerable number of accounts under their committee's jurisdiction. They have done so very graciously, without demanding further hearings or otherwise asserting their HELP Committee's turf. So to both of them I offer, and we should all offer, our sincere and heartfelt thanks.

It does seem a stretch to think that the appropriators in the Appropriations subcommittee that funds these HELP accounts could have foreseen last June not only that CARA would pass out of the Judiciary Committee in February and not only that it would come to the floor now, but also could have foreseen that so many of its programs would have been transferred from Judiciary Committee to HELP Committee accounts. That would have been an astonishing—indeed, truly magical—feat of prediction.

The simple fact is that the Labor-HHS appropriations that my friends rely on as the funding for this CARA bill passed out of the relevant subcommittee with little or no regard for CARA.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a letter dated April 2, 2015, regarding this matter.

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

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC, April 2, 2015.

Hon. RICHARD SHELBY,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies, Committee on Appropriations, Washington, DC.

Hon. ROY BLUNT,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies, Committee on Appropriations, Washington, DC.

Hon. BARBARA MIKULSKI,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies, Committee on Appropriations, Washington, DC.

Hon. PATTY MURRAY,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies, Committee on Appropriations, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SHELBY, CHAIRMAN BLUNT, RANKING MEMBER MIKULSKI, AND RANKING MEMBER MURRAY: As you may know, heroin use and prescription opioid abuse are having devastating effects on public health and safety across the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), drug overdoses now surpass automobile accidents as the leading cause of injury-related death for Americans ages 25 to 64. Every day, more than 120 Americans die as a result of drug overdose. Over half of these drug overdoses are related to prescription drugs. While addiction is a treatable disease, only about ten percent of those who need treatment receive it.

We write to express our strong support for fiscal year (FY) 2016 funding for programs that would support the integrated strategies for addressing opioid abuse included in the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2015 (CARA, S. 524). This bipartisan legislation was developed over the past year and a half through a cooperative process involving key national stakeholders in the public health, law enforcement, criminal justice, and drug policy fields, and is designed to fight prescription opioid abuse and heroin use holistically—from expanding prevention to supporting recovery.

Among other objectives, CARA would:

Expand prevention and educational efforts—particularly aimed at teens, parents and other caretakers, and aging populations—to prevent prescription opioid abuse and the use of heroin.

Expand the availability of the overdose reversal drug naloxone to law enforcement agencies and other first responders.

Expand resources to promptly identify and treat individuals suffering from substance use disorders in the criminal justice system.

Expand disposal sites for unwanted prescription medications to keep them out of the hands of children and adolescents.

Launch an evidence-based prescription opioid and heroin treatment and intervention program to expand best practices throughout the country.

Launch a medication-assisted treatment and intervention demonstration program.

Strengthen prescription drug monitoring programs to help states monitor and track prescription drug diversion and to help at-risk individuals access services.

As you begin consideration of the FY 2016 appropriations bills, we urge you to provide sufficient funding for the provisions included in CARA, which would provide the resources and incentives necessary for states and local governments to expand treatment, prevention, and recovery efforts for the millions of Americans who are affected by substance use disorders. Among other things, we ask that you ensure adequate funding for CDC's prescription drug surveillance and monitoring activities and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Medication-Assisted Treatment for Prescription Drug and Opioid Addiction program. Because we know that medication-assisted treatment should be an important component in treating those suffering from opioid abuse in the criminal justice system, we urge you to continue your support for the Medication-Assisted Treatment Pilot Program at the Bureau of Prisons.

Only through a comprehensive approach that leverages evidence-based law enforcement initiatives, treatment, and support for recovery can we reverse the current skyrocketing numbers of heroin and prescription opioid overdoses and deaths. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

KELLY A. AYOTTE,
SUSAN COLLINS,
CHRISTOPHER A. COONS,
SHELDON WHITEHOUSE,
AMY KLOBUCHAR,
United States Senators.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, the letter I have submitted was written to bring CARA to the attention of both the CJS and the Labor-HHS subcommittees. But those subcommittees, when they got this letter, had no idea the bulk of this would move from the Judiciary Committee to the HELP Committee. Back then, CARA was mostly funded through another subcommittee—CJS. Back then, CARA had not even been scheduled for its hearing in Judiciary.

So why was the funding for the opioid crisis put in and, indeed, increased by the appropriators of the HELP accounts? Obviously, because 47,000 people died last year—in 2014, the last year we have on record—of opioid overdose deaths. This is a national crisis. They were paying attention to it. They were putting resources in, but not resources to implement the bill that we are about to vote on in the next few days.

Indeed, as we speak, SAMSHA, the relevant agency, is gearing up its grant applications to go forward and solicit bids for all the money the appropriators approved and that was dialed up in the omnibus. And SAMSHA is proceeding under the pre-CARA laws. SAMSHA intends to spend every dollar of the appropriated funds, CARA or no CARA. That means if this CARA bill passes, every dollar that goes this year to fund a CARA program will take away funds from that pre-CARA grant array that SAMSHA is preparing right now. In that case, we will necessarily be robbing Peter to pay Paul. You cannot count the same funding twice, and there is no new money for CARA.

One can make the argument, and, indeed, I would accept the argument that though we are robbing Peter to pay Paul, CARA's Paul is better than pre-CARA's Peter. CARA is, after all, a very good bill, but the funding math is still undeniable. We are, in fact, robbing pre-CARA Peter to pay for a new CARA-improved Paul. So one can argue that funded programs may improve because of CARA, at least to the extent the funding goes to new CARA-authorized purposes. But that is an argument that the same money will be better spent. It is not a fair argument that there is new money for CARA programs. There is no new money.

In sum, the timing does not support the argument that there is new funding for CARA. That money was appropriated long ago. Indeed, this bill will not even be law if we get it through the Senate. There is still the House, the Conference, and the President. What kind of wizards do we think our appropriators must have been 8 months ago at seeing a future for this bill which we even now cannot see?

On top of that, the jurisdictional problem between Judiciary and HELP shows that the HELP appropriations had to be intended back in June for other programs, specifically for the HELP grants now underway at SAMSHA, which we would be robbing to fund CARA programs.

Unless they were time-traveling wizards, if the appropriators had intended to add extra money for CARA for this fiscal year, they would have added the money to the Judiciary accounts that were what CARA authorized back then

when it was introduced and when the appropriators passed the appropriations in the subcommittee.

Finally, it is a fact that all of this appropriated money my friends speak of is already on its way to being spent. It will be spent even without CARA. It will be spent even if, for some reason, CARA fails. It may even be spent before CARA becomes law, and it will be spent in programs to support addiction recovery.

That is the logic of my conclusion that there is no funding for CARA. That is the logic of my conclusion that to fund CARA without robbing other addiction recovery programs, we would need new funding, not just last year's appropriations. And that, my friends, is why Senator SHAHEEN's emergency funding bill is so important.

With that, I see my distinguished chairman on the floor, and I yield the floor.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MARKEY. 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. MARKEY. Mr. President, I would like to start my remarks on the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act today by complimenting all of the Members—Senator WHITEHOUSE, Senator GRASSLEY, Senator PORTMAN, Senator AYOTTE, Senator SHAHEEN, and all the Members who have been working so hard on this legislation to produce something which is very much needed by our country.

I will start my remarks by telling a little story of a constituent who wants to remain anonymous. This is her story:

On July 20, 2009, I was the passenger in a vehicle with my close friend at the time behind the wheel. The light turned green and as expected he hit the gas. While he was hitting the gas, the oncoming car never hit their brakes to stop at the red light they were approaching.

I was painfully pinned in the passenger's seat. All I could hear was my friend asking me if I was OK. Upon arriving in the ER I was quickly poked, prodded, and injected with high-level painkillers. This is where it all began.

Walking out of the hospital, I wasn't only walking out with crutches, but a prescription that changed the next 5 years of my life. I was prescribed OxyContin to help manage the pain I was experiencing. With continuing follow-up appointments and check-ins, also came more prescriptions for ''pain management prescriptions.''

Two months after getting into a car accident, I was a heroin addict. How quickly all things I knew changed. In September of 2009 I not only began shooting heroin but I also began my first semester of college. I was a freshman at UMass Boston, worked full time, but, secretly, I was also a heroin addict. I kept my addiction a secret from everyone I knew including my close friends and family.

On August 31, 2014 I woke up and said to myself ''enough is enough.'' It took three overdoses in order to open my eyes. Since leaving treatment in November of 2014, my recovery has not stopped; I continue to learn and to grow daily. I have also learned of the medical issues and complications that my heroin use has led to. I now suffer from seizures because the excessive drug use over 5 years has led to minor brain damage. Along with the seizures, I have tested positive for Hepatitis C and HIV, which is common with injection drug users.

At the end of the day, all I want to do is to help others who are struggling because I know what they are going through.

Mr. President, she is one of the fortunate ones. She found the help she needed and had the strength and support to get clean. But I am hearing enormous frustration from people who don't feel that sufficient resources are being brought to bear on this enormous epidemic of prescription drug and heroin addiction.

All week we have heard the statistics here in this Chamber. Our Nation is experiencing more deaths from drug overdoses than from gun violence or auto accidents. Eighty percent of the people suffering from heroin addiction started with opioid pain medications approved by the FDA and prescribed by doctors, with 27,000 people dying from an opioid overdose in 2014 and 1,300 of those coming from the State of Massachusetts.

This issue is one that doesn't just affect the Bay State. America is drowning in a tsunami of heroin and prescription drug addiction that we must stop before it drowns any more families and communities.

Let us compare what we are did as a nation when confronted with other deadly epidemics. A bipartisan majority in Congress funded more than $5 billion to respond to Ebola. We dispatched the medical community and public health experts. Today the Obama administration is asking Congress for $1.8 billion in emergency funding to fight the Zika virus.

Imagine if we applied the same commitment, the same urgency, and the same level of resources to the prescription drug and heroin epidemic. We need an immediate and comprehensive strategy that requires commitment from all levels of government—State, local, and Federal. That means Congress must step up to respond with leadership and with resources. We need to stop the overprescription of opioid pain medication, we must prevent addiction before it takes hold, and we must provide the funding necessary to ensure that we stem this tide of deadly addiction.

The Food and Drug Administration must change its decision not to seek expert advice about the risks of addiction before it approves abuse-deterring opioids. Abuse-deterring opioids is a contradiction in terms. Whether an opioid is used as a deterrent or not, it has not prevented tens of thousands of people who have had their wisdom teeth removed or experienced lower back pain from getting addicted to these painkillers. By refusing to convene the advisory committee to inform all of its opioid approval decisions, the FDA continues to ignore outside experts who could help stem the tide of tragic deaths and overdoses plaguing this country.

That is why I have filed an amendment to require the FDA to convene advisory committees of outside experts for all opioid approval decisions—period. Now is the time to implement effective and commonsense solutions, but we need funding to do that; funding for families, funding for treatment providers, funding for our sheriffs and firefighters who carry overdose prevention drugs that save lives. We need to provide the real resources necessary to address a crisis that is only growing in numbers and severity, and that comes in the form of emergency funding. We are hemorrhaging lives by the day, and supplemental funding is the first step needed to staunch the flow of suffering and death.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are at a watershed moment in this national debate to address the public health crisis of addiction. So let us be clear. Stopping the overprescription of pain medication that is fueling opioid addiction and overdoses starts with the prescribers. We need to require anyone who prescribes opioid pain medication and other controlled substances to undergo mandatory training on safe prescribing practices and the identification of possible substance abuse disorders. That is why I have filed an amendment that requires prescribers to get the education needed to help staunch this wall of suffering and death.

The doctors will say they don't want education to be mandated; that it should be voluntary. Well, the FDA has had voluntary education for opioid prescribers in place since 2013 and has been actively encouraging doctors to take these voluntary education modules, but in more than 2 years, less than 12 percent of prescribers have actually completed the FDA's voluntary education program. A survey of 1,000 physicians nationwide found that nearly one-half of doctors erroneously reported that abuse-deterrent formulations were less addictive than their counterparts. It is unconscionable that our doctors know so little about these potentially deadly painkillers.

I intend to call up amendment No. 3382 later so we can make consideration of the bill. The amendment would ensure that as a condition of receiving a license to prescribe opioids, the recipient of the license is educated in the best practices for using opioids and the connection with addiction and with diversion. I intend to call up that amendment later, asking for consideration.

From my perspective, if we are going to have a real strategy, then we have to make sure there is a requirement that there is continuing education. We also need to remove the barriers to effective treatment, including outdated Federal restrictions on medication-assisted therapies like SUBOXONE.

Medication-assisted therapy for opioid addition is cost-effective, it decreases overdose deaths, and it reduces transmission of HIV and hepatitis C. That is why I have filed an amendment that would lift the caps that are limiting the number of patients doctors can treat with medication-assisted therapy. If we are going to reduce the supply of heroin and illicit prescription drugs, we have to reduce the demand through effective treatment. I have been working with Senator PAUL from Kentucky on that amendment.

Also, fear of a lawsuit should not deter anyone from trying to save the life of someone suffering from an overdose. That is why I have filed an amendment that creates a Federal Good Samaritan provision that shields from civil liability family members, friends, and other bystanders who administer opioid prevention treatments like Narcan.

The debate we are having on this legislation this week is just the beginning. We must let prescribers know that unless they get basic education in opioids, they will have to turn off the spigot of painkillers that are flooding this country and leading to deadly overdoses. We must let law enforcement and the judicial system know we cannot incarcerate our way out of this problem. We must let Big Pharma know we are going to work to ensure that we have a lifting of awareness of this issue every single day. Enough is enough in this country. Enough is enough. We have just seen an explosion in terms of this problem.

We must now let all of those struggling with addiction know that help is on the way and that no matter how dark life seems right now, there is hope and the Sun will rise for them once again.

I thank the Presiding Officer for giving me the opportunity to speak for some time, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The Senator from Oregon.

(The remarks of Mr. MERKLEY pertaining to the introduction of S. 2621 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. KAINE. Madam President, I rise to offer some thoughts about the current discussion over a vacancy on the Supreme Court.

I had high hopes yesterday for the meeting in the White House between the majority leader, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, President Obama, and Vice President BIDEN. I had high hopes that meeting might lead to an opening and a willingness to entertain the important business of filling a vacancy on the Supreme Court, but the announcements made directly after that meeting suggested—a phrase we sometimes use back home—that the schoolhouse door is going to stay closed. There will not be a debate. There will not be a vote. There will not be a committee hearing. In fact, there was even a suggestion, a commitment, that the majority would refuse even to entertain courtesy office visits with the nominee that President Obama is expected to send up soon.

I was disappointed in that, and I wanted to take the floor to offer a simple message. It is very important that the Senate do its constitutional duty and do its job with respect to the Supreme Court vacancy. The job is pretty plain. We have a job description, as most people do who have jobs. The job description is contained mostly in article I of the Constitution, but there are also descriptions of what we must do in the Senate in article II. Article II, section 2, clause 2 of the Constitution says the President ''shall nominate, and . . . with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint'' a variety of officials, including Supreme Court Justices.

This is part of our job description, to entertain Presidential nominations for Supreme Court Justices. We volunteer for the job. We take an oath to do the job. We cash a paycheck written by the American people to pay for us to do the job. Frankly, we don't have the option of refusing to do the job.

Is there anything unusual about this situation, a vacancy on the Supreme Court occurring during the last year of a President's term? The answer to that is no.

On 17 occasions, this body has entertained and had a confirmation vote on a Supreme Court Justice in the final year of a President's term—17 times. When this happened, people thought it seemed rare, but when you go back and look at the historical record, it is not rare at all. On each of those occasions in a Presidential election year, the Senate has done its job under article II, section 2, clause 2, and entertained a nominee. There is no reason why this Senate should not do exactly the same thing, follow that historical precedent.

As I have traveled around Virginia in the weeks since the vacancy became open, I have talked to a lot of citizens about this. Sometimes it is helpful for us in this body to think about the way others—especially our citizens—look at what we are doing or not doing here. Citizens ask me: What possibly could be the reason why the Senate would not follow its clear historical precedent and do a job description that is contained in the Constitution and would refuse a vote, refuse debate, refuse committee hearings, refuse even to meet with a nominee? Why would Congress not do its job? Why would the Senate not do its job?

I have been thinking about that, and I can only conceive of two reasons why this Senate would not do its job, and both of the reasons are highly illegitimate, in my opinion.

The first reason—and this is a reason that occurs to many citizens, and they are very concerned about this—is that the Senate is announcing that it will not do its job because of the identity of this particular President. The Senate has been willing to do the job for other Presidents, but is there something about this particular President that is making the Senate decide to break its historical traditions and violate article II, section 2, clause 2, and not do the job?

This question has given some added oomph because of another recent event. In early February, President Obama sent his budget to the Congress. Pursuant to the Budget Act of 1974—and this has been followed uniformly by the Senate and the House—when the President sends up a budget, the Budget Committees have a hearing about the President's budget—even if they do not like it, and they often don't like it, but that is what you do. You have a hearing about the President's budget. If you don't like it, you criticize the budget and then you write a different budget. That is what has happened for every President since the Budget Control Act of 1974 passed.

In the last year of the Bush administration, when there were Democratic majorities in both Houses when President Bush sent up his budget, hearings were held on the budget. But in this instance, just within the last month, when the budget was sent up from President Obama, both committees said: For this President—breaking the statute, breaking all tradition—we will not even have a hearing on this President's budget.

So if we are going to break a constitutional command and break a history in which 17 Justices have been confirmed in a Presidential year, and if we are going to break it for this President, and if we are going to break the Budget Control Act and break a uniform history since 1974 by not according even a hearing for the budget submitted by this President, then a question that is being asked by the citizens of this country—certainly the citizens of this Commonwealth—is whether the actions taken here on this Supreme Court nomination to not allow a vote, not allow a debate, not allow a committee hearing, and not even allow courtesy office visits, is actually not about the Supreme Court at all, not even about the nominee, whosoever it shall be, but it is a particular mark of disrespect for this President that is unprecedented in the history of this body. That is an explanation which many of my citizens are deeply worried about and which many of my citizens are talking about and asking about, and frankly I don't have a good answer to that concern.

There is a second reason that suggests itself to me with respect to breaking all of the historical precedent on this particular Supreme Court vacancy. It connects to another concern that I have taken to the floor many times to talk about as a member of the Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees. There is another clause of the Constitution that I care deeply

about, and that is article 1, section 8, clause 11. We should not be at war without a vote of Congress.

We are now in the 20th month of a war, and Congress hasn't even voted—this war against ISIL. I go to hearings all the time where Members of the Senate criticize the President for what he is doing or not doing in the war, but I see a complete unwillingness in this House and the House of Representatives to actually do what the Constitution commands and have a vote on the war.

This circumstance reminds me of that: a clear constitutional command in article 2, section 2, clause 2; a clear historical precedent of the Senate engaging; but now, for this President, on this vacancy, a decision: Hold on a second. Maybe we can just avoid voting yes or no. If we vote yes for a nominee the President might send up, we will make some people mad. If we vote no on a nominee the President sends up, we will make some other people mad. Maybe we can just avoid the commands of article II, section 2, clause 2, avoid the uniform history of this body, and not vote at all. If we can avoid voting at all, maybe we can evade accountability; maybe we can evade the criticism that might come to us from our constituents.

That is also highly troubling.

I can't think of any other reasons why this body would violate the clear commands of article II, section 2, clause 2, and violate a uniform history of approving 17 Supreme Court Justices during a Presidential year other than, A, it is fundamentally a sign of disrespect for this particular President or, B, it is a desire by a Senate that certainly has the votes to confirm or deny, consistent with the constitutional provision, to avoid taking a vote and thereby think we can avoid the accountability to our citizens for casting a vote on something that might be controversial. Needless to say, both of those reasons are highly illegitimate and, in my view, are really beneath what we should be doing in this Chamber.

The last thing I will say is this: The job description of a Senator is laid out in the Constitution, but there are other parts of the job that may not be laid out so plainly but that we all understand to be our job. For example, I don't think it is laid out that we should passionately represent our citizens and do constituent service for them, but we all understand that is part of the job.

Well, another part of the job of a U.S. Senator that may not be spelled out as directly as the power to advise and consent on nominations or the power to declare war is that we are elected guardians of this institution, and more than just the institution of the Senate, we are elected to be guardians of the Democratic traditions that are set out in the Constitution, in this marvelous Constitution that establishes three branches of government that have checks and balances against each other.

We should always act, regardless of our disagreements, regardless of our debates or arguments, and the differences of opinion are legitimate. We should always act to promote respect for our institutions, not only the institution of the Senate but the institution of the court system, which has a vacancy right now on the Supreme Court, the institution of the Presidency, toward whom we are sending a signal of disrespect by the actions that are being undertaken in this body. It is part of the job we need to do to build up the respect for the institutions of our government. If Senators don't respect the institutions of our government, why would anyone else respect them? If we act in a way that subverts or tears them down, why would we expect anyone else to respect the institution?

I came here to this body because I do respect the institution. I respect its history. We are all humans; we can make mistakes. Votes have been cast that in the light of day you could look at and expect to be different. But compared to other systems in the world—and I lived in a country that was a military dictatorship when I was a young man, and I can certainly see the great blessing it is to live here in this country and serve here in this body. I deeply fear that the actions we are embarking on in connection with the Supreme Court nomination are expressing a profound disrespect for the article III branch, the courts; a profound disrespect for the article II branch of the Presidency; and, frankly, a profound disrespect for our own history, traditions, and job description in this article I branch of the legislature.

It is not too late for us to turn this around. It is not too late for us to take a pause and, when the President sends over a nomination for the Supreme Court, to do what justice demands. If justice demands anything, it should be that we would analyze an individual on that person's own merits instead of just saying that the blanket rule is that no matter who you are, no matter what your qualifications, because you were sent by this President, we will create a unique rule for you and refuse to entertain you.

We still have time to turn this around. I have no idea when the President will send a nominee over, and I have no idea who that nominee will be, but when that nominee is delivered and recommended to the Senate, it is my prayer that this body will do what article II, section 2, clause 2, demands; that we will do what we have done in every other instance when a President has sent a nominee over in a Presidential election year; that we will not bar the schoolhouse door but we will open the doors to our office to accord a nominee the courtesy of a discussion; that we will have hearings in the Judiciary Committee; and that we will have a robust debate and a vote on this floor. If that vote is a yes, that will be great. If that vote is a no, that will still be fully in accord with the constitutional job description of this Congress. But to not entertain a nominee at all, in my view, would violate our oath, would violate the Constitution, and would express a significant disrespect for all three branches of government.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

AMENDMENT NO. 3367 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3378

(Purpose: To establish a life-saving program to prevent drug and opioid abuse in Medicare.)

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I call up the Toomey amendment No. 3367.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the pending amendment is set aside.

The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Iowa [Mr. GRASSLEY], for Mr. TOOMEY, proposes an amendment numbered 3367 to Amendment No. 3378.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

(The amendment is printed in the RECORD of March 1, 2016, under ''Text of Amendments.'')

Mr. GRASSLEY. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

AMENDMENT NO. 3395 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3378

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I call up amendment No. 3395.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the pending amendment is set aside.

The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Oregon [Mr. WYDEN] proposes an amendment numbered 3395 to amendment No. 3378.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide for comprehensive provisions for the prevention and enforcement of opioid abuse and treatment of opioid addiction)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. INCREASED ANTI-KICKBACKS PENALTIES.

Paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 1128B(b) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320a–7b(b)) are each amended by inserting ''(or, beginning January 1, 2017, $50,000)'' after ''$25,000''.

SEC. ___. CENTER FOR MEDICARE AND MEDICAID INNOVATION TESTING OF OPIOID ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAM MODEL FOR PART D PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN ENROLLEES.

Section 1115A of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1315a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(2)(A), by adding at the end the following new sentence: ''The models

selected under this subparagraph shall include the model described in subsection (h).''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(h) OPIOID ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAM MODEL.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall test a model requiring prescription drug plans under part D of title XVIII to have in place, directly or through appropriate arrangements, an opioid abuse treatment program for applicable enrollees in lieu of the medication therapy management program under section 1860D–4(c)(2) with respect to such applicable enrollees.

''(2) START DATE.—The model under this subsection shall start in plan year 2018.

''(3) SELECTION.—The Secretary shall select a limited number of Medicare part D regions in which to the model, giving priority to regions based on the number of total opioid prescriptions in the region.

''(4) REQUIREMENTS FOR PROGRAM.—Under an opioid abuse treatment program, the PDP sponsor offering the plan shall—

''(A) establish a care team that includes at least—

''(i) a pharmacist;

''(ii) a physician; and

''(iii) an individual licenced in a State with expertise in behavioral health (as determined by the Secretary), which may be the physician described in clause (ii); and

''(B) develop, in consultation with the applicable enrollee and with input from the prescriber to the extent necessary and practicable, a care plan for the applicable enrollee that is intended to treat the applicable enrollee's pain and limit any unnecessary opioid prescriptions when possible.

''(5) PAYMENT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Under the model under this subsection, the Secretary shall make a monthly payment to the PDP sponsor offering the prescription drug plan for each applicable enrollee who receives services under the opioid abuse treatment program.

''(B) SHARED SAVINGS.—Under the model under this subsection, the Secretary shall (using a methodology determined appropriate by the Secretary) make payments (in addition to the payments under subparagraph (A)) to the PDP sponsor offering the prescription drug plan if the Secretary determines that total spending under parts A, B, and D of title XVIII (and including the payments under subparagraph (A)) for applicable enrollees who receive services under the opioid abuse treatment program is less than a historical benchmark of total spending under such parts A, B, and D for such enrollees or similar enrollees. Such benchmark shall be adjusted at the Secretary's discretion for changes in law or regulation, unforeseen circumstances, or advances in medical practice.

''(6) QUALITY.—Under the model under this subsection, the Secretary shall measure the quality of care furnished by opioid abuse treatment programs, including elements related to access to care, the unnecessary use of opioids, pain management, and the delivery of behavioral health services.

''(7) APPLICABLE ENROLLEE.—In this subsection, the term 'applicable enrollee' means an individual who is, with respect to a prescription drug plan—

''(A) enrolled with the plan; and

''(B) an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse (as defined in section 1860D–4(c)(5)(C)).

''(8) MODEL NOT APPLICABLE TO MA–PD PLANS.—The model under this subsection shall not apply to MA–PD plans or enrollees of such plans.

''(9) CLARIFICATION OF APPLICATION.—For purposes of the preceding provisions of this section (including paragraphs (3) and (4) of subsection (b) and subsections (d) and (f)), the model under this subsection shall be deemed to be a model under subsection (b).''.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, along with my colleague Senator SCHUMER, I rise to offer what, in my view, are some needed changes to the amendment Senator TOOMEY has now offered to the opioid bill. My bottom line for the opioid legislation is that a real solution has to include three priorities: more prevention, better treatment, and tougher enforcement. To be successful, all three priorities must work in tandem.

The Toomey amendment, which is often called the Part D lock-in, would allow Part D plans to identify people in Medicare who may be abusing opioids. These people would then be assigned to one prescriber and one pharmacy to get their pills. This is an enforcement policy, and it cracks down on those who game the system.

What is important, what is critical for the Senate to understand is that the story does not stop there. If someone is addicted to opioids, they need a path—a real path—to treatment. Without treatment, they may get their pills on the street or they may turn to heroin. This amendment ensures those who are at risk for opioid abuse are connected to meaningful treatment choices so they can better manage their pain and limit excessive prescriptions. Those struggling with addiction need the health care system to be all hands on deck, working to ensure that there is adequate treatment. That means your doctor, your health care plan, and your pharmacy need to come together and develop a treatment plan in order to ensure that Americans are on the road to real recovery. Without access to treatment, the Toomey amendment alone would simply lock persons suffering from addiction into a pharmacy, and they would still be without a path out of addiction. Effective treatment has to be more than handing a pamphlet to somebody struggling with a condition as powerful as addiction.

My amendment also aims to end the tide of overprescribing in the first place. It doubles the penalties for opioid manufacturers that provide kickbacks to prescribers in order to boost their profits by promoting the unapproved use of these drugs at the expense of a patient's safety. The inappropriate practices of these companies have been well documented in recent years, and it is high time for real accountability when the opioid manufacturers go too far.

I will close by saying that at the Finance Committee hearing, which was held last week, I asked the three panelists—one was a witness chosen by the distinguished chairman, Senator HATCH, one was a witness I chose, and one was an individual that both of us thought would make an important contribution. The panel consisted of a pharmacist, a State assistant attorney general, and a child welfare and substance abuse expert. I asked all of them one simple question, and that question was: Does treatment and enforcement have to work in tandem to solve the opioid crisis? Each one of these witnesses—a witness chosen by Chairman HATCH, a witness chosen by me, and an independent witness—answered yes to my question. Prevention, treatment, and enforcement must work in tandem, and to do that we have to adopt this amendment.

We ought to take action to improve policies in our government that will actually solve the opioid crisis. I hope all of my colleagues will support my perfecting amendment to the Toomey amendment.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Madam President, I rise to speak in favor of amendment No. 3354. I filed this amendment with my colleague from West Virginia, Senator CAPITO, who has been a leader in our fight against opioid addiction. The opioid addiction problem in our country is severe. It is growing, and it is not going to end unless Congress comes together to pass a law that targets the root causes of this epidemic. The stakes are simply too high to ignore.

Last year alone, in communities all across our country, including many in New York, 1.4 million more Americans started abusing opioids. Every day, 44 more people are killed by an overdose. We have seen enough data to know that our opioid addiction problem is spiraling out of control. Opioid addiction is destroying too many lives in our cities, too many families in our rural communities, and too many young men and women in our suburbs.

I wish to tell the story of one of my constituents whose name is Sean Murdick. Sean was a really special and gifted young man. He was cocaptain of his high school football team and had that rare ability to bring people together and connect with anyone. Sean didn't care if you were on the football team or had a disability, he was always the first one there to help you when you needed it.

After high school, Sean loved working with his hands, so he got a good job as a construction worker. One day Sean broke his arm. Sean's doctor gave him a prescription for oxycodone, a powerful opioid to mask his pain. By the time his prescription ran out, Sean was already addicted. He couldn't shake the addiction no matter how hard he tried. He started using heroin and tried to quit many times, but the system failed. The system failed him nearly every step of the way, and last fall Sean overdosed and died.

I would like to tell you Sean's story from the perspective of his parents. My hometown paper, the Times Union, did an incredible story about his life. I can imagine the pain they suffer because I have two young sons. The Murdicks

had many questions but very few answers, and they have been lost in a fog of grief since their son's death 2 months ago.

The Times Union wrote:

They want to speak out in Sean's memory, to reclaim what heroin stole from them in the hope that it might help other parents struggling with a child's addiction.

''Sean did not die in vain,'' his father said, choking back tears.

''We tried our best to save him. It wasn't enough,'' his older brother said, his voice cracking. . . . His mother walked over, embraced her son and spoke soothing words into his ear. The father buried his head in his hands. It was a tableau of sorrow.

We have seen this happen far too often. When their son spiraled down into addiction—

His parents could see something was wrong with Sean. He lost a lot of weight and seemed distant and fidgety. He nodded off at the dinner table.

His father found a syringe in the bathroom and confronted Sean.

''Dad, I'm sick. I need help,'' he said. ''This is not me. I don't want to be like this.''

The parents told their story to our paper. The paper says:

It was a revolving door of failure: detox, intensive outpatient care, relapse. He did not qualify for the most intensive and costliest level of care, inpatient residential treatment. They denied him because he was not homicidal or suicidal and had a stable home environment. ''It was a never-ending battle with the insurance companies,'' his mother said. ''They treated him like the scum of the Earth.''

Now imagine being a parent and going through this with your son—going from treatment center to treatment center.

When Sean finally died, he had the best care. He was in a treatment center. When he called his mother, he said:

''Mom, I've gotta go. My steak's ready,'' he said. ''Love you, mom.''

He went into the bathroom, and he overdosed.

Sean left his parents a final solace. Not long before he died, he thanked them for their unconditional love and how they supported him through a long road of misery.

''You did everything right,'' he told them.

I don't know how a parent can hear those words and think they did everything right, but I can tell you as a Senator that the U.S. Congress is not doing everything right.

Too many parents are telling these stories about their children who have died and too many patients are being prescribed opioids, such as Percocet, Vicodin, and OxyContin for acute pain. This medication is prescribed to patients for a broken wrist or when they have a wisdom tooth pulled—medication that they may need for only 2 or 3 days. Why in Heaven's name are they sent home with a dose of 30 oxycodone pills? What happens to those pills? Are they given to kids at a party? Are they sold to addicts?

We know there is a huge issue with how prescriptions are being made, how much medicine is being given to patients for this acute care, and right now there are no guidelines—no guidelines—given to doctors.

I have a bill to create that guideline. We need a guideline for the CDC. Our amendment is very simple. It would require the CDC to issue clear guidelines to our medical community for when it is appropriate to prescribe opioids instead of something nonaddictive, such as Extra Strength Tylenol.

Our amendment simply requires the CDC to issue these clear guidelines for how much opioid medication our medical professionals can prescribe without putting a patient at high risk for addiction. These guidelines are already being done for chronic pain, so they should also do them for acute pain.

We need to do something. As Members of Congress, we need to respond to the suffering of so many of our constituents. It is truly an epidemic, and it needs a response.

I thank the Presiding Officer, 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.

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

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that at 2:30 p.m. today, the Senate vote in relation to the following amendments in the order listed: 3362, Feinstein; 3395, Wyden; 3367, Toomey; 3345, Shaheen; that there be no second-degree amendments in order to the amendments and that, where applicable, Senator ENZI or his designee be recognized to offer a budget point of order against the respective amendment and that the sponsor or their designee be recognized to make a motion to waive; further, that all the amendments be subject to a 60-affirmative-vote threshold for adoption and that there be 2 minutes equally divided in the usual form prior to each vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

KARI'S LAW

Mrs. FISCHER. Madam President, I rise today to discuss a bipartisan bill that ensures all Americans can access 911 in emergencies.

In December of 2013, Kari Hunt was attacked in her Texas hotel room. As this was unfolding, her 9-year-old daughter tried desperately to call 911, but the call did not go through. Like millions of American children, Kari's brave daughter was taught to dial 911 for emergency assistance, but because they were in a hotel room, the phone required her to dial 9 followed by 911.

In any emergency, a few precious seconds can mean the difference between life and death. And although we cannot prevent tragic events from taking place, we do have the ability to make it easier to get help. That is why I have teamed up with Senators AMY KLOBUCHAR, JOHN CORNYN, TED CRUZ, and BRIAN SCHATZ to put forward a new bill that could save countless lives. Our legislation, named in honor of Kari Hunt, would require that everyone has the ability to call 911 in an emergency. This problem isn't isolated to one hotel room or a particular incident.

As of March 2014, consumers could not directly dial 911 in 44.5 percent of hotel franchises and 32 percent of independent hotels. Over the past 2 years, the hotel industry and phone manufacturers have undertaken voluntary efforts to improve the problem, and I do commend those efforts, but we need to do more. If one person cannot call 911 in a life-or-death situation, that is one person too many.

The bill we have introduced, known as Kari's Law, would require multiline telephone systems, such as those used in hotels and schools and office buildings, to have a default setting that enables people to directly call 911 without first dialing an access code such as 9 or 1. The bill also requires that these phone systems be programmed to allow a central location—such as the hotel front desk—to be notified if a 911 call is made. Through our legislation, first responders can more easily locate people during an emergency. Then they face fewer barriers while this is unfolding.

Kari's Law has already received generous support from across the country. For example, in Nebraska, the bill is supported by the firefighters associations in Omaha and Lincoln, the Buffalo County Sheriff's Office, the city of Beatrice Fire and Rescue Department, Cheyenne and Scotts Bluff County 911 representatives, and the chairman of the Scotts Bluff County Board of Commissioners. The bill is also supported by the hotel industry and the American Hotel and Lodging Association.

I would also like to acknowledge the efforts of FCC Commissioner Pai, who has devoted time and resources to bring attention to this very important issue. Commissioner Pai traveled to Nebraska last June, and he participated in a workshop on direct-dial 911 issues while at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln. He has continued to encourage the industry to work with him in an effort to find solutions to this important issue. The Nebraska Public Service Commission, which led the workshop, has also been at the forefront of the discussion.

And finally, we would not be here discussing this bill without the tireless work of Kari's father, Hank Hunt. Hank has worked day in and day out to advocate for this legislation at both the State and the national level. Hank has made it his mission to ensure that no other family will have to suffer through a similar tragedy. I paraphrase Hank: It was the look on my granddaughter's face when we failed her. A 9-year-old did what she was instructed to do by her parents, teachers, and adults. She was in a true, dire emergency, and she followed instructions, but it didn't work.

I would call on all my colleagues to support this important legislation. We owe it to Kari Hunt, her family, and the Americans who rely on their ability to call 911 for emergency help.

SPOOFING PREVENTION ACT

Madam President, I also want to take a moment to speak about another bipartisan bill that is currently before the Senate. This legislation also seeks to protect Americans by updating our telecommunications laws. It would fix loopholes in our laws that are allowing scammers to take advantage of innocent Americans through a practice known as caller ID spoofing.

Caller ID spoofing allows predators to deliberately falsify their identification and telephone numbers relayed through caller ID. The scammers frequently ask for personal information and for money. Often, senior citizens and our veterans are the target of these predatory practices. Caller ID spoofing has become a major problem for Nebraskans and for law enforcement, which is why I am committed to eliminating this practice.

In September 2013, USA Today highlighted the story of Marian Kerr from Hastings, NE. Ms. Kerr is an 83-year-old retired hospital nursing administrator who fell victim to a spoofing scam. She received a call from individuals who claimed to work for the Federal Government, and they asked for her bank account information. The scammers told her they were Federal officials and already had her name, address, and her phone number. They used this information to trick Marian into providing her bank account number. Ms. Kerr had caller ID, but it displayed a number in Nevada, not Washington, DC, or Hastings, NE. She attempted to call back repeatedly, but she either received a busy signal or was sent to voice mail. Ms. Kerr reported the incident to the police, but by then it was too late. Her money was gone, and there was nothing that law enforcement could do.

Last fall, the Omaha FBI issued a warning about the danger posed by scammers using the Bureau's identification to target Nebraskans. The callers claimed to be offering a grant from the Federal Government, and they proceeded to solicit credit card and banking information. This practice is happening across the country and it needs to stop. Whether it is hard-working Nebraskans like Ms. Kerr or veterans who bravely served our country, no one is immune to this form of fraud.

That is why I was very pleased to join with Senator NELSON last month to introduce the bipartisan Spoofing Prevention Act. This bill would amend the Truth in Caller ID Act. Currently, loopholes in this law are allowing scammers to manipulate caller ID information and to harass millions of Americans.

While the Truth in Caller ID Act has helped to curb spoofing, the growth in new technologies has allowed scammers, especially those operating overseas, to continue this fraudulent practice. The Spoofing Prevention Act would crack down on spoofing by prohibiting caller ID spoofing on all voice calls, including those originating outside the United States, and all calls made using IP-enabled voice services. It would also prohibit caller ID spoofing done via text messaging, which is now becoming a really common practice. Additionally, the bill directs the GAO to look at what the FCC and the FTC have done to combat spoofing.

We must call for new solutions as technology continues to evolve, and I urge all my colleagues to support this important legislation so we can ensure that our citizens are protected from fraud and abuse.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, I would like you to recognize the assistant minority leader from Illinois, Senator DURBIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. I thank my colleague from Indiana.

Mr. President, the bill before us is the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. It is one of the few bills on which we find so much bipartisanship. It really is an issue that all of us understand back home is a major problem, wherever home may be. In my State of Illinois, there is no town too small and no suburb too wealthy to avoid the challenge of this heroin crisis.

Here is what is happening. Over the last 10 years, we have seen the pharmaceutical industry dramatically increase the number of painkiller pills for sale. One classification of those opioids includes OxyContin, hydrocodone, and other names that are pretty familiar to us. It turns out that there have been so many of these pills produced that they have now created an industry of their own—an illicit industry where people are buying and selling them to get high. When they reached a point where they can't find these pills or they are too expensive, they switch, in the same category of narcotics, to heroin. Of course, heroin can kill you if you have an overdose.

We now have more people dying from overdoses of heroin across the United States than people who are dying in traffic accidents. To give you an idea of the volume of this challenge, I have been all across my State, from one end to the other, from Southern Illinois all the way up to Chicago and the suburbs and towns in between. There is hardly a single town that has been spared where some teenager wasn't found dead because of a heroin overdose. There are things we are doing to try to resolve this, but we are not doing enough and not doing it fast enough.

So the bill that is on the floor, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, is an attempt to find new ways for prevention, education, and treatment of substance abuse. There is an amendment offered by Senator SHAHEEN from New Hampshire. It is really a test. All of us can agree on the goals. Senator SHAHEEN says that is not enough. That is an empty promise unless you pay to achieve the goals. We have to put the money into substance abuse treatment. We have to put the money into efforts with law enforcement to reduce the likelihood of these drugs coming into the United States. That is why I support her amendment.

I will offer another amendment too. What we are finding is that there are not enough treatment facilities for this huge growth in people who are addicted to heroin and other narcotics. There just aren't enough. So my bill takes a look at Medicaid. That is the health insurance plan for people in low-income categories. A few years ago, we changed this law and said you can't treat people for substance abuse if you have any more than 16 beds in your facility—16. Can you imagine in the city of Chicago what that means?

Well, I went to Haymarket, which is a wonderful operation started by Monsignor Ignatius McDermott decades ago, which treats people for alcoholism and substance abuse. They have empty beds now that can treat people who are addicted to heroin and help them to break away from this habit. But if they are under Medicaid, they can't offer these beds to these individuals. So I have an amendment with Senator ANGUS KING of Maine, and this increases the number of beds in each facility to 40. This isn't a runaway number. It is a manageable number, and it is a realistic number. If we are going to deal with heroin addiction, we have to deal with it in an honest fashion.

Let me give an example of what I consider to be one of the more effective approaches. In Gloucester, MA, the chief of police decided to try something new. They were having too many heroin overdose deaths, so he made the decision and announced that if you came to his police department or sheriff's office and announced your addiction, they wouldn't arrest you. They would put you into treatment. What happened was a number of people came forward and went into treatment. It was a good outcome for them and for the community.

I have a similar story from the town of Dixon in Illinois. They had too many scary instances where people were either close to a heroin overdose or actually passed away. They tried the same thing as Gloucester, MA, and offered that if you came in and confessed your need for help and treatment, they wouldn't arrest you. They would take you into treatment. It worked. Over 20 local teenagers showed up because of their addiction and they were put into treatment.

Of course, the problem is there aren't enough treatment facilities. So this amendment I have would expand the

opportunities for treatment, and we have to do that.

The good news about this, if there is a good part of this, is that we are finally dealing with addiction in reality. It is no longer viewed just as a moral failing or characterized as some omission of conscience. It is being viewed as a disease—a medical condition that should and can be treated—and that is why we are making a step in the right direction.

We also—I think it bears repeating—we also changed the law in this Chamber not that many years ago, a law which was brought to the floor originally by Senator Paul Wellstone of Minnesota and Senator Pete Domenici of New Mexico, and that bill required that health insurance policies in the United States, in the future, would cover mental health counseling and substance abuse treatment. So, now, because that became the law, the health insurance plans we buy cover our families for those needs. Many families who never dreamed they would need substance abuse treatment for their kids, thank goodness, can turn to their health insurance plan for that kind of help. We have to protect that. Those who talk about repealing the Affordable Care Act would be repealing this very protection that families are using now for substance abuse treatment. That isn't the answer. The answer is to have more treatment facilities available so people can rid themselves of this addiction and get on with their lives.

I have met so many of these people in my roundtables, including law enforcement and doctors, but the ones I remember the most are the young people addicted in high school who finally were able to break the habit. They have a chance now for real life, but it is because there was treatment there when they needed it.

I hope my colleagues will consider this amendment. It will not come up today, but it will soon.

This is a good bill. I hope they will vote for the Shaheen amendment because it pays for the services we are promising. I don't want to end up making an empty promise to America as we face this heroin crisis.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, I thank the assistant minority leader for those inspiring words, and I recognize the Senator from Virginia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 6 minutes as in morning business.

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

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, let me also join my colleague in agreeing with the Senator from Illinois on his comments, and I, too, will join him on voting in favor of the Shaheen amendment. It is important we not only take on this question of opioid drug abuse but that we also make sure we fund the program. I thank him for his leadership.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. President, I wish to take a couple of moments and join with many of my colleagues to talk about an issue of enormous importance on the constitutional obligation to fulfill our duty in terms of reviewing whomever the President of the United States nominates for the Supreme Court. I wish to start, though, by saying a few words about Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia and to offer my condolences to his family. Whether you agreed or disagreed with Judge Scalia's decisions—and mechanically I disagreed with many of them—he was a remarkable jurist and he was a remarkable individual. Over the last 10-plus years, I got to know him and his wife Maureen more in a social setting. He was warm, witty, charming, brilliant, and he will be missed by all who agreed or disagreed with him. My thoughts continue to be with Maureen and his family.

I rise, I think, almost in the mode of what I believe Justice Scalia would have said as someone who was a strict constructionist and someone who believed so firmly in the words of the Constitution. The words of the Constitution are quite clear in article II, section 2, where it says the President shall nominate Justices to the Supreme Court, and it is the responsibility of the Senate to advise and consent.

So my request to all colleagues in this body is simply let's do our job. It is not if the President will nominate, it is when the President will nominate—and I hope he nominates soon—we should give that nominee their due consideration, a fair hearing, and then an up-or-down vote. The President has repeatedly voiced his strong commitment to nominating an eminently qualified replacement. That is his duty, and we must do ours.

To those who suggest we should wait and let the American people decide, the truth is, they already did. In 2012, the American people voted to return President Obama to the White House for a second 4-year term. That 4-year term doesn't end until January 20, 2017. I believe there is ample time to vet a nominee and still wrap up this process this spring.

Are we going to allow politics to totally overtake the work of this body? Are we resigned to a complete and utter failure to govern until next January?

I know the Presiding Officer and I both share a common background; that is, a background in business. It is remarkable to me. No business in America—no business in the world—would operate under the presumption that because it is a Presidential year, that somehow we can default on all of our duties and simply kick over every issue until next year. If we operated a business that way, we would be out of business.

I believe it is absolutely essential that when the President—and I hope expeditiously—nominates an individual to the Supreme Court, that this body do its job constitutionally: review that applicant, meet with that applicant, hold hearings on that nominee, and then give that nominee the up-or-down vote the Constitution requires.

The remarkable thing is in a year where there is a lot of commentary about what the public wants, I can at least tell my colleagues what the public wants in Virginia. They want us to do our job.

I have received an overwhelming response from Virginians from one end of the Commonwealth to the other. They are expressing their opinion clearly about how the nomination process should move forward. A lot of Virginians are expressing their thoughts about what kind of nominee the Senate should confirm or not confirm, but what they are not saying is that the U.S. Senate should punt on this constitutional responsibility. They want us to do our job.

Over the past week, what I have found most striking is the awkward public position held by so many people who otherwise claim to be advocates of a strict reading of the words of the U.S. Constitution, who somehow are saying—imagining something that doesn't appear in the Constitution, that a President or at least this President in his last year—we are not going to follow the Constitution. We are going to kick it over until next year. I believe that is irresponsible. I believe it is inappropriate. I believe that does not follow the interpretation of the Constitution and quite honestly I don't believe it would follow what Justice Scalia, who was a strict constitutionalist, would want to see this body do.

Yet we saw some on the other side of the aisle, literally within hours of Justice Scalia's passing, saying: No vote. No proceeding. We are not going to do our job. We saw certain members of the leadership meet yesterday with the President, again reaffirming their unwillingness to do their job.

This failure to act, this failure to do our constitutional duty, could result—will result—in a vacancy on the Supreme Court stretching close to a year, across two distinct terms of our highest Court. Over that time, the Supreme Court could be deciding extremely important cases, and in many ways they are not going to function as the Constitution laid out.

Many of my friends on the other side of the aisle often quote President Reagan. President Reagan himself said: ''Every day that passes with a Supreme Court below full strength impairs the people's business in that crucially important body.''

As a matter of fact, if we don't do our job, in effect, what we will be doing is potentially shutting down another branch of government. Regardless of where we fall on the political spectrum, if there is one message we have

heard loud and clear over the last couple of years, the American people do not abide shutting down various branches of government. The American people deserve better than this.

I would again urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to step up and do their job. Let's give the President's Supreme Court nominee the appropriate respect, hear them out, have those hearings, and give the Senate a chance to exercise its will in a straight up-or-down vote.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, I rise for all Hoosiers who have been touched by addiction or suffered the loss of a loved one as a result of opioid abuse, heroin use or other drug epidemics. I am here for every Hoosier community that has been gripped by addiction.

I am here from Austin, IN, a small town of 4,200, much like many small towns in the Presiding Officer's home State of North Carolina, where more than 185 people tested positive for HIV, largely caused by injection drug users who shared needles. I am here for Connersville, which was devastated by a heroin epidemic that saw 41 overdoses and 8 deaths in a 3-month span. I am here for my hometown of Granger, which was shaken last year when two teenage brothers, Nick and Jack Savage, died in just one night from a prescription drug-related overdose. I am here for Fort Wayne, Lafayette, and Terre Haute, and Indianapolis, and every community across our State. No part of Indiana or our country is immune from the pain of addiction and these drug epidemics.

By now many of us have heard the staggering statistics. One person in America dies every 25 minutes from an opioid overdose, and overdose deaths in the United States now outnumber fatal auto accidents.

Ultimately, this is about people. People like Mike Zoss of Tippecanoe County. Mike was the youngest of three boys. Mike was creative, enjoyed reading, and had a ton of friends. In high school he began experimenting with prescription drugs. During his senior year, Mike's mom Donna got a call no parent wants to receive. Mike had overdosed at a friend's house from a combination of LYRICA and methadone. He landed in intensive care and was in a coma for nearly 3 weeks. Miraculously, Mike survived, but after struggling for nearly 3 more years with his addiction, Mike died from another overdose.

This scourge is about families and the heartbreak they endure and all the people whose lives are shattered by addiction or even cut short. That is why I have been working on this issue for over 2 years, listening to Hoosiers, introducing bipartisan legislation, partnering with Federal, State, and local officials, and bringing stakeholders together.

These families are why I support the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. This bill provides States and local communities with the tools to prevent and treat drug addiction and to support individuals in recovery. CARA strengthens prevention efforts, increases access to treatment and recovery services, develops best prescribing practices, and expands access to naloxone, also known as Narcan, which can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. In addition, CARA expands disposal sites for unwanted and unused prescription drugs to keep them out of the hands of children and teens, and CARA strengthens prescription drug monitoring programs. This bill provides States and local communities with the tools to prevent and treat drug addiction and to support individuals in recovery.

CARA strengthens prevention efforts, increases access to treatment, develops best prescribing practices, and expands access to naloxone, as I said. Naloxone can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. These are incredible steps that can make a huge change in what happens in the future of our country.

While this bipartisan bill includes many important provisions that help families in my home State of Indiana and across our entire country, it will take all of us working together to prevent and treat addiction. Prescribers and pharmacists, law enforcement and first responders, parents and families, and officials at the Federal, State, and local levels all have a role to play.

I want to talk today about how CARA can best help in these efforts. First, I want to talk about prescribers. Our prescribers play a vital role in addressing addiction because they are our partners in the fight to reduce the risk of prescription drug abuse. They have the knowledge and authority to help our patients, friends, neighbors, and family members understand both the benefits of prescription opioids and the potentially devastating dangers associated with opioid abuse.

Last year, we hosted a roundtable discussion in Indianapolis on prescribing practices with my colleague, Congresswoman SUSAN BROOKS. By bringing together State officials, doctors, and pharmacists, all of whom play key roles in curbing overprescribing, we can better engage health professionals in the fight against the opioid epidemic. We want to make sure doctors have the training, the tools, and the resources to prevent overprescribing and also to help them make the best possible decisions about how to treat their patients.

Right now there is not one set of currently nationally accepted best practices that can help prescribers make the best informed decisions about prescribing opioid drugs. Existing guidelines vary in the recommendations that are made.

CARA would help. It includes a provision adopted from my bipartisan legislation that I reintroduced last year with my friend and colleague, Senator KELLY AYOTTE from New Hampshire, which brings experts together to review, modify, and update, where necessary, best practices for pain management and prescribing pain medication.

Second, I want to talk about our first responders and our law enforcement who are on the front line of this crisis. Frequently they are called to scenes where an individual has overdosed, and they are working to find ways to address these drug epidemics. In Northwest Indiana, the Porter County sheriff's department is reaching out to educate families about the heroin crisis there with a video that includes first-person accounts about how the epidemic has impacted the local community. In the northeast part of our State, over by the Ohio border, the Fort Wayne Fire Department began using Narcan just last August to try to help save people who had overdosed. In the first 4 days, they had to use it three different times—and many times since then. In Central Indiana last year, Indianapolis EMS had administered naloxone an astounding 1,227 times. We need to make the overdose reversal drug naloxone more readily available to first responders and law enforcement.

CARA includes a provision similar to one from my bill with Senator AYOTTE that provides grants to train law enforcement and other first responders in the administration of naloxone to save lives. I have also offered an amendment that encourages first responder units receiving funding through this program to use outreach coordinators to ensure that every individual who receives naloxone also receives in-person followup. Indianapolis EMS recently began a similar outreach program designed to connect overdose victims who receive naloxone with the help they need.

CARA assists law enforcement by expanding resources to identify and treat individuals facing addiction in criminal justice centers. I hear frequently from my friends—the police officers, sheriffs, judges, and court personnel throughout the Hoosier State—that more resources are sorely needed.

Third, I want to talk about families. There are countless personal stories across our State and almost every State about moms and dads, brothers and sisters, wives and husbands, and grandparents who have been impacted by addiction. I want to share a couple of these stories.

Our young friend Aaron—Justin Phillips remembers her son Aaron, a talented athlete who had dreams of playing football in college and the NFL. He was a starting quarterback on Lawrence North's varsity team. He was smart and charming, with a generous heart.

It started for Aaron with a prescription pain medicine and then led to heroin. At the age of 20 years old, in October 2013, Aaron died of a heroin overdose. His mom said, ''We can't pretend it is not our kid because it very well may be our kid who is next.''

There are people like Michelle Standeford of Lebanon, IN, who lost her son and her nephew to addiction. Her nephew Greg died 3 years ago from a heroin overdose at the age of 21. Her son Troy, 33, died following a long battle with addiction. His struggle began when he was prescribed opioids for the pain he was struggling with after a jet ski accident. This past Christmas, Michelle visited Troy, who was in South Florida seeking treatment. She said he was in great spirits and eager to reunite with his family. A few weeks after Troy came back home to Indiana, he passed away. Think of this. He left behind parents, a wife, and two sons, 2 and 4 years old. These stories are way too common.

As Donna Zoss of Lafayette said, ''There are way too many kids dying, and as a community we need to do something.'' She wants to make sure other families learn from her experience before it is too late.

CARA would help families by raising awareness about opioid abuse and heroin abuse and expanding access to treatment. It includes a provision from our bipartisan bill with Senator AYOTTE that establishes a national drug awareness program. By helping families learn about the serious effects of opioid abuse and its connection to heroin, it can make a difference.

CARA also would strengthen additional prevention efforts and increase access to treatment and recovery services with the goal of helping more people overcome addiction, including specific initiatives for women, youth, and vets.

We are not doing enough, and the burden of addressing the opioid and heroin use epidemic has fallen heavily on our criminal justice system, which is clearly not equipped to treat all those struggling with addiction. That is why CARA is so important and why we need to pass this critical legislation quickly.

We have an opportunity to work together—all of us—to pass a good bipartisan bill that helps confront opioid abuse, heroin abuse, and other drug epidemics. On the Federal level, it is our job to support and strengthen partnerships on the State and local levels to make sure every town in every State is accounted for and can heal. CARA will do just that. It would be a significant step forward, although I think we can all agree that it is just a first step.

Mr. President, I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

AMENDMENT NO. 3367

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I rise on the same topic that the Senator from Indiana was addressing very eloquently through the absolutely heartwrenching stories he told of his constituents and their families. These are stories we hear all across America. I hear them all across Pennsylvania day in and day out.

Drug addiction is an enormous problem. It is devastating families and communities in our States. I share the view of the Senator from Indiana that this legislation is very important. It takes a number of steps that are very constructive. I congratulate Senator WHITEHOUSE and Senator PORTMAN for a very good piece of legislation that is going to help save lives. It is going to help save families and communities.

I have an amendment that I am going to address that is going to take another step to help save lives, and I hope my colleagues will overwhelmingly support this because it is an epidemic the likes of which I don't know we have seen in a very long time.

Last October, I convened a field hearing of the Senate Finance Subcommittee on health care to learn more about this very epidemic of opioid addiction and heroin addiction and the overdoses that are resulting. We did it in Pittsburgh, and Senator CASEY joined me. We reserved a very large auditorium, and we invited some of the leading local experts, doctors who were dealing with people who were suffering from addiction, law enforcement folks, recovering addicts. We had a standing-room-only crowd in that room. Such was the intensity of the concern of this issue and the breadth of it because we all know people who are affected by this terrible scourge.

A couple of things I learned in the hearing that are important is that we have to figure out how we can reduce some of the overprescribing of these narcotics—these prescription opioids—upon which people then become addicted. We also have to find ways to address the diversion from prescriptions that are obtained through the conventional process, the black market, the streets, and the places where it feeds the addiction.

I think one of the overlooked elements of this problem has been the opioid epidemic that is affecting older folks, aging baby boomers, and senior citizens who have become addicted to opioids for a variety of reasons.

The headlines have screamed about this. USA Today's headline said: ''Many seniors Hooked On Prescription Drugs.'' The Wall Street Journal had a headline recently: ''Aging Baby Boomers Bring Drug Habits Into Middle Age.'' This came from a TV news channel: ''Senior citizens getting hooked on painkillers.''

This is growing problem, and it doesn't know any demographic limits. It affects senior citizens as well as young people. In fact, to give a sense of one of the, perhaps, contributing elements to this, in 2013 there were 55 million opioid prescriptions written in America for Americans over the age of 65. It is a stunning number. It is a 20-percent increase in just 5 years. We have not had a comparable increase in the number of senior citizens. It is a huge increase in the number of prescriptions per person. This is probably related to the fact that the number of opioid-addicted seniors has itself tripled in the last decade.

One of the problems has been identified by the Government Accountability Office. They estimate that in 1 year alone, 170,000 Medicare enrollees engaged in doctor shopping. That is the process by which beneficiaries go to multiple doctors to get multiple prescriptions for the same or similar powerful narcotics. They go to multiple pharmacies to get them all filled, and they end up with these commercial quantities of prescription drugs—vastly beyond anything that any individual could need.

The GAO discovered that one beneficiary had visited 89 different doctors in one year just to get prescription painkillers—89 doctors in one year. That is almost 2 a week. Another beneficiary received prescriptions for 1,289 hydrocodone pills. That is almost like a 2-year supply. It makes no sense. I could go on and on with cases in which fraud is being committed for the purpose of obtaining these prescriptions, which are then sold in the black market.

There is also a subset of Medicare beneficiaries who are innocently getting duplicate opioid prescriptions because they are being treated by different doctors for different maladies. They have multiple illnesses. They get multiple prescriptions because in many cases there is nobody providing adequate oversight and coordination for their care. So we have both, people who are intentionally and fraudulently getting multiple prescriptions and then we have people who are innocently getting it. So there is a way we can deal with this inappropriate prescription and diversion into the black market, and the administration has asked us to do this.

This administration—the Obama administration—has asked Congress to give them, in Medicare, the power to limit certain beneficiaries who are engaged in doctor shopping, exactly as people already can do so within Medicaid and with private health care providers. So the simple idea is to give Medicare the power when it identifies a beneficiary who is engaged in doctor shopping—getting multiple, duplicative prescriptions, either intentionally or unintentionally—to allow Medicare to lock that patient into one prescriber and one pharmacy. That way you don't have this problem. That is what the administration has asked us to do.

So I have introduced a bill that does exactly that. It is called the Stopping Medication Abuse and Protecting Seniors Act. Senator BROWN of Ohio is the lead Democrat on this bill. I thank Senators PORTMAN and MCCAIN also for their work. This is the amendment we are offering to this bill to give Medicare the very same tool that Medicaid has, the tool that the administration is asking for, and the tool that all experts say makes sense.

As I said, Medicaid and commercial users already do this, and we are not inventing something new. What we are doing is simply applying a proven technique that limits overprescribing and

diversion, applying that to Medicare, where it does not exist today. No one who legitimately needs a prescription for opioids will be denied that. That would be completely unreasonable and inappropriate.

In fact, we exempt seniors in nursing homes, where the nursing home can provide the monitoring, and seniors who are in hospice, and cancer patients who might need unusually large quantities are exempted. In fact, this legislation would actually lock in a small fraction of 1 percent of Medicare enrollees, but that is the fraction that is engaging in this very dangerous behavior.

First, I am grateful for the very broad bipartisan support that we have. As a result, if we get this passed today—which I certainly hope we will—we will help opioid-addicted seniors find treatment because they will be notified when they come up on this list—when it is discovered that they are going to multiple doctors and multiple pharmacies. It will stop the diversion of these powerful narcotics.

It will save taxpayer money because taxpayers reimburse for all of these prescriptions, even those that are fraudulent. Maybe, most importantly, it will reduce the availability of these opioids. We have 25 Republican and Democratic cosponsors on the bill. We have the support of the National Governors Association. Nearly identical language was already passed in the House. It was embedded in the 21st Century Cures Act, where it passed overwhelmingly.

The President's budget has asked for this very mechanism repeatedly. The CMS Acting Administrator was before our committee, and Administrator Slavitt said this legislation ''makes every bit of sense in the world.'' The CDC Director is for it. The White House drug czar is for it. The Pew Charitable Trusts testified on behalf of our legislation, and the Physicians for Responsible Opioid Prescribing support it—not to mention many law enforcement groups and senior groups, such as the Medicare Rights Center.

This is a tool that is overdue. We have this tool in private health care insurance coverage. We have this tool in Medicaid. We just need to have this tool in Medicare.

I wish to single out for a special thanks my coauthor SHERROD BROWN. Senator BROWN and his staff worked very hard and did a tremendous job. They provided, in fact, very valuable feedback to make sure that all the stakeholders were going to be treated fairly and specifically, that beneficiary rights would be properly respected. That is a very important and very constructive contribution that Senator BROWN made to this legislation. He also helped to secure many endorsements from outside groups.

My fellow Pennsylvanian, Senator CASEY, was very helpful and is passionate about this issue. He has seen firsthand the damage that is being done across Pennsylvania from opioid abuse. He is a cosponsor of the legislation.

We had a very successful hearing in the Finance Committee. I thank Senator HATCH for having this very topic of how we can limit the diversion through Medicare of these very dangerous narcotics, and I thought that was a very constructive hearing.

I also thank Senator KAINE, who, through his work on the Senate Aging Committee, has been very active and extremely helpful on this issue.

Again, this is an amendment that has broad, bipartisan support. It has been vetted by the stakeholders. It has been vetted by and requested by the administration. It is endorsed by numerous health care and law enforcement groups. The reason it has such broad support is because it will save lives, it will protect seniors from opioid overprescriptions, it will stop fraud, and it will dramatically reduce pill diversion. So to vote no on this would be to allow the continued flooding of very dangerous prescription opioids onto the black market, and I can't think of any reason we would want to do that.

I urge my colleagues to support the bipartisan Toomey-Brown-Portman-Kaine amendment. Let's get this adopted and then let's pass this underlying bill, which is very, very constructive as well.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, as one of the authors of the bill before us on the floor now, I wish to say that I appreciate and welcome the Senator's amendment, and I appreciate the bipartisan way in which it was achieved, with SHERROD BROWN and TIM KAINE, as well as with the other cosponsors of the bill.

With that, I yield the floor back so that we may hear from another coauthor of this legislation who was with us through the long and arduous process of preparing this bill, running the seminars, putting together the advisory committee, and crafting the legislation.

I yield for the Senator from New Hampshire.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I very much thank the Senator from Rhode Island for the work that we were able to do together on this important legislation, for his leadership, and, really, his passion for this issue that is devastating my State—the heroin and opioid epidemic that is facing all of us. I thank him for a very thoughtful approach and bringing people together around this. I am so pleased we are debating this on the Senate floor today.

HONORING OFFICER ASHLEY GUINDON AND LIEUTENANT JAMES ''JIMMY'' GERAGHTY

Mr. President, I come to the Senate floor today with great sadness to discuss and to honor the lives of two of our outstanding law enforcement officers from New Hampshire who were taken from us far too soon. One is New Hampshire State Police Lieutenant Jimmy Geraghty, a U.S. Army veteran and outstanding public servant. Another is Prince William County Officer Ashley Guindon of Merrimack, NH.

Ashley was a Merrimack, NH, native and a Marine Corps veteran who was killed in the line of duty in Virginia 1 day after being sworn in as a police officer to serve in the Prince William County Police Department.

These individuals represent the very best of law enforcement. It is with such a heavy heart that I pause to remember Ashley Guindon, an incredible young woman whose life was tragically cut short. Ashley was killed in the line of duty last week, tragically, on her first day as a police officer with the Prince William County Police Department in Virginia.

Ashley could not have known her fate when she responded to an emergency call, but she responded to the call with the same sense of duty and resolve that all of our faithful law enforcement officers do every single day because they don't know at that next stop, at that next house that they respond to help someone in need, what they are going to be confronted with.

Ashley's death is a terrible, unthinkable tragedy and serves as a somber reminder of the tremendous sacrifices that our law enforcement officers make every single day by putting their lives on the line to keep us safe.

My heart breaks for Officer Guindon's mother Sharon, for her family, for her friends, and for the public safety community, as they mourn the loss of this tremendous young woman whose life ended far, far too soon. I will keep them in my thoughts and prayers as I know everyone in this Chamber will.

But Officer Guindon should not be remembered because of the circumstances of her death. Rather, she should be remembered for her tremendous life of service to her Nation, to the people whose community she worked to keep safe, and for the sacrifices that she has made and her family has made on behalf of all of us.

Officer Guindon demonstrated an incredible commitment to her country in so many ways. Following her graduation from Merrimack High School in 2005, she joined the Marine Corps. In doing so, she was honoring the life of her father and the service of her father, who deployed to Iraq as a member of the New Hampshire Air National Guard. So she comes from a family of service. Her father lost his life after returning home from serving in Iraq, and Officer Guindon felt that she could honor his memory by joining the armed services herself. So she joined and became a marine.

In her high school yearbook she wrote:

> As I take flight it only makes me closer to u daddy. Mom, thanks for everything it'll be a long road but we can manage and it will only make u stronger.

Underneath her picture in her high school yearbook, the caption read: ''live for something rather than die for nothing.''

Think about that: ''live for something rather than die for nothing.''

Well, absolutely, Officer Guindon did live for something. She lived for our country in her service as a marine. She lived for members of her community, giving of herself and making the ultimate sacrifice to keep others in her community safe. She lived with such honor and distinction, and she answered the call to duty.

Officer Guindon was taken from us far too soon. But by working to ensure that we honor her service, her heroism, her commitment, and the sacrifice she and all law enforcement officers make on our behalf every single day, we can ensure that her inspiring legacy of dedication to others, of service to her country and to her community will never be forgotten. We will never forget her service or her sacrifice. We will continue to honor her and her family for what they have done in service to our Nation every single day.

I also wish to take a moment to honor another law enforcement officer, someone with whom I had the privilege of working personally when I served as attorney general of our State, someone whom I probably called a friend, and who has also been taken from us far too soon.

I honor Lieutenant James ''Jimmy'' Geraghty, who passed away recently following a courageous battle with cancer. I join his family, his friends, and the law enforcement community in New Hampshire who mourn his death. I am speaking about someone who touched so many people in our State, who really lived a life of service, a life of heroism, a life of integrity. I honor his service, his integrity, and his dedication to excellence.

He was a member of the New Hampshire State Police for 24 years and rose to the rank of commander of the New Hampshire State Police Major Crimes Unit. The New Hampshire State Police Major Crimes Unit is the unit that handles the most difficult cases in our State—murder cases, very difficult cases. It is a unit where you are called upon at every hour of the day in the most difficult of circumstances.

Lieutenant Geraghty handled some of the most troubling cases and the most horrific cases you can imagine as a law enforcement officer. He handled them with such incredible dedication, compassion, and commitment, and he did his job so well.

In the most high-profile case of his career, Lieutenant Geraghty led the investigation into the brutal 2009 Mount Vernon homicide—a horrific, horrific case. It was a complex and extremely time-consuming investigation that focused on multiple juvenile defendants.

Because of the thoroughness, professionalism, and dedication brought to the case by Lieutenant Geraghty and the major crimes unit, the prosecution was able to pursue the successful conviction of all the defendants involved.

For their work on the 2009 Mount Vernon case, Lieutenant Geraghty and the major crimes unit were presented with the New Hampshire Congressional Law Enforcement Award for unit citations.

I had the privilege of being there when Lieutenant Geraghty received that award, when he was there with his family. Really, the incredible work that he did on that case made such a difference in bringing to justice defendants who committed horrific, horrific crimes and in keeping New Hampshire safe.

Lieutenant Geraghty will also be remembered for his entire outstanding career of service to both New Hampshire and the Nation.

Lieutenant Geraghty also served very honorably in the U.S. Army for 5 years, holding posts at Fort Benning in Georgia, Fort Polk in Louisiana, and at Fort Richardson in Arkansas.

He also served overseas by participating in the REFORGER exercise in Germany. He achieved the rank of sergeant, E–5, during his career with the U.S. Army and received an honorable discharge. But his service did not end there. After serving in the armed services, he then returned home and embarked on his career in law enforcement, first serving as a police officer in the Hudson Police Department, after which he was accepted as a trooper in the New Hampshire State police.

During his time with the New Hampshire State police, Lieutenant Geraghty spent 8½ years with the Narcotics and Investigations Unit, and he did a phenomenal job there investigating a variety of cases, from street-level buys to multistate trafficking organizations.

While serving in the Narcotics and Investigations Unit, Lieutenant Geraghty was assigned to the HIDTA—high-intensity drug trafficking area—for 2½ years, so he understood and worked hard on the issues we are trying to address on the Senate floor today regarding heroin and opioid addiction and so many other illegal substances as he fought to keep them off our streets. Lieutenant Geraghty's natural talent for leadership and keen ability to work with others were critical in the role he played in HIDTA. During his time with HIDTA, he received several awards and recognitions for his dedication and commitment to excellence.

He was promoted to the rank of sergeant in May of 2006, and from there he was assigned to the Major Crime Unit as a detective sergeant in February of 2008. In 2010 he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant within his unit, assuming the commanding officer's position—a post in which he served until he became ill last year. And he served with such distinction.

I have many friends at the attorney general's office who worked with the Major Crime Unit and with whom I have spoken—the chief of the criminal bureau unit and with other prosecutors—and they speak of Jim Geraghty's service with such glowing reviews, with such incredible compassion, and they speak of the incredible hard work he put in. He represented the very best of our law enforcement officers.

I wanted to talk about his career today because it was important for me to mention his professional accolades, and there are many, because he was such a humble man and he never liked to talk about all of his accomplishments. He liked to focus on something I want to make sure we remember about Jim Geraghty: He lived by the motto ''family first,'' which was incredibly apparent to anyone who knew him. He was married to his wife Valerie for 30 years. Together they had four wonderful children. They are an amazing family, son Jimmy and daughters Colleen, Katie, and Erin.

I want to offer my thoughts and prayers to Valerie, to Jimmy, to Colleen, and to Katie and Erin. You are an incredible family, and your husband and father will never be forgotten. What an incredible person he was. He impacted the lives of so many people with the service he gave to his State.

It has been said that although Geraghty had an exceptional law enforcement career, he considered his family his greatest adventure. In a 2015 letter, his fellow local law enforcement officers described him as a ''gallant public servant who has spent most of his life serving others.'' Others said of him that ''he [was] truly a consummate team player who demonstrated the true meaning of a quiet professional.'' Another individual said that ''he [was] humble, dedicated, and resilient with any duties and/or responsibilities [he was] faced with.'' And, lastly, ''His remarkable and unblemished career within law enforcement is a true testament and shining example of what we all wish to aspire to.'' This is how the officers who served with him, the troopers who served with him, described Lieutenant Jim Geraghty. He will be deeply missed.

I am honored to recognize Lieutenant Jim Geraghty and to honor his tremendous contributions as the commander of the State Major Crime Unit and to say what an amazing family man and great human being. He was someone who lived his life with great integrity. He was truly someone we would all want to emulate in living our lives.

Again, I offer my prayers to his family. They are an incredible family as well, and I hope they know we will continue to stand with them in their most difficult days ahead.

So today I wish to say about both Officer Ashley Guindon and Lieutenant Jim Geraghty that they were incredible law enforcement officers who gave so much to New Hampshire, to our country, and that they really represented the very best in what it means to be an American.

Mr. President, with that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT). The Senator from Florida.

RETURN FROM SPACE OF COMMANDER SCOTT KELLY

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I rise to welcome a national hero back to planet Earth—CDR Scott Kelley. After spending 340 days in space on his most recent visit to the International Space Station, Commander Kelley has smashed the previous U.S. record in space flight and for most of the total time spent in space as well. But Commander Kelley's accomplishment, while notable in its own right, is serving a greater purpose. NASA is preparing to undertake one of the greatest technological challenges in human history—a voyage to the planet Mars. Depending on the alignment of the planets, Mars is anywhere from 35 million miles to an astounding 250 million miles from Earth. It is all according to the alignment of the planets.

If you want to put that into perspective, Mr. President, the distance from you and me reflecting the 238,000 miles from Earth to the Moon, which is as far as we have gone and is a long way—that is the farthest we have ever been—if that distance from the Earth to the Moon were represented by the distance from you to me, then the distance to Mars from right where this Senator is standing would be way out to the edge of the District of Columbia and Maryland.

Commander Kelley's mission is a milestone on this journey to Mars. The International Space Station—our football-sized laboratory orbiting in space, as large as a football field from one goalpost to the other—is our test bed for exploration. Indeed, Commander Kelley spent those 340 days at the International Space Station.

Now, as we venture out, traveling those vast distances between Earth and Mars, it is going to mean that humans are going to spend more time in space than ever before, so Commander Kelley's yearlong stay aboard the station is an important validation of our ability to live and work in space for the long periods of time someone would be in zero-g.

But there is another very interesting aspect to his mission. Scott Kelley has an identical twin, his brother Mark. Retired Navy CAPT Mark Kelley, also an astronaut, remained on Earth while his brother was in space, and now he is a baseline to compare the changes in the body and the psychological effects to his brother Scott. This comparison is going to provide important insights into the effects of space flight on the human body and perhaps even effects on the Human Genome itself. The more we learn about how the human body changes in space, the better off we are because we can prepare for the longer and longer voyages in space. But we also gain insights into the fundamental working of the human body that we may never have learned confined to Earth's gravity. And who knows where these discoveries are going to lead—perhaps to new cures and therapies for afflictions folks suffer here on the face of the Earth.

The space station where Commander Kelley stayed for almost a year is a powerful tool for science and for discovery and for exploration. That is why at the end of last year we extended the authorization of the space station all the way until at least through the year 2024. It is also why I am so excited about the crewed flights from U.S. soil to the space station resuming next year. Next year, Americans on American rockets will go to and from low-Earth orbit. Once we have the Dragon on the SpaceX or the Starliner on the Atlas V, those crewed capsules are going to make regular trips to and from the space station. But we should also then be able to expand the space station crew, because of that regular visitation, from six to seven doing their research projects on board the station. That means a lot more discoveries.

Some people may not appreciate how difficult it is to spend a year in space, but I can tell you it is not only an amazing experience, but it is tough on your body. The body experiences muscle atrophy in zero-g and also bone loss. This is why astronauts have to be in peak physical condition and also try to continue that as they are out in space for long durations. And spending a year away from loved ones, of course, is no easy task. This demonstrates the strength and the courage Scott Kelley has shown.

So I want the Senate to recognize CDR Scott Kelley for this accomplishment. It is going to take him some days to readapt to the Earth's gravitational pull. I commend him for the contributions to space exploration and thank him for the sacrifices he has made and the sacrifices his family has made over the last year.

Welcome home, Commander, and thank you for offering to be a part of this great adventure we call space exploration.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, prescription drug abuse is the fastest growing problem in the country. It is a problem the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention classifies as an epidemic.

The availability of prescription painkillers is a leading factor in the increase of opioid abuse. Since 1999, opioid abuse overdose deaths have quadrupled nationwide.

Unfortunately, my home State of Arkansas is not immune to the problem. CDC data shows that it is one of 12 States with more painkiller prescriptions than people—I repeat, one of 12 States with more painkiller prescriptions than people.

Benton, AR, police chief Kirk Lane has seen the impact in his community. During a recent visit to my office, he said: ''A lot of people become addicted very innocently and can't find a way back.''

Placing prescription drugs in the medicine cabinet for safekeeping is no longer the best option because 70 percent of Americans misusing painkillers are getting them from friends and family.

Arkansas has implemented measures to combat this problem by decreasing the availability of prescription drugs and properly disposing expired and unneeded medication through the Arkansas Take Back Program. This is an important step that has resulted in the removal of more than 72 tons of unneeded medication from homes in the State.

Congress has taken action to fight this epidemic. As a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I have pushed the Department of Veterans Affairs to reform its culture of prescription. Nationwide, pharmacies have a system in place to prevent overfilling prescriptions. It is time for VA to adopt a similar system.

I pressured the DEA—the Drug Enforcement Administration—to reform its policy to allow clinics and pharmacies to serve as dropoff sites for the collection of unused or unwanted prescription drugs.

Last year, we passed legislation to improve the prevention and treatment of opioid abuse by pregnant women and care for newborns affected by this abuse. That bill was signed into law.

Congress approved more than $400 million in funding to address the opioid epidemic this fiscal year. That is an increase of more than $100 million from the previous year. Calls for additional funds for this legislation are premature. We need to see the progress and results made with the current finding.

We must continue our commitment to the fighting of this epidemic and providing our communities with the tools they need to improve response to addiction and promote treatment and recovery. That is why we need to pass the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act.

This bill can help give communities the ability to combat the growing opioid epidemic in Arkansas and across the country by expanding prevention efforts, supporting law enforcement, combating overdoses, and expanding access to treatment.

I have heard from many Arkansans who support this bill. It has the support of a wide range of organizations that represent law enforcement officials, drug treatment providers, and health care professionals. This speaks to the comprehensive approach we are taking to fight this epidemic.

It also authorizes the Attorney General to award grants to veterans treatment courts. These courts are critical in helping our veterans break the cycle of addiction and turning their lives around.

Prescription drug abuse is a widespread problem that impacts all ages

and populations of Americans. I am committed to providing Arkansas communities the resources they need to fight this epidemic.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

AMENDMENT NO. 3345

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I appreciate the comments from my colleague from Arkansas about the challenges of the heroin and opioid epidemic. I think it is really a pandemic that we are facing in too many States across this country. Certainly it is a huge issue in New Hampshire, my home State, where we have the highest percentage of deaths from overdoses of any State in the country.

In a few minutes, we are going to be voting on the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, which is an excellent piece of legislation, sponsored by my colleagues SHELDON WHITEHOUSE from Rhode Island and AMY KLOBUCHAR from Minnesota, as well as my colleague from New Hampshire, Senator AYOTTE, and Senator PORTMAN.

We are also going to be voting on a number of amendments, including an amendment that I have proposed, which is emergency supplemental funding to make sure that the changes we are making as a result of the CARA legislation actually get the resources that need to be provided in order to make those changes work.

In 2014, more than 47,000 Americans died from lethal drug overdoses. Each day, 120 Americans die from drug overdoses in New Hampshire. We are losing more than a person a day from drug overdoses—three times as many people as we lost last year in automobile accidents. These are numbers we have been using a lot on the floor of the Senate in the last couple of days, but I think they are numbers that we need to continue repeating and repeating because losing 47,000 Americans from drug overdoses is not acceptable.

Everywhere I go in New Hampshire, I am told one thing consistently by drug treatment professionals and by law enforcement, and that is, they need more resources and they need them now. Health workers are being overwhelmed. Nationwide, nearly 9 out of 10 people with substance use disorders don't receive treatment. They are being turned away. They are being denied treatment because of a chronic lack of resources.

The amendment Senator WHITEHOUSE and I have proposed addresses this problem. It provides $300 million in emergency funding for the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant Program. This is funding that will save lives in our States of New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Arkansas, and in the Presiding Officer's home State of South Carolina. This is funding that will save lives in each of our States.

Not only are health workers being overwhelmed, but law enforcement officials are also being overwhelmed. We need an infusion of new funding to mobilize additional efforts to stop opioid traffickers and drug dealers.

This emergency supplemental amendment would allocate $230 million to the Byrne JAG Program to directly combat the opioid crisis. These are efforts that will keep drugs off the streets.

In total, the Shaheen-Whitehouse amendment appropriates $600 million in emergency funding that will be immediately available to States and those working on the frontlines to address this crisis. I think that is why the National Governors Association, the Fraternal Order of Police, the American Public Health Association, the American Society of Addiction Medicine, the American Academy of Pain Management, the American College of Physicians, the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors, and so many other groups support this amendment. Again, the critical point here is that this amendment funds key provisions of the CARA bill.

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act is a good bill. It is excellent work that so many people have been involved in. The sponsors did great work in writing the legislation. I support it. I am a cosponsor. But it is an authorization bill that does not provide funding. So if we support making the changes in law that are included in the CARA bill, we should also support providing emergency funding to those same programs.

To all my colleagues in this body, we know that doing the same thing is not working. Every year more and more people are dying from drug use. Congress needs to rise to this challenge, just as it has in so many previous public health emergencies, because, make no mistake about it, this is a public health emergency, and we have a history of providing supplemental funding to address public health emergencies. In 2009, Congress appropriated $2 billion in emergency funding to fight swine flu—a bill that passed the Senate 91 to 5. Many of us who voted for that are still in this body. Just last year, Congress approved $5.4 billion to combat the Ebola outbreak—an outbreak that killed just one person in the United States. Compare that to the 47,000 people we lost in 2014 to drug overdoses. Surely—surely Congress can come together now to fight this raging epidemic that is right here at home.

We can't avert our eyes from the 47,000 Americans who are killed by lethal overdoses each year. We can't accept that 9 out of 10 Americans with substance use disorders don't get treatment. We can't ignore 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. The $600 million emergency funding in the amendment I am proposing will help stem the tide. It will make a powerful difference in communities all across America.

CARA is important legislation. I intend to vote for it. I hope this body will pass it. But I urge my colleagues to also support the amendment that makes sure we have the urgent emergency funding to ramp up this fight in the months immediately ahead. Passing CARA without any funding is like offering a life preserver to people who are drowning and not putting air in that life preserver. This is a nationwide crisis. It is way past time we mobilized a nationwide response that is equal to the challenge.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I know we have a vote coming. I ask unanimous consent to complete my remarks.

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

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss why I believe the Senate should not hold hearings or schedule a vote on any Supreme Court nominee offered by President Obama until the American people choose our next President this November.

The American people are reacting to our global security and debt crises when they go to the polls, and this upcoming election will not only determine the direction of our country, but it also serves as a referendum on the Presidency, Congress, and now the Supreme Court balance.

The last 7 years have shown that this President has sought to exceed the constitutional bounds of the Executive office by assuming powers that were delegated to this body. For instance, in January of 2013 the President attempted to recess-appoint nominees to the National Labor Relations Board in direct violation of the Senate's will. Of course, the Supreme Court later intervened and struck down those appointments. As well, my colleagues across the aisle have repeatedly shown a willingness to aid this administration in making unprecedented power grabs, including employing the nuclear option for judicial nominees. The American people were outraged at these events, as was I.

So while I acknowledge the President's position on insisting that the Senate consider a nominee, it is vital that the people get their say on this lifetime appointment. It is the role of the Senate to rise above current political theater. It is about upholding principle and not about the individual. The Senate simply should not consider a nominee at this time and let the people have their say.

I should also point out that my position and the position of many of my colleagues is not a novel idea. For instance, it was then-Senator Obama who filibustered Justice Alito's nomination in 2006. It was then-Senator BIDEN who in 1992 preemptively said that President George H.W. Bush should avoid a Supreme Court nomination until after that year's election. As chairman of

the Senate's Judiciary Committee, then-Senator BIDEN also made the same point we are today when he came to the floor of the Senate and made this quote: ''It is my view that if a Supreme Court justice resigns tomorrow or within the next several weeks, or resigns at the end of the summer, President Bush should consider following the practice of a majority of his predecessors and not—and not—name a nominee until after the November election is completed.''

The balance of the Supreme Court is in serious jeopardy. We must ensure that balance remains as a check against efforts by government to bypass the will of the people.

As a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I stand with Chairman GRASSLEY and other members in saying we will not consider a nominee to the Supreme Court before the next President is sworn into office. We are already in the midst of a political campaign season, so any nominee will be seen through the lens of partisan politics. It is disingenuous for the minority party to say otherwise. And this is to the point that then-Senator BIDEN was speaking in 1992.

As we said in our letter last week, we intend to exercise the constitutional power granted to the Senate under article II, section 2. While the President shall nominate judges to the Supreme Court, the power to grant or withhold consent of such nominees rests solely with this body.

At a time when the stakes are so high, the American people deserve the opportunity to engage in a full and robust debate over the type of jurist they wish to decide some of the most critical issues of our time and for the next generation. Not since 1932 has the Senate confirmed a Supreme Court nominee in a Presidential election year to a vacancy arising in that year—not since 1932.

It is necessary to go even further back, to 1888, to find an election year nominee who was both nominated and confirmed under divided government, as we have now. Today, the American people are presented with an exceedingly rare opportunity to decide the direction the Court will take over the next generation. The people should have this opportunity.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

AMENDMENT NO. 3362

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to amendment No. 3362, offered by the Senator from Iowa, Mr. GRASSLEY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 2 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I wish to say a few words in support of amendment No. 3362, which Judiciary Committee Chairman GRASSLEY and I, with Senators CANTWELL and AYOTTE, have cosponsored.

This bill has passed the Senate by unanimous consent three times. It ensures that international drug traffickers can be prosecuted when there is reasonable cause to believe that their illegal drugs will be trafficked into our country. It also better enables the prosecution of manufacturers and distributors of listed precursor chemicals who know or intend that these chemicals will be used to manufacture illicit drugs destined for the United States.

Finally, it makes a technical fix to the Counterfeit Drug Penalty enhancement Act of 2012 at the request of the Justice Department.

I would like to thank Senators GRASSLEY, AYOTTE, and CANTWELL for cosponsoring this amendment. I hope my colleagues will pass it this time with a vote, since it has been done by unanimous consent three times in the past.

I yield the floor.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I wish to speak in strong support of amendment No. 3362, offered by Senator FEINSTEIN and me, the Transnational Drug Trafficking Act. This is a bill that she and I have worked on for many years.

One of the many reasons for the ongoing heroin epidemic in this country is the increase in heroin supply on the streets of the United States.

Mexican cartels are aggressively expanding into new territory here. And they are flooding our communities with cheap, pure heroin. Indeed, heroin seizures at the border have more than doubled since 2010. The U.S. Government estimates that Mexican heroin production jumped an incredible 62 percent from 2013 to 2014 alone.

And the reality is that it isn't just heroin coming over the border. Between 2009 and 2014, U.S. Customs and Border Protection reported a 300 percent increase in methamphetamine seizures on the southwest border as well.

This bill is a natural complement to CARA. We can't arrest our way out of this heroin epidemic. We can try to reduce the heroin supply on our streets by making it easier to target these cartels for prosecution.

This is in part why Senator FEINSTEIN and I introduced this legislation. Our bill would make it easier for the Department of Justice to prosecute cartels who harm our communities from abroad by trafficking heroin, other drugs, and precursor chemicals for ultimate delivery here.

If this amendment is adopted, prosecutors would need to prove only that an international drug trafficker had reasonable cause to believe that the illegal drugs or chemicals he manufactured or distributed would be unlawfully imported into the United States, as opposed to knowing or specifically intending that result.

This amendment passed the Senate by unanimous consent in October. It also passed the Senate unanimously the past two Congresses.

But the House still hasn't taken it up. So I ask my colleagues to vote for this amendment so we can send it to the House again, this time along with CARA.

We need to attack the problem of opioid addiction from every angle, and this amendment should be part of a comprehensive approach.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. PAUL (when his name was called). Present.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 94, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 28 Leg.]

YEAS—94

Alexander	Fischer	Murphy
Ayotte	Flake	Murray
Baldwin	Franken	Nelson
Barrasso	Gardner	Perdue
Bennet	Gillibrand	Peters
Blumenthal	Graham	Portman
Blunt	Grassley	Reed
Booker	Hatch	Reid
Boozman	Heinrich	Risch
Boxer	Heitkamp	Roberts
Brown	Heller	Rounds
Burr	Hirono	Sasse
Cantwell	Hoeven	Schatz
Capito	Inhofe	Schumer
Cardin	Isakson	Scott
Carper	Johnson	Sessions
Casey	Kaine	Shaheen
Cassidy	King	Stabenow
Coats	Kirk	Sullivan
Cochran	Klobuchar	Tester
Collins	Lankford	Thune
Coons	Leahy	Tillis
Corker	Lee	Toomey
Cornyn	Manchin	Udall
Cotton	Markey	Vitter
Crapo	McCain	Warner
Daines	McConnell	Warren
Donnelly	Menendez	Whitehouse
Durbin	Merkley	Wicker
Enzi	Mikulski	Wyden
Ernst	Moran	
Feinstein	Murkowski	

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—1

Paul

NOT VOTING—5

Cruz	Rubio	Shelby
McCaskill	Sanders	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes

for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is agreed to.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the votes following this first vote in the series be 10 minutes in length.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3395

Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to amendment No. 3395, offered by the Senator from Oregon Mr. WYDEN.

The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, this amendment keeps the Toomey amendment on enforcement completely intact and makes two critical improvements. It adds prevention and treatment.

Colleagues, this is what the Republican witness in the Finance Committee said is needed. It is what the Democratic witness in the Finance Committee said is needed. We need more prevention, better treatment, and tougher enforcement to work in tandem. The Toomey amendment is about enforcement, but we also need prevention and treatment. If somebody is addicted to opioids, they need a real path out of addiction. This amendment ensures people who need help are connected to meaningful treatment choices to better manage their pain and limit excessive prescriptions.

My amendment also aims to end the tide of overprescribing in the first place. It does that by doubling the penalties for manufacturers that provide kickbacks to prescribers in order to boost their profits.

I offer this with my colleagues Senator SCHUMER and Senator MURRAY. I very much hope we can get this amendment adopted. If we can have a bipartisan effort in the Senate that ensures there is tougher enforcement but also better treatment and better prevention to do that we have to vote for this amendment.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, the pending amendment, No. 3395, offered by Senators WYDEN and SCHUMER, would establish a new demonstration program within Medicare Part D to coordinate the treatment of opioid addiction. The proposal would also increase the penalties on drugmakers.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, the amendment would increase direct spending over both the 2016 through 2020 and the 2016 through 2025 periods. If the amendment were adopted, then the Judiciary Committee would exceed its spending allocation over both of these time periods. As a consequence of the new spending proposed, the Wyden-Schumer amendment is a violation of section 302(f) of the Congressional Budget Act.

As I said before, we all agree that the heroin and opioid abuse epidemic is real and has to be addressed, but I believe we ought to address the problem living within the confines of the budget we previously agreed to just last December. The underlying bipartisan bill provides a good framework for tackling this problem. It provides a comprehensive, specific, and evidence-based approach to help Americans combat this epidemic.

In light of that, the pending amendment No. 3395, offered by the Senator from Oregon, would cause the underlying legislation to exceed the authorizing committee's section 302(a) allocation of new budget authority or outlays. Therefore, I raise a point of order against the measure pursuant to section 302(f) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, pursuant to section 904 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, I move to waive the applicable sections of that act for purposes of the pending amendment, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 46, nays 50, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 29 Leg.]

YEAS—46

Ayotte	Franken	Nelson
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Peters
Bennet	Heinrich	Reed
Blumenthal	Heitkamp	Reid
Booker	Hirono	Schatz
Boxer	Kaine	Schumer
Brown	King	Shaheen
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Cardin	Leahy	Tester
Carper	Manchin	Udall
Casey	Markey	Warner
Collins	Menendez	Warren
Coons	Merkley	Whitehouse
Donnelly	Mikulski	Wyden
Durbin	Murphy	
Feinstein	Murray	

NAYS—50

Alexander	Ernst	McCain
Barrasso	Fischer	McConnell
Blunt	Flake	Moran
Boozman	Gardner	Murkowski
Burr	Graham	Paul
Capito	Grassley	Perdue
Cassidy	Hatch	Portman
Coats	Heller	Risch
Cochran	Hoeven	Roberts
Corker	Inhofe	Rounds
Cornyn	Isakson	Sasse
Cotton	Johnson	Scott
Crapo	Kirk	Sessions
Daines	Lankford	Shelby
Enzi	Lee	
Sullivan	Tillis	Vitter
Thune	Toomey	Wicker

NOT VOTING—4

Cruz	Rubio
McCaskill	Sanders

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BARRASSO). On this vote, the yeas are 46, the nays are 50.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

The point of order is sustained and the amendment falls.

AMENDMENT NO. 3367

Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to amendment No. 3367, offered by the Senator from Pennsylvania, Mr. TOOMEY.

The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, this is a bipartisan, commonsense policy. I wish to thank my coauthors, Senators BROWN, PORTMAN, and KAINE.

Lock-in is a tool by which beneficiaries who are abusing prescription opioids are locked in to a single prescriber and a single pharmacy for access to these powerful narcotics. It would make it difficult or impossible for these excessive prescriptions to continue when a patient is so locked in.

It is a tool that is already used by Medicaid and private insurers. What our amendment would do is extend this important tool to Medicare. It is a policy that has been requested by the administration. It is in the President's budget. It has broad bipartisan support. It will help stop fraud, help coordinate care for seniors, and save taxpayer money.

As Senator WYDEN observed, his amendment, had it proceeded, would not have actually extended this tool to Medicare. The only way we can do that on this bill is to pass this amendment.

I would encourage everyone's support. I think we have an agreement for a voice vote on this, but before we go to that, I wish to yield to Senator BROWN for his comments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Pennsylvania for his leadership.

Various doctors may not realize they are prescribing duplicative opioid painkillers. We have done the lock-in with Medicaid. In many States, it has worked. This is a commonsense solution to help a relatively small number of people but a growing number of seniors whom a Medicare lock-in could assist.

I urge support for the Toomey-Brown amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, in light of the agreement for a voice vote, I ask unanimous consent that the 60-vote affirmative threshold with respect to amendment No. 3367 be vitiated.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 3367) was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3345

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate prior to a vote in relation to amendment No. 3345, offered by the Senator from New Hampshire, Mrs. SHAHEEN.

The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, we are voting on very good legislation with the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. This is a way to expand programs that work to address what is a real pandemic of heroin and opioid abuse in this country. But the reality is that unless we provide the resources to make these programs work, it is like giving a drowning person a life preserver that has no air in it. It doesn't make a difference. We are losing 47,000 people a year—120 people a day—to overdoses. Our law enforcement needs additional funding. The substance abuse treatment folks need additional support.

What my emergency supplemental amendment would do is to support the programs that are in the CARA legislation. It is about equally divided between support for law enforcement and support for treatment. It helps with prescription drug monitoring, with education, and with recovery. It is the kind of support we need to provide if we are really going to make a difference in this epidemic we are all facing.

I urge my colleagues to not just support the underlying legislation—that is good and we should support it, but unless we provide the funding, we will not have done what we need to to accomplish real change to keep people from dying. I urge all of my colleagues to support this amendment.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I wish to speak in opposition to the Shaheen amendment No. 3345.

Of course, the opioid crisis demands resources, and significant resources are being directed to it. But this amendment is political gamesmanship by some of my Democratic colleagues for whom the Senate's advancement of CARA doesn't fit their preferred political narrative.

CARA is a bipartisan bill that addresses the clear and present public health crisis of heroin and prescription opioid abuse. Through the hard work of many on both sides of the aisle, it passed the Judiciary Committee unanimously. And just a few weeks later, we are considering it on the Senate floor. This is the Senate working in a constructive, bipartisan way on behalf of the American people, unlike the way it worked under Democrat control.

But that is not a narrative some Democrats want the American people to hear. So a controversy must be manufactured to create a distraction. And the controversy that has been manufactured today is that CARA doesn't appropriate any funds for this crisis.

CARA, of course, is an authorizing bill. It does many significant things that I talked about here on the floor earlier in the week. But it was never intended to appropriate funds.

That is what we have the Appropriations Committee for. That is why we have an appropriations process. We should follow that process.

In fact, according to the Office of National Drug Control Policy, the fiscal year 2016 appropriations act passed in December provides more than $400 million in funding specifically to address the opioid epidemic.

This is an increase of more than $100 million over the previous year. None of that money has even been spent yet—it is available today. So there is simply no reason to leap ahead of the fiscal year 2017 appropriations process.

The reality is that this public health crisis festered while the Senate was in Democratic control for years. For example, heroin overdose deaths more than tripled from 2010 to 2014.

And all the while, no emergency supplemental spending bill was brought to the floor specifically to address it. In fact, no authorization bill like CARA was brought to the floor either during those years.

So I ask my colleagues to ignore this manufactured controversy. $400 million is available today to combat this crisis, an increase of $100 million. We should follow the appropriations process, which is just around the corner, where competing priorities and tradeoffs can be evaluated.

That is the best way to ensure both that adequate resources are directed to this epidemic while at the same time maintaining fiscal discipline.

I urge my colleagues to vote against the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, the pending amendment offered by the Senator from New Hampshire appropriates $600 million on top of the $571 million provided in the bill as reported by the Judiciary Committee over the 2016–2020 period. Unlike the underlying bill, which requires appropriators to provide the authorized funding within the discretionary spending caps, the Shaheen amendment would designate new spending as emergency not subject to budget enforcement.

I am also concerned that this amendment lacks specificity in how the funds are allocated. For example, the bill provides $300 million to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration for substance abuse treatment to address the heroin and opioid crisis and its associated health effects. While we all agree that the heroin and opioid abuse epidemic must be addressed, I believe the underlying bipartisan bill provides a better framework to tackle this problem. It provides a comprehensive, specific, and evidence-based approach to help Americans combat this epidemic.

In the meantime, the Senate Appropriations Committee shepherds resources to the opioid problem in the consolidated appropriations bill signed into law late last year. Nearly $600 million was included to start down the road to helping States and communities to address this problem.

The appropriators, working with our authorizers inside the framework of this bill, can evaluate the effectiveness of this year's spending as they make decisions about how much to spend and how to spend most effectively in upcoming years.

Finally, last year's budget resolution conference report contained a deficit neutral reserve fund, spearheaded by Senator AYOTTE and adopted unanimously by the committee, to address the opioid challenge. Together, Republicans and Democrats agreed that, if Congress were to agree on policies and funds to tackle this urgent problem, we should work to pay for it. The Shaheen amendment does not do that.

Also, the Obama administration did not request opioid funding in the supplemental request sent just last week for emergency Zika funding.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired.

Mr. ENZI. In that case, let me say that the pending amendment, No. 3345, offered by the Senator from New Hampshire would cause the aggregate level of budget authority and outlays for fiscal year 2016 as established in the most recently agreed to concurrent resolution on the budget, S. Con. Res. 11, to be exceeded; therefore, I raise a point of order against the amendment under section 311(a)(2)(A) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, do I have any time left to speak under the previous 2 minutes?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is no time remaining.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Then pursuant to section 904 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and the waiver provisions of applicable budget resolutions, I move to waive all applicable sections of that act and applicable budget resolutions for purposes of the pending amendment, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID), and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 48, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 30 Leg.]

YEAS—48

Ayotte	Franken	Murphy
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Murray
Bennet	Graham	Nelson
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Peters
Booker	Heitkamp	Portman
Boxer	Hirono	Reed
Brown	Kaine	Schatz
Cantwell	King	Schumer
Cardin	Kirk	Shaheen
Carper	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Casey	Leahy	Tester
Collins	Manchin	Udall
Coons	Markey	Warner
Donnelly	Menendez	Warren
Durbin	Merkley	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Mikulski	Wyden

NAYS—47

Alexander	Fischer	Paul
Barrasso	Flake	Perdue
Blunt	Gardner	Risch
Boozman	Grassley	Roberts
Burr	Hatch	Rounds
Capito	Heller	Sasse
Cassidy	Hoeven	Scott
Coats	Inhofe	Sessions
Cochran	Isakson	Shelby
Corker	Johnson	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lankford	Thune
Cotton	Lee	Tillis
Crapo	McCain	Toomey
Daines	McConnell	Vitter
Enzi	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	

NOT VOTING—5

Cruz	Reid	Sanders
McCaskill	Rubio	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 48, the nays are 47.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

The point of order is sustained, and the amendment falls.

The Senator from Iowa.

AMENDMENT NO. 3374, AS MODIFIED, TO AMENDMENT NO. 3378

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I call up Donnelly amendment No. 3374, as modified.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Iowa [Mr. GRASSLEY], for Mr. DONNELLY, proposes an amendment numbered 3374, as modified, to amendment No. 3378.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment, as modified, is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide follow-up services to individuals who have received opioid overdose reversal drugs)

On page 33, line 9, 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.''.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I, Senator SHAHEEN, and Senator KING be recognized for a 15-minute colloquy.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 3345

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, we rise to express our disappointment with what just took place. I am one of the authors of the underlying bill. I think it is a very good piece of legislation, but it would make a very significant difference if it had some funding.

The simple fact that we have to face is this bill has no funding right now. I know colleagues on the other side have come to the floor to say there is funding—$80 million, $400 million—but in point of fact I must disagree with them. Let me list the points that show, I believe, why there is no funding to this bill at this point.

The first is that the funding they point to was passed out of the Appropriations subcommittee 7 months before this bill even had its markup. It would have been an astonishing feat of prediction to be able—back then—to fund this bill now.

If that weren't clear enough, there was a change in the bill between then and now. Then, if you wished to fund this bill, you would have put the bulk of the money through the CJS Appropriations Subcommittee because the bulk of this bill was written in the CJS Appropriations Subcommittee. We only changed it this January in response to Republican objections that nobody wanted to create new programs. So we rerouted the new programs through existing programs. That is when it became a Labor-HHS-dominated bill. So there is no way that last June, when this money came through that Appropriations subcommittee, they knew it was going to this.

Moreover, if you go to the agency that is responsible for distributing this money, they are bidding the money out right now. They have a use right now for every dollar of it. If we don't pass this bill, they will put the money out and it will be spent. If we do pass this bill, they will put the money out and it will be spent. If we don't get the bill out soon enough, they will have to pass it out and get it spent under existing law. So you simply can't say with a straight face that this is a funded bill.

The only way this is funded is by robbing the accounts that SAMHSA is now putting out now to bid to fund, in order to fund this bill. You can say the money will be better spent under this legislation. I think that is true. I support this bill. I am going to be for the bill all the way through, even if it is not funded, but you can't say there is funding.

This is a very solvable problem. We have done it before. As Senator SHAHEEN pointed out on the floor, when it was the swine flu, on an emergency appropriations process, we appropriated $2 billion and when it was Ebola, $5 billion. If you say: Well, no, now something has changed, we can't do that, we have pay for it—Senator MANCHIN has a pay-for. A penny per milligram of opioid raises over $1 billion. You could do half a penny that could be contributed by the pharmaceutical industry that is so culpable in this predicament, in this tragedy we have, but, no, rather than allow this good program, this bipartisan program to be expedited out there, to help the people who are dying—47,000 in 2014, the last year—what we have done is protect the pharmaceutical industry from having to pay any share of the solution.

I yield to my colleagues.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I appreciate the comments from my colleague from Rhode Island, who is the author of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. That is the underlying bill we were trying to amend.

I would just point out that despite what the honorable chairman of the Budget Committee said, the fact is that the emergency supplemental funding amendment we introduced is very specific about where the funding goes. It goes to programs that are addressed in CARA, expanded, and improved; the substance abuse prevention and treatment block grants that go to the States to be distributed, funding the law enforcement through the Byrne-JAG and COPS grants that are very specific in how they can be used to fight heroin and opioid abuse.

Like my colleague, I am disappointed—not surprised but disappointed. I very much appreciate those people who voted for this amendment, who were willing—particularly some of my colleagues from the other side of the aisle—who were willing to step forward and say, if we are going to address this problem, we have to provide the resources that communities, that States need to fight this addiction.

The question I have for those people who didn't vote to support this amendment is, How many more people have to die before we are willing to provide the resources that are needed to fight this epidemic—47,000 people in 2014. In New Hampshire, we are losing more than a person a day. In 2015, we lost over 400 people to overdose deaths from opioid and heroin, three times as many people as we lost in traffic accidents. So many communities will continue to be ravaged because we are not willing to commit the resources to tackle this pandemic.

What do we tell the families of those people who have overdosed? What do we tell the parents of young people such as Courtney Griffin, whose father came and testified at a hearing Senator AYOTTE and I had last fall in New Hampshire. He talked about the difficulties of getting Courtney treatment before she overdosed and died.

I met a man at a treatment center in Lebanon, NH, a man in recovery who had been in and out of prison. I thought he put it very well when he said: You know, it costs about $35,000 a year to keep somebody in prison. Wouldn't it make more sense to put dollars into treatment because it is a whole lot less expensive to provide the funding to

treat people who are using opioids and heroin, who are substance abusers, than to put them in jail?

To all of my colleagues, I am disappointed, but I am not defeated. The fact is, this is coming back. It will come back in the appropriations process, and it will come back at every opportunity because I am not going to quit on those families in New Hampshire who need help. I am not going to quit on the treatment professionals who are trying to provide treatment for the people who are in need. I am not going to quit on the law enforcement, the police officers, the sheriffs, and all of the people in law enforcement in New Hampshire who are trying to put pushers behind bars and trying to get people off the streets and into treatment.

I hope at some point the rest of the Members of this body are willing to take up this cause and provide the resources people need because I will tell you it is certainly worth it to address the 47,000 people we lost. We were willing to put $5.4 billion into Ebola, and we lost one person in America. We were willing to put $2 billion into fighting swine flu, and we lost about 12,000 people in the swine flu epidemic. We have not been willing to put funding in to address the thousands, the tens of thousands of people we are losing each year in this country.

So we are going to keep at it. We are going to keep fighting until we get the resources that families and communities need to fight this scourge.

I yield to my colleague from Maine, who has been—like my colleague from Rhode Island—a real leader in trying to address this issue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I rise in disappointment, surprise, and some confusion that we have this bill. We spent a week—I went to the Judiciary Committee. The bill came out of the committee unanimously. There is tremendous interest in this subject. When I have talked about it at home, I have said to my people in Maine, this is something we are going to be able to do because every Member of this body is being affected by this tragedy that is engulfing our country. This is something we are going to be able to do together and indeed we have done a lot together. We have a good bill. We have passed some good amendments. One of the President's amendments was in the bill that we passed this afternoon. This is important work, but it has to be funded—the old saying in Maine, and I suspect everywhere else, put your money where your mouth is.

I was on a teleconference with some folks in Maine just 2 hours ago talking about this, and one of the chiefs of police said: It is time to move from talking about being interested in this to investing in it. We cannot solve this problem without money. It would be nice if we could. There is a drastic and dramatic shortage of treatment facilities in this country, and the only way we are going to be able to do it is to pay for it.

We had a point of order on the budget. I have to tell you I am confused because I stood here less than 3 months ago when we passed the budget bill and $680 billion of tax extenders. Where was the point of order then? It wasn't funded. A dime of it wasn't funded. Maybe there was a point of order, but it was rejected and overwritten so fast that none of us noticed it. It was the speed of light.

My mother used to say we strain at gnats and swallow camels. We swallowed $680 billion of entirely unfunded tax extenders, and we cannot solve it and bring it into our hearts to save lives for one one-thousandth of that amount, $500 million—one one-thousandth of the amount that we passed in a matter of minutes last December. I am confused by this. I don't understand it.

By the way, 47,000 people, that sounds like a lot, but this is what really sounds like a lot. Since this debate started at 2 o'clock this afternoon, 10 people have died; 10 people have died in the last 2 hours; 47,000 people is 5 people every hour, 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year. We are not talking about abstractions here, we are talking about people's lives. We are talking about what I consider one of the most serious problems I have ever seen in my State. We talk about Ebola. We talk about ISIS. We talk about all of these challenges we have. Yet this is something that is killing five people an hour, and we are not willing to put the funds in to do it. It is a false promise.

I believe this bill is going to do a lot of good, but it is not going to meet the promise we are making to the American people by all of this drama this week about drug abuse and that we are going to do something about it. We are not going to do enough about it because in order to deal with this problem—and this is true everywhere—it is going to take money to provide treatment for people who need it.

As I talked about this morning, the tragedy is when someone is ready to change their life and ready to try to defeat this awful disease—and they cannot find any place to give them treatment. I was at a detox center in Portland just last week. They are turning away 100 people a month from a detox center—not even a treatment center but a detox center—because they do not have the beds.

I am delighted we are working on this bill. I am delighted we are passing it. I think there is a lot of good in it, and it is, in fact, a bipartisan bill. But to venture up to the edge of this problem and then step away because we are not willing to pay for what, in my mind, is one of the most serious emergencies we have faced since I have been in public life is disappointing, surprising, and it is a great missed opportunity for the country.

I join my colleagues in regretting the decision that was just made. I think it was an opportunity where we could have spoken as one to realistically attack this scourge that is devastating our people. We are losing lives, we are squandering treasure, and we are breaking hearts. The only way we are going to be able to solve this problem or at least make a dent in it is to provide the wherewithal to the programs throughout the country that are struggling manfully and mightily to confront the problem and defeat it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Nevada for yielding to me to speak for a moment in response to the comments made by my colleagues about the legislation before us, which is legislation to address the horrible problem we have in all our States of the addictions caused by heroin and prescription drugs. About 100 people will die today from overdoses, and that is just the tip of the iceberg because there are so many other people whose lives are being ruined, families being torn apart, and communities being devastated.

Senator WHITEHOUSE, other Members of this body, and I drafted this legislation over the period of the last few years, including five summits we had in this Congress to bring in experts from all over the country on prevention, education, treatment, and recovery—dealing with the law enforcement side and the importance of having Narcan available and also helping to get prescription drugs off bathroom shelves and ensure we had drug-monitoring programs. It is a comprehensive approach.

I will say I disagree a little with my coauthor, my colleague from Rhode Island, in saying that if we could pass this bill, there would be no funding for it somehow. There was a huge increase in funding, as everyone knows, at the end of the year for opioids. Senator WHITEHOUSE, others, and I approached the appropriators and asked them to be sure that funding was consistent with where we were on CARA at that time—in the middle of the Judiciary Committee. When we had some jurisdictional issues, we worked hard to draft the legislation so that if we could get it enacted this fiscal year—that is between now and September 30—there would be funding to help us accomplish what is in the legislation.

However, as my colleagues know, this bill is an authorization bill. What does that mean? It means it is a bill that directs how funding will be spent. It is not a spending bill.

Having said all that, as Senator SHAHEEN knows, I supported her efforts to add additional resources over and above what could be spent this year on CARA because I believe this is such an urgent problem, and I believe it does rise to the level of being an emergency. That is saying a lot. I am a fiscal conservative. But that means it is not paid for by offsetting other programs. It is

just additional funding because it is such an urgent need.

We have done this on other occasions with health care emergencies when we have had something like the Ebola crisis. Well, I think this is a crisis too, so I voted with Senator SHAHEEN today. I am a cosponsor of her amendment. I support it, but I don't support the efforts of some who say somehow there is no money in here. This is an authorization bill. This is the first step toward getting the money, not just this year but into the future. That is the point.

Back in the House, I was the author of the Drug-Free Communities Act. Some 19 years later, $1.3 billion has been spent in support of the Drug-Free Communities Act, helping to create over 2,000 community coalitions, including in just about every State represented in this body. Was that a spending bill? No. It was like this—an authorization bill to direct the spending based on a lot of research and effort, evidence-based practices we know would work. That is what this is. This is taking it to the next level.

Specifically directed to the points my good friend from Maine just mentioned about treatment centers being filled and detox centers not having room for someone to go to get the detox and then get into treatment, these are real problems in our communities now. That is what this legislation is meant to address, not just by appropriations for 1 year but by changing the law for the future.

If we do this, and do it right, in another 19 years in this legislation, we will spend even more than we spent on the Drug-Free Communities Act. It will be well over $2 billion that will have been spent that would otherwise not have gone out because of this legislation. So just as Senator WHITEHOUSE said that he strongly supports this bill because it is evidence based, because we spent the right time putting the effort into making sure it would be money well spent, this bill is really important.

I appreciate the support of my colleagues—Senators SHAHEEN, KING, and WHITEHOUSE. Senator WHITEHOUSE and I have been at this for a few years together. It is the right thing to do for our country at a time when we do face a crisis.

Again, I will support the additional spending because I think this is so critical. But let's not go forward with this sense that somehow this doesn't matter. This does matter in a very big way. This is a necessary first step. And in terms of this year, because we increased funding dramatically at the end of the year for this fiscal year—not one penny of that has been outlaid, by the way; it has been appropriated but there has been no outlay yet—I believe anything we could get done this year—getting it through the House, getting it through the Senate, and the President signing it—would be funding we could use for these important CARA programs just in the 7 months of this fiscal year.

Certainly we should right now—as I have done and I know Senator WHITEHOUSE is doing and others are doing—go to the Committee on Appropriations and say: With regard to next fiscal year, let's be sure that we have the entire bill funded. And again, I would support even additional funding beyond that. But at a minimum, let's get this done. This is an opportunity on a bipartisan basis to actually get something done to help people who are crying out for our help. Communities need our help. Families that are being broken apart need our help.

I appreciate the fact Senator SHAHEEN made her best effort today. She was right, in my view, but let's also continue to work together to get this legislation passed with whatever funding we can add to it. That is great with me, but let's get this bill passed to ensure that going into the future we are directing this funding effectively and increasing this funding to help those who need it most.

Again, I appreciate my colleague from Nevada, and I am sorry to take so much of his time.

I yield the floor.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, if I can have 1 minute before the Senator departs.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I thank the Chair.

I would like to end this conversation on a happy note, after what I consider to be a very unhappy vote, and that is to express my appreciation to Senator PORTMAN for his collegiality and his work over many years to get this bill to where it is now in the Senate. I express my appreciation to him for voting for the amendment of Senator SHAHEEN. I express my appreciation to him for publicly pledging to work as hard as we can together to get funding for this bill into the appropriations process that is underway right now.

I look forward to working with him on all those endeavors. I do believe that we missed a big opportunity, because Senator SHAHEEN's bill, had it passed, would have flooded a lot more money, a lot faster, into the solution of this problem.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle on this particular piece of legislation. I know there is a lot of passion behind this, and there should be, and I do believe at the end of the day there will be an appropriate authorization and spending level so we can get this bill passed, which is something I support.

I also want to thank Chairman GRASSLEY, Ranking Member LEAHY, and all those who have been involved in this particular topic of bringing opioid abuse to the forefront. Opioid abuse is an issue every Member of the Senate hears about when they go home. For many Nevadans, substance abuse is an issue that hits close. It is an issue I read about in constituents' letters and hear in far too many calls that come in to my office on this issue.

Like many of my colleagues, I have heard from those who are struggling with addiction or who have lost a loved one to this epidemic. In my home State of Nevada, there were 545 drug overdose deaths in 2014 alone. I have heard countless stories from young Nevadans who have experienced addiction themselves or seen their friends slip into this scary spiral of abuse.

I recently met a young man from Reno who was advocating on behalf of multiple friends whom he had lost to heroin overdose. He said it started with experimenting with leftover painkillers in his friend's parents' medicine cabinet. Eventually, the pills were gone, and the group of friends started experimenting with harder and cheaper drugs. Some of their friends fell into the juvenile court system after being caught with illegal drugs.

Unfortunately, the court system wasn't equipped to adequately treat their addiction. They slipped back into their old habits, and the young man from Reno has now gone to multiple funerals.

I am glad he had the courage to tell his friends' stories. Opioid abuse and addiction has stolen the lives of far too many Nevadans, and it is time we do something about it.

I know my colleagues also hear the same stories in their offices on a daily basis. In 2014, opioids were involved in almost 30,000 American deaths. That means more Americans now die each year from drug overdoses than they do from car crashes.

The unfortunate reality of opioid abuse has become a major public health concern, and something needs to be done. We know this epidemic hits all ages, all socioeconomic levels, all races, and all genders.

Opioid use often starts with treating legitimate pain needs. There are two groups of Nevadans that are extremely important, and I have focused my efforts today on these two very important populations: our veterans and our seniors.

First, I have two amendments that improve access to treatment for our Nation's veterans. My first amendment, Heller amendment No. 3346, would include veterans service organizations in the Pain Management Best Practices Interagency Task Force. Giving VSOs a seat at the table on this task force will help us better understand the unique circumstances our Nation's veterans face that drive them to use opioids in the first place.

My second amendment, Heller amendment No. 3351, would allow veterans nonprofit organizations to be eligible for grants from the Building Communities of Recovery program. The Building Communities of Recovery program is designed to pool community resources to help those affected by

opioid abuse seek the proper treatment to recover from these highly addictive pain medications and avoid slipping into a cycle of chronic drug abuse.

Including veterans nonprofit organizations in this grant program will allow places like Veterans Village in Las Vegas to access more resources to treat the servicemen and -women in our State. As a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I am concerned about how opioid abuse impacts America's heroes. Some of these veterans are in severe pain due to the injuries they sustained during service to our Nation, and numerous veterans have reached out to my office for help when the VA's policies are negatively impacting them.

As we debate the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, it is critical for Congress to ensure VSOs have a voice. These organizations understand the unique challenges veterans face with opioids and how to resolve these issues. That is why I have filed two amendments to allow this important stakeholder to come to the table and help reduce opioid abuse.

I encourage my colleagues to accept these amendments, and I would like to continue to work with the bill managers as we find a path forward on them.

The senior population is another group of Nevadans that face unique circumstances on how they become dependent on opioids. They are prescribed opioids to cope with chronic pain and discomfort after surgery and, obviously, rightfully so. In fact, about 40 percent of Nevada's seniors are on some type of opioid, but opioids have qualities that make them highly addictive and prone to abuse.

Pain is a highly complex issue, and there are many barriers to pain management. Just recently I had a constituent reach out to my office because they were being denied access to a lifesaving opioid pain medication for a very rare and serious condition. Fortunately, we were able to help resolve the situation, but it was disappointing that this Nevadan had to go to such extremes to receive the treatment they deserved.

No doubt Congress should play a role in addressing opioid addiction and this epidemic, and I think there are ways to accomplish this goal while ensuring that seniors in Nevada and throughout the United States continue to receive the care they need. One of those ways is to permanently repeal the Medicare caps on therapy services. Right now, current law places an annual per-beneficiary payment limit of $1,880 for all outpatient therapy services.

I firmly believe that if patients had better access to physical therapy, they would not be as dependent on highly addictive pain medication. Seniors would also have a higher quality of life by treating the sources of the pain and rebuilding their strength. With proper access to care, seniors will be able to enjoy a happy and healthy retirement rather than cope with the pain through highly addictive medication that only masks their discomfort.

Senator CARDIN and I have been working on a responsible alternative to the Medicare's therapy cap. I believe more work needs to be done to ensure that these proposals will solve the problem and ensure that these seniors have access to the therapies and treatments they need.

Right now, the cap has been lifted until March of 2017. We have until early next year to come up with a permanent solution to the therapy cap issue, and I have no doubt that Senator CARDIN and I will be able to deliver results for seniors across this country.

The American people want us to put partisan politics aside and come up with solutions to the problems we see every day. CARA is an example that Congress can, and should, come together to solve these problems. The epidemic of opioid abuse has reached a serious point in our debate. I believe the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act is a step in the right direction.

I encourage my colleagues to pass this important legislation, and I am hopeful that we can do it this week, showing Nevadans and all Americans that we are serious about addressing this problem.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the Supreme Court vacancy for the second time on the floor, but I did want to thank the cosponsors of our bill, Senator PORTMAN, Senator WHITEHOUSE, and Senator AYOTTE, and also Senator SHAHEEN for her strong amendment that I think would have made such a difference if we could get some immediate emergency funding.

As we know, there are other important provisions in this bill, especially the work I am focused on with prescription drug monitoring, the simple idea that when I talk to doctors, they are never sure if this is someone who is actually abusing the system. They want to do well. They have been trained to do well to get people out of pain. But so often there is not a lot of monitoring about what is going on. And this is going to help get the States to start doing their work. I again thank Senators WHITEHOUSE, PORTMAN, AYOTTE, and SHAHEEN for their work on this bill.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. President, I come today to talk about the Supreme Court.

Last Wednesday, I led a meeting of the steering and outreach committee on the Supreme Court and the Senate's constitutional responsibilities. We had the opportunity at that meeting to hear from four distinguished law professors on the constitutional implications of the current vacancy and to put some historical and constitutional context about the choice before us. I would like to share some of the insights with my colleagues.

First of all, Jamal Greene, a professor of law at Columbia Law School, looked to the original intent of the Framers of the Constitution, noting that ''the Framers did not contemplate the use of the Senate's advice and consent power solely to run out the clock on a presidential appointment. As [Alexander] Hamilton speculated in Federalist 76, rejection of a nominee 'could only be to make place for another nomination by [the President].' ''

The critical point made by Professor Greene, which was echoed by the rest of the panel, is that inaction is not an appropriate response when the Constitution says that the President shall nominate and that the Senate has a duty to advise and consent. In fact, Professor Gerhardt from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill noted that the only time Members truly abandoned their constitutional duties and left this position open was during the Civil War. Think about that. Senators before us in this great Chamber—even before we had this Chamber, when they were meeting in other places. We have been through World War I, we have been through World War II, we have been through the Vietnam war, we have been through civil rights tumult, and always the position was filled and not left vacant for that year time period. We have to go back to the Civil War.

Another common theme we heard from all of the panelists is that the proposed inaction by our colleagues on the other side of the aisle is without precedent in our Nation's history. In the last 135 years, no President has been refused a vote on a nominee for an open seat on the Court. The Senate has confirmed more than a dozen Supreme Court Justices in Presidential election years, including five in the last 100 years. So it is not as if we have to go way back in time; five of them were in the last 100 years. Probably the most oft-cited example is the example of President Reagan nominating Justice Kennedy in his last few years in the White House. He nominated Justice Kennedy, and a Democratic Senate confirmed—not just confirmed but confirmed unanimously.

Another member of the panel was Professor Jeff Stone. He is a professor at the University of Chicago Law School—actually, my professor, my evidence professor. I always enjoy asking my professors questions now that I am a Senator as opposed to when they used to ask questions of me. He was, of course, a former colleague of Justice Scalia's. In fact, when Justice Scalia left the University of Chicago to be appointed to the bench, he actually gave his papers and all of his notes to Professor Stone. While they had some different political views, without a doubt, he had admiration for Professor Stone and Professor Stone had admiration for Justice Scalia, as he has written about since his death.

After reviewing the history of Supreme Court nominations, Professor Stone concluded:

> Despite all the fuss and fury over the Supreme Court confirmation process, the plain and simple fact is that the Senate always defers to the president as long as the president puts forth nominees who are clearly qualified and who are reasonably moderate in their views. And this is true even when the Senate is controlled by the opposing party. In short, nominees who are both qualified and moderate are confirmed. Period.

I think he was using as an example—we know there have been nominees who have been turned down by the Senate in past, including in the recent past, but the point is, they got a hearing and they got an up-or-down vote. There are cases where people withdrew their names. There are cases where the up-or-down vote was not in their favor. But they always were moved forward.

Although we have been accustomed to a certain level of partisanship in Congress, Professor Stone pointed out that the nomination process for Supreme Court Justices has remained in large part a bipartisan process. Again, people may vote differently, but as a member of the Judiciary Committee and a relatively new member in confirmation processes for both Justice Kagan and Justice Sotomayor, those hearings were very civil. At the time, Senator SESSIONS was the ranking member and Senator LEAHY was the chair. At those hearings, people asked the questions they wanted to. They went on for a number of days. Then we had a final vote, and then we came to the Senate and all was done. As we know, among the Justices currently serving, the longest time from the nomination to the confirmation was actually 99 days; that was Justice Thomas.

So we have always had a process that has worked. And while the result has, sadly, become more partisan—although there have been a number of Republicans who voted for the recent nominees, it has been more partisan over time. When we look at the unanimous vote Justice Kennedy got, the process itself worked, and that is very important to the functioning of the Senate.

The fact is, we may have a very difficult atmosphere around us politically and sometimes right here in this Chamber, but we have tried to keep our dignity and move forward with our processes, and we find ways to work together and we treat each other with respect. For me, that is a lot about what this is about, this process for a nominee. Yes, it is about what the Constitution says. Yes, it is about respecting history. Yes, it is about not leaving a vacancy on the third pillar of our government when, in fact, our only job as Senators is not to determine what happens in those cases or what the individual decisions are, but it is to fund that Court and make sure that vacancies are filled in our advice and consent function. But it often goes beyond all of that for me. It is about how we function as a body, that we keep to our processes, that we move legislation, that we move nominees, and that we respect our traditions, we respect the Senate, and we respect each other.

Looking beyond the constitutional duties of the Senate and the historical precedent of the Senate considering Supreme Court nominees, we have had the opportunity to hear from our panel, as I mentioned, as well as from a number of others, about the importance of filling a vacancy on the Supreme Court.

Professor Greene, whom I mentioned before, and others noted that this inaction could leave the Court for two full terms without the ability to resolve closely contested cases. They don't get the easy cases on the Supreme Court. That is not why they are there. That is not why they are called the Supreme Court. They get the tough cases. They get the cases in the gray area. When the lower courts are in disagreement and can't figure out what to do, they are the decisionmaker.

Professor Greene went on to say in our panel: ''The Supreme Court has multiple responsibilities, but one of its main, core functions is to resolve those disagreements [among the lower courts], and [this vacancy] leaves the law in a state of uncertainty.''

The people of this country have enough uncertainty to deal with. Of course, because of our democratic functions, we do not know who our next President will be. There is a lot of blame and a lot of finger-pointing going on throughout our political system right now. There is a lot of uncertainty. There is uncertainty with the way our laws have worked. But one of our jobs is to put some certainty in people's lives. We did that with the budget at the end of last year. We did that with the Transportation bill last year. We did that with a number of pieces of legislation that were passed on a bipartisan basis. Now it is our job to not leave the entire legal system in a state of uncertainty.

Former Justice Sandra Day O'Connor has also spoken out. When asked about Republicans seeking to wait a year until considering a nominee, she said: ''I don't agree. I think we need somebody there to do the job now and let's get on with it.''

In fact, former President Ronald Reagan, who nominated Justice O'Connor to the Supreme Court, said in 1987: ''Every day that passes with a Supreme Court below full strength impairs the people's business in that crucially important body.''

He made that statement around the same time he nominated Justice Kennedy, who was confirmed, as I noted, unanimously by a Senate controlled by the opposite party in the last year of a Presidency. That is our closest and most recent example—confirmed in the last year of the Reagan Presidency by a Democratic Senate, with a Republican President.

We now have a Democratic President who is not running for President again—he can't—who is in the last year of his Presidency, with a Republican Senate.

The critical importance of filling this seat is clear, and it is not something we can wait on for over a year. Not since the Civil War have we had a vacancy for over a year. And, may I add, there is plenty of time for the Senate to consider and confirm the nominee. Is it convenient? No, it is not convenient. There is a lot going on. It is an election year. Things happen. Unexpectedly, Justice Scalia died. And many people who knew him well, such as my law professor in Chicago, miss him. But he died, and that triggered a duty on the part of the President and on our part.

The Senate has taken an average of only 67 days—about 2 months—from the date of the nomination to the confirmation vote since 1975. This means that if the President offers a nomination this month, that nominee should receive a vote in the Senate by Memorial Day. If for some reason that doesn't happen and the hearings take longer than we think, I would put one other day forth: We could finish this by the Fourth of July. For those who love the Constitution, that is certainly a good holiday and end date.

Looking at the text of the Constitution, the precedent of the Senate, and the importance of the circumstances, the matter is clear: It is the duty of the Senate to thoughtfully consider the President's nominee to the Supreme Court, and anything less than that disregards our oaths of office.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I wish to associate my remarks with the Senator from Minnesota and just say that what the Constitution says is so clear. It says that the President shall—not may—it says shall nominate and then the Senate will advise and consent. That is clear. The President is going to nominate. So are we going to wait around for a whole year without giving our advice and/or consent? In other words, just do your job. So I thank the Senator for her comments.

TAKATA AIRBAGS

Mr. President, I have a very touchy subject to talk about again—the ongoing Takata airbag fiasco. It is now a recall fiasco. To this point, some 26 million of these airbags that are in the center of the steering column that we drive around with right in front of us or in front of the passenger's seat or on the sides, side airbags—some 26 million of them have already been recalled.

A little over a week ago, I spoke about this continuing customer confusion over this recall fiasco. For the sake of the safety of our American consumers who happen to be drivers in these vehicles with these Takata airbags, we need to end this confusion. I think the process has to begin with having the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, or NHTSA,

take a hard look at whether they need to start the process of recalling all Takata airbags with ammonium nitrate-based inflaters.

Ammonium nitrate seems to be the problem. It is a chemical compound that is ignited when you have a collision. Within less than a second, it inflates with gases. This is the airbag that is supposed to save our lives. But what is supposed to save lives has been killing lives because the explosive force is so great that it starts to shred the metal housing. That is sending pieces of shrapnel right into the driver or into the passenger.

Last week, I showed the Senate one of these airbags, and then I showed them a piece of metal that became, in effect, shrapnel, like a grenade, only this piece was that big and it had killed a lady in Orlando, FL. As a matter of fact, when the police got to the intersection where she had a collision and the airbag deployed and they got there and found her in the car, they thought it was a murder because her neck had been slashed. But, in fact, it was this airbag, exploding with such force that it shredded the metal. In this case, it was a piece that big.

On February 10, I sent a letter to the NHTSA Administrator, Mark Rosekind, asking him to do two things. First, I asked him to use his authority to phase out the production of the new Takata ammonium nitrate-based airbag inflaters as soon as possible. With all that we know about these things, this ammonium nitrate should not be used as replacement for the old Takata inflaters, and it certainly shouldn't be used in the new cars that are produced and sold to consumers.

Second, in this letter, I asked him to seriously consider a total recall of all Takata ammonium nitrate-based inflaters that are currently in vehicles. My goodness, that is a big number. That is potentially another 90 million units in this country alone. That could be as much as 260 million worldwide. But with all the manipulation of data and the serious safety lapses that our staff on the Senate Commerce Committee has detailed in two separate reports, I think it is something that we should seriously look at. Potentially, it is a big number of recalls of this ammonium nitrate-based inflater that is currently in vehicles.

I want to say that I supported Administrator Rosekind's nomination, and I think he has done a number of things to try to improve NHTSA. But I was not too pleased with his written response to my letter that I received from him on February 26, just a few days ago. In my letter, I asked him to provide me with the total number of inflaters that Takata could supply under existing contracts with automakers. He didn't supply that.

Will Takata continue to produce millions of these things? We don't know. We don't know the answer.

Are consumers today basically getting a newer version of the old version that has been so defective? No answer to that either. In other words, are we going to replace an old live grenade with a new live grenade?

In the letter, I also asked the Administrator to consider an accelerated phaseout of the production of new Takata ammonium nitrate-based inflaters. In his letter, he declined.

As to the request for NHTSA to look at a larger recall of Takata ammonium nitrate-based airbags, Administrator Rosekind declined to call for a larger recall. He based that statement on the fact that most of the Takata airbags that have not been recalled contain something called desiccant, which removes the moisture and is supposed to stabilize the ammonium nitrate in the inflaters.

That desiccant is there because moisture is considered to be the culprit that causes the ammonium nitrate to be defective in its explosion. So desiccant is supposed to remove that moisture, and it is supposed to stabilize the ammonium nitrate.

The exact quote in his letter is this: ''In fact, to date, NHTSA is unaware of any inflator rupture, in testing or in the field, of a Takata inflator using chemical desiccant to counteract the effects of moisture.''

He says that NHTSA is unaware of any inflater rupture using the chemical desiccant.

That statement is not true. On October 15 of last year, General Motors recalled about 400 vehicles for Takata side airbags with the chemical desiccant. Fortunately, in that testing, nobody was injured. But that wasn't correct information given to the Commerce Committee, and NHTSA finally admitted their error to our staff on Monday of this week.

Why didn't NHTSA seem to know about it beforehand? This really raises serious questions when a regulator doesn't even seem to know about its own data. NHTSA had that data. As a result, it continues to raise questions about who is really in control of this recall. Is it who ought to be, NHTSA, or is it the manufacturer of the defective airbag, Takata?

Deaths and serious injuries have occurred as a result of these defective airbags. They have been in Florida, but they have been in many other places. The last one was in the Carolinas in December, and a Ford driver is dead as a result of it.

I can tell you that this Senator and many of the members of the Senate Commerce Committee are not going to sit quietly and wait for this to get sorted out in good time. Lives are at stake. We are going to keep pushing until all consumers who have vehicles with Takata airbags get answers and get help.

I wish I didn't have to bring this to the Senate floor, but in the safety and sake of consumers we have to.

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

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

WHOLE WOMAN'S HEALTH V. HELLERSTEDT

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I rise to speak on the Texas case that was heard by the U.S. Supreme Court, Whole Woman's Health. This morning, I joined hundreds of pro-choice advocates on the steps of the Supreme Court in advance of the oral arguments. They came from all parts of the country with signs such as ''Don't mess with access'' and ''Respect my fundamental human dignity.''

The lead-up to this case was a Texas law, HB2, which imposes unnecessary medical requirements on the State's clinics that provide abortion services.

According to the American Medical Association and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, these requirements are not necessary to protect the health of women seeking these services. Rather, these onerous restrictions, known as targeted regulation of abortion providers, or TRAP laws, have only one purpose—to deny abortion services to women.

Three-quarters of clinics in Texas will close if this law is upheld, leaving nearly a million women without adequate access to reproductive services. By making the false claim that restrictions like those passed in Texas will actually protect women's health, opponents of abortion hope to conceal their true agenda, which is putting an end to abortion and women's reproductive choices.

The Texas law is just one more example of a litany of legislation and other attempts to limit a woman's constitutionally protected right to choose. Attacks on reproductive rights, such as misleading undercover videos, violence at clinics, and numerous attempts in Congress to roll back progress on women's health care continued in 2015.

Since Roe v. Wade was decided, State legislatures have passed hundreds of laws to chip away at a woman's right to choose. In the last 4 years alone, States have passed 231 anti-choice laws. Among the most invasive are those requiring ultrasounds of women seeking abortion care, and some of the most ill-conceived laws require providers to give medically unsound information to scare women seeking abortion care. Laws that are not based on medical science and opposed by medical practitioners do not protect a woman's health. No matter how loudly or how often these arguments—or these claims—are repeated, they are lies. Lies repeated do not become truths.

While these restrictive laws impact all women, they impact minority and lower income women most. For example, the Texas law will result in the closure of more and more provider clinics. Women in Texas will have to travel farther and farther to get to open clinics. Women who have limited resources

to travel for needed services or cannot afford to take time from work to travel these long distances are the most negatively impacted by TRAP laws.

Why do women need to be protected from being able to access the reproductive services they need and choose? Fundamentally, what is the point of a constitutional right if one is unable to exercise that right? I cannot think of any other constitutionally protected right that has seen so many restrictions placed upon it, except perhaps the right to vote, but that is a subject for another speech.

It is more than ironic that while many of our anti-choice colleagues vehemently speak out in support of constitutional rights, when it comes to women's bodies and reproductive choice, they are all too willing to set aside their constitutional principles to invade those fundamental rights. Neither Congress nor the States have a right to do that.

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. ISAKSON. 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. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate as in morning business.

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

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I am not a lawyer. I am a politician. I was a businessman before I was elected to the Senate. I watched with interest the debates since the death of Antonin Scalia about what the Senate and country should do in terms of filling its vacancy, in terms of its timing.

The Constitution tells us what to do. The Constitution tells us that the President shall make an appointment, or a nomination, to fill that vacancy and the Senate shall offer its advice and consent. There is no deadline or trigger date. There are no other rules or guidelines.

There have been a lot of historic debates on both sides of the aisle over whether or not a nomination for a Supreme Court justice should be named in the last year of a Presidency. Interestingly enough, if you read the history, sometimes it is the Republicans saying they shouldn't do it and sometimes it is the Democrats. In fact, if you really go back and look, we have all said the same thing. It would just depend on whose ox was getting gored in the politics of a particular day.

I love JOE BIDEN. He is a personal friend of mine and a great Vice President of the United States. I served with him in the Senate and on the Foreign Relations Committee, which the Presiding Officer serves on today.

I did a little research on what JOE had to say because I appreciate his wisdom. In the last year of the Bush administration—H. W. Bush—in 1992 on June 25, then-Senator BIDEN made two statements, and I would like to share those statements. The first is the following:

> [I]t would be our pragmatic conclusion that once the political season is under way, and it is, action on a Supreme Court nomination must be put off until after the election campaign is over. That is what is fair to the nominee and is central to the process. Otherwise, it seems to me, we will be in deep trouble as an institution.

Let's take that quote and apply it to the current contemporary time we are in today. We are in a politically unknown territory. Yesterday was Super Tuesday, and 15 States went to the polls. We had newcomers getting the most votes, and we had old-timers getting the most in one primary. We have women getting votes. We have men getting votes. We have conservatives and we have liberals. We don't know who our President is going to be or what party he or she will be from. But we do know that when they are elected and sworn in January of next year, they will be the President of the United States most contemporarily appointed and elected by the people of the United States of America.

The Supreme Court is the ultimate arbitrator of what the executive and legislative branches do. It is only appropriate that the Supreme Court majority, as it is cast, be made up of nine people, five of whom are in the majority, who were appointed freely and without political influence, judged for their best political and legal acumen and in the best interest of the country.

I don't think going to the current President, Mr. Obama, who is in the last year of his term, and getting him to make an appointment that will only last a few months of his last year in office is the right way to go.

I think we need to say the following: The President of the United States who is elected this November and sworn in next January will be the President of all the people most contemporarily voted by the people of America. That is the President who should make the nomination, and that is the Senate that should make the confirmation.

I urge my colleagues who argued about going ahead and moving forthrightly and quickly on filling Antonin Scalia's seat to think about this. Next year the Senate will be a new Senate. It won't be this Senate. Many of us are up for reelection. I may not be here. I don't know who will be here. I am trying. I don't know who will be here. I want to get here, but I don't know if I will be here.

We don't know who the President will be. Each of us, Republicans and Democrats, have our pick. We hope it is our President. We hope it is the man or woman we want, but we don't know that. But we do know that on the first Tuesday in November, we will elect a new President. In January, that President will be sworn in, and it will be his or her opportunity, if we wait, to make the nomination for whomever will fill Antonin Scalia's place. It will be the new Senate's place to confirm that nomination. The Senators who are elected will be the ones most recently elected to the Senate, and the President who is elected will be the most recently elected President of the United States. That is the person who should make that appointment, and that Senate should make that confirmation.

Think about this. Ronald Reagan appointed Antonin Scalia in 1986. Antonin Scalia served on the Court for 30 years until 2016. The next person appointed to take his place may serve 30 years as well. That takes us to 2046. That is a long time from now. Shouldn't we take the most contemporarily elected President to make that appointment rather than one who is going away and will be in the history books? I think it is right to allow the President who has been most recently elected to make that nomination and allow the newest Senate to make the confirmation and do what is right for the American people.

This is not a Republican or Democratic thing. I respect my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. We have all made the same statements. It would just depend on whether it was our President or the other guy's President, whether it was our Senate or the other guy's Senate.

In fact, I will close my remarks by again quoting my friend JOE BIDEN from the same speech he made on June 25, 1992. He said: ''Others may fret that this approach would leave the court with only eight members for some time, but as I see it, the cost of such a result . . . [is] quite minor compared to the cost that a nominee, the President, the Senate, and the Nation would have to pay for what would assuredly be a bitter fight, no matter how good a person is nominated by the President.''

Vice President BIDEN made that statement when he was a Senator and faced the same situation that we face today. He was smart and wise beyond his years. He said: It is best to look to the future for the appointment, the next President for the nomination, and the next Senate for the confirmation and look to the future of the of the Court, because it is the Supreme Court—many times on a vote of 5 to 4—that will decide the fate of legislative and executive action. It is only right that we have the best and most contemporarily appointed Court that we could possibly have, and the only way to do that is to make sure that the next President makes the appointment.

I underscore what I said at the beginning. It is not a Republican or Democratic thing. It is a political thing. We are all politicians and creatures to our politics. All of us have said the same thing. It would just depend on who was in charge at the time as to whether we spoke like JOE BIDEN as a Republican or spoke like JOE BIDEN as a Democrat.

I commend Antonin Scalia for being a great servant to the American people. He was a great jurist, a great writer, and a great judge. He will be missed.

Somewhere out there in America today, there is another Antonin Scalia just waiting to be nominated and confirmed by the Senate. I don't know who it is, but I know this: I want them to be found by the next President of the United States elected this November and confirmed next January by this Senate. That is the right person. That is the right way, and I submit that is the way I recommend we do it.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

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

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

WOMEN'S HEALTH PROTECTION ACT

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, earlier today I joined a number of my colleagues outside the Supreme Court to work with advocates who were gathered there, thousands of people, including many young people. Looking into their faces, I realized that for them Roe v. Wade is history, but my mind went back to 1974, the year after Roe v. Wade, when I was a law clerk to Justice Blackmun. I heard similar voices from the serene, contemplative chambers of Justice Blackmun and thought then—in fact all of us thought then—that Roe v. Wade would settle for all time, at least for the next decades, the reproductive rights of women in the United States of America, and we were wrong. We were wrong that the law would be settled, that rights would be protected, that Roe would be accepted, and that privacy would become enshrined as a matter of constitutional law or at least accepted politically. We were wrong.

Today, in a historic case, the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments on a challenge to the basic fundamental right of privacy with practical implications that will alter the lives of women in Texas, where the case rose, and throughout the country.

I know firsthand from my experience as a law clerk, but even more so in the decades since as an advocate for reproductive rights and women's health care, as U.S. attorney, as a member of the Connecticut General Assembly, first as a member of the House and then in the State Senate, and as our State attorney general, working and fighting to enshrine in State law the rights protected by Roe v. Wade and then protect them from physical threat and intrusion at the clinics where those rights were made real.

Those rights mean nothing if they are unprotected. If women need to travel hundreds of miles, if women need to leave their jobs and their children for days, if women have no access to those rights, they are unreal for them. That is the net fact of the law that is underchallenged in the case before the U.S. Supreme Court, Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt. That law, HB2, in effect, so restricts the availability of reproductive rights in practical, real terms as to place an insurmountable burden for many women on the exercise of those rights. Those rights are prevented from being real for them, for countless others, and they will be put out of reach for countless women across the country if this law is not struck down.

That is what we are asking the Supreme Court to do: to strike down this law that under the pretense of protecting women's health, imposes restrictions that deny rights, rights to privacy that are basic to the human condition. They are constitutional rights, but nothing is more basic than the right to control your own body. Nothing is more essential than protection of rights to decide when to have a child. These issues of control over one's body involve control over one's faith, rights of privacy, and power to make basic life decisions.

That is what it means to have a right to privacy. It is the right to be left alone—as one of our Supreme Court Justices said, the right to be left alone from unwarranted and unnecessary government intrusion. The Supreme Court will have to make a judgment about whether the burden placed on that right is justified by this supposed protection of women's health.

Anybody familiar with this case knows that supposed reason for these laws that require many privileges for doctors or particular widths of hallways in clinics is a ruse, a pretense, in fact, a falsehood.

My view is the outcome should be clear in this deliberative battle before the Court, but the ramifications, the practical impacts, are severe for those women in Texas who would have no access to reproductive health care, and for women around the country because the simple stark fact is, since 2011, State legislatures have enacted 288 laws like the one in Texas, designed to restrict access to reproductive rights. We are not talking about a situation limited to Texas. In State after State, legislature after legislature, these rights would be restricted by similar laws.

That is the reason I have introduced the Women's Health Protection Act, to stop this invasion—it is truly an invasion—of women's reproductive rights. The measure I have introduced would, in effect, strike down such measures, prevent them, so as to reduce, and hopefully even eliminate, the cost and the time required for litigation challenging them in State after State, like what happened in Texas where women have been denied the certain assurance, the basic security of knowing that this care will be available to them, because of the continuing litigation, the costs of lawsuits, and the time-consuming contention and controversy that arises from it.

The arbitrary and arcane restrictions imposed by the Texas law concerning admitting privilege requirements and building specifications are unrelated to health and safety and clearly create an undue burden on women's right to choose. That is the legal principle, the core tenant that needs to be upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court.

I joined with a number of my colleagues, and in fact led the amicus brief to the Supreme Court, which urges them to reach the right result and strike down this law. My hope is that the outcome will not only be right for Texas and the women of Texas—and the people of Texas because the right of privacy is not guaranteed only to women, it is to men, and the decisions that women make affect families and children as well as their spouses. I hope the Supreme Court finally does what Roe v. Wade was thought to do in clear, bright-line text that will prevent States from intruding with these pretense, ruse laws, supposedly protecting health when, in fact, all they do is restrict the right to privacy.

I am proud to join with my colleagues in fighting these attacks on women's health care. But I hope that the clerks, as I once was, in the Supreme Court will look from those windows today and think to themselves that this case will, in fact, finally settle these issues, finally give women the assurance and security they need.

There is no need to keep returning and relitigating these issues. There is no need for this body to consume time and energy on defunding Planned Parenthood. There is no need for these kinds of repeated battles over rights that should be secure and unchallengeable in 21st Century America. Rehashing this fight simply costs us in time and other precious commodities that we should be spending on jobs, economic progress, veterans, national security, investment in infrastructure, investment in our human capital, and college affordability. All of the present issues—those and others of this day—are what should occupy us on this floor and occupy the country as we move forward, hopefully guaranteeing that the rights in Roe will be real for every American woman.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

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

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak in support of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2015, which is bipartisan, I might

add, and to discuss several amendments that I have submitted.

Mr. President, our country is facing a prescription drug epidemic, and today is a good step toward addressing this crisis. This is a crisis I have been dealing with since my days as Governor of the great State of West Virginia. Opioid abuse is ravaging my State of West Virginia and many other States. I know the Presiding Officer has the same problem in Utah. Our State has been hit harder than any other State in the country. Drug overdose deaths have soared more than 700 percent since 1999. We lost 627 West Virginians to opioids last year alone. Mr. President, 61,000 West Virginians used prescription pain medication for nonmedical purposes in 2014. This includes 6,000 teenagers. Our State is not unique. Every day in our country, 51 Americans die from opioid abuse. Since 1999 we have lost almost 200,000 Americans to prescription opioid abuse.

The fact that we have with the bill in front of us is simply this: It is an important first step. It will authorize $77.9 million in grant funding for prevention and recovery efforts, which we need, and expand prevention and education efforts particularly aimed at teens, parents and other caretakers, and aging populations. It will also prevent the abuse of opioids and heroin and promote treatment and recovery. It will expand the availability of naloxone to law enforcement agencies and other first responders to help in the reversal of overdoses to save lives. It will expand disposal sites for unwanted medication to keep them out of the hands of our children and adolescents. It will also launch an evidence-based opioid and heroin treatment and intervention program to expand best practices throughout the country. It will strengthen prescription drug monitoring programs to help States monitor and track prescription drug diversion.

While the bill is a good start and addresses critical problems, there is more that needs to be done. I have a few amendments I want to speak about and explain that I think will improve the bill by changing the FDA mission statement, providing grants for consumer education, and requiring prescription prescriber training.

First of all, I firmly believe we need cultural change at the FDA. That is why I submitted the Changing the Culture of the FDA Act as an amendment to this bill. This amendment would strengthen the actions that the FDA recently announced that they were committed to taking into consideration the public health impact of approving opioid medications. Mind you, what they said is that they were committed to taking it into consideration. I don't think that is much of a change, and it is definitely not a cultural change. It is a movement in the right direction, which I acknowledge. By solidifying this commitment in the agency's mission statement, we ensure that the agency oversees the approval of these dangerous drugs and cannot waiver from their stated goals.

The language in my amendment is similar to the language in the FDA's current mission statement regarding tobacco, and we all know the devastating effects of tobacco. The mission statement says simply this: ''FDA also has the responsibility for regulating the manufacturing, marketing, and distribution of tobacco products to protect the public health and to reduce tobacco use by minors.''

If we think it is that serious that we put this in the mission statement for tobacco, why can't we do it for opiates? Tobacco kills hundreds of thousands of Americans every year, and we have rightly recognized this as a public health crisis. However, opiates killed more than 18,000 people just by the end of 2014. That is 51 people every day. This, too, is a public health crisis. It is absolutely ridiculous that the FDA has treated opiates like any other drug up for approval.

To date, the agency has failed to consider the devastating public health impact of their repeated decisions to approve dangerously addictive opiates. We have seen that in their resistance to rescheduling hydrocodone, their approval of Zohydro against the advice of their own advisory committee, and their refusal to consult an advisory committee on other dangerous opioid approvals, including their decision to allow the use of OxyContin in children as young as 11 years old. Opioids are simply different from many types of drugs the FDA oversees. As I noted before, they have killed almost 200,000 people since 1999 and have ruined the lives of countless others.

The FDA must be held accountable for their actions. Like our efforts to protect the public—particularly children—from the dangers of tobacco, the U.S. Congress must take action to ensure that the FDA does, in fact, do what it has promised to do and take the devastating public health impact of opiate addiction into account when approving new drugs. It is putting it on par with tobacco, that is all. In a mission statement, one has more responsibility than just passing it through as a business plan.

My second amendment also relates to the critical role the FDA plays in addressing the opiate epidemic. It would require the FDA to seek the advice of its advisory committee before approving any new opiate medication. These are experts, scientists, people who know the makeup and composites of these chemicals and what they do to human beings. If the FDA approves a drug against the advice of the advisory committee—that means if they do not take the recommendation by their own experts and they wish to put this drug on the market—the agency would be required to submit a report to us, the people's representatives, the Congress, justifying that decision. The approval will be delayed until the report is submitted. Tell us why you won't take the advice of your experts and why you even subvert and basically pay no attention.

The FDA plays a critical role in addressing the opiate epidemic as the agency overseeing the approval of these drugs. Under the FDA's own rules, they are supposed to convene a committee of scientific experts when a matter is of significant public interest, highly controversial, or in need of a specific type of expertise. With 51 people dying every day in the country from an overdose of prescription opiates, it is clear that the approval of opiates meets every one of these standards and that the FDA should seek the counsel of its expert panel and adhere to its recommendations with regard to approving dangerously addictive opioids.

Unfortunately, this hasn't happened. It truly hasn't happened. Let me give an example. It took us 3 years just to get rescheduled from a schedule III to a Schedule II all opiates—Zohydro, Vicodin. These are the most widely prescribed opiates. It took us 3 years, which what should have been a 3-week turnaround.

The week after they even approved the taking down of these drugs from a schedule III to a schedule II, which took over 1 billion pills off the market, they came right back and they recommended a drug called Zohydro. This is a drug that their expert panel had basically advised 11 to 2 not to put on the market. They failed to seek their council's advice on the concerns with the safety of this drug.

Since that time, three new extended-release opioid medications—Targiniq, Hysingla, and Morphabond—have been approved without any advisory committee meeting at all. Let me give my reasoning on why I think this happened. There was so much pushback on Zohydro from the Governors, Senators, and Congress people for putting this high-powered drug on the market against the advice of their own council that they didn't want to go through that again, so basically they just skipped it altogether and brought these drugs right to market. They also approved OxyContin for use in children as young as 11, again without seeking the advice of a pediatric advisory committee. This is a dangerous precedent and must stop.

I am encouraged that in the FDA's recent announcement on opioid approvals, the FDA has finally agreed that the approval of these powerful drugs must be subject to an advisory committee. I am very concerned, however, that the FDA will continue to exempt abuse-deterrent opioids from this process and has not promised to abide by the advice. They said they will take it under consideration. They are not bound to take the advice of the advisory committee.

While abuse-deterrent formulations, which are harder to crush or liquify, have a role to play in reducing the impact of this epidemic, these drugs are

no less addictive than traditional opiates. In addition, in the real world, we have seen these so-called abuse-deterrent properties easily overcome. The tragic HIV outbreak we saw in Scott County, IN, last year occurred after hundreds of people in that community shared needles to shoot up Opana. They used the same needle to shoot up Opana—something that should have not been possible if it were truly abuse-deterrent.

This amendment would solidify the FDA's commitment to seek the advice of an advisory committee when approving opioid medications and would strengthen it by extending that commitment to all opioids and by holding the FDA accountable. The FDA does not listen to its own experts. This is such a reasonable request and such a reasonable amendment to protect all the people in all of our States. It is a commonsense measure that would ensure that the FDA is fully considering the public health impact and the many lives lost as a result of these dangerous opioid medications.

Another amendment I have is on mandatory prescriber education. This epidemic is one that needs to be fought on all fronts, but most importantly, we need to fight it on the frontlines with prescribers, which is precisely what my third amendment seeks to do. It requires medical practitioners, our doctors—the people we trust—it basically requires them to receive training. You would think they are getting training on this now, but they are not. There is no specific training, going through school or at any other time, on the safe prescribing of opiates prior to receiving and renewing their DEA license to prescribe a controlled substance. That is all we are saying. This training must include information on safe opioid prescribing guidelines, the risks of overprescribing opioid medication, pain management, early detection of opiate addiction, and the treatment of opiate-dependent patients. This is something only the doctors can do. These are the people writing on their prescription pads, sending them to the pharmacists, and fulfilling all of our prescriptions. We are asking for them to have that type of required training when they get their DEA license and renew their DEA license.

This must be fought on all fronts, but most importantly we need to fight it on the frontlines with the prescribers. According to the National Institutes of Health, more than 259 million prescriptions were written in 2012. Think about that—259 million prescriptions were written in 2012 just in the United States for opiate painkillers. That equals one bottle of pain pills for every adult in the United States of America. We are the most addicted country on planet Earth. With a population of less than 5 percent of us living in this great country of ours, we consume 80 percent of the opiates produced in the world. The other 6.7 billion people don't use what we use. Why? That is a 400-percent increase in the number of prescriptions since 1999. In a little over a decade, there has been a 400-percent increase, and we are pumping out more pills, thinking this is going to cure America. This is without a corresponding increase in reported pain. They are not complaining any more about pain; they are just getting more pills. But it has come with a corresponding 400-percent increase in overdose deaths. So if overdose deaths are related to the increase of pills on the market, don't you think we ought to do something about it? It is pretty simple.

I have too many stories from my constituents that they receive significantly more pain medication than they need to treat their pain, and those extra pills increase the risk of addiction for individuals and are dangerous for society if diverted. Someone can get their teeth worked on, get their teeth extracted, and they will get 30 days of pain pills when they may only need them for 1 or 2 days. It is ridiculous.

I hear from physicians themselves that they do not receive enough training. These are doctors telling us it is not in their basic education as they go through medical school—prescribing these drugs—or even after they leave medical school. There is no continuing education demanded about this. Until we ensure that every prescriber has a strong understanding of the state of opiate prescribing practices and the very great risk of opiate addiction, abuse, and overdose deaths, we will continue to see too many people prescribed these dangerous drugs which can lead them down the tragic path of addiction.

Finally, we must improve our consumer education efforts. My fourth amendment would establish consumer education grants through SAMHSA to raise awareness about the risks of opiate addiction and overdose. There are 2.1 million Americans addicted to opiates. Many of these individuals began the road to addiction with a seemingly innocent prescription and little or no warning about the danger from a physician. They weren't told they could be addicted. They weren't told they would be hooked and it would change their life forever. Or it began when a friend offered a pill that they thought couldn't be that dangerous because a doctor had given it to them: Here, I have got something that will help you. Try this.

And they get started. There is simply too little understanding about the dangers of these drugs, and too many get sucked into opioid addiction because they don't understand the risk and because the people close to them don't know how to recognize the signs of addiction or know how to access the resources to help their loved ones.

It is the silent killer. It is the one we all keep quiet—every one of us. Every one of us in America knows somebody—either in our immediate family, extended family or a close friend—who has been affected, but we say nothing. Use and abuse of prescription drugs cost the country an estimated $53.4 billion a year in lost productivity. These are people who can't function, who can't work, and are basically drawing off of their unemployment or off of their insurance.

Medical costs and criminal justice costs—you name it. You talk to any law enforcement anywhere in the United States of America and they will all tell you a minimum of 80 percent of the crimes that are reported that they have to go and serve are drug related—80 percent. So the cost is probably even higher than that.

This amendment provides $15 million a year to help prevent these costs in the first place. It makes sense. That is $15 million. OK, you are going to say: Oh, that is a lot of money.

Let me just tell say that as a society we regularly invest in efforts to prevent unnecessary deaths. We already have done that, and we continue to do that. Thirty thousand people died in car accidents in 2013, and we invested $668 million in motor vehicle safety and accident prevention. That is more than $22,000 per death that we have invested trying to prevent people from getting killed in automobile accidents, driving safely, DUI, everything. With 28,000 people dying of prescription opioid or heroin overdose in 2014, this $15 million funding represents an investment of $500 per person for a life that we could save. We spend $22,000 trying to prevent accidents in automobiles.

As to opiates, all we are asking for is a $500 investment to save their lives. We have to put our priorities where our values are, and we can do that. The grants that would be authorized under this amendment would help those on the frontlines of this terrible epidemic to provide their communities with the information they need to help stop the spread of opioid addiction and to help people seek treatment. This funding will better enable us to educate individuals about the dangers of opioid abuse.

There are practices to prevent opioid abuse, including the safe disposal of unused medication and how to detect the warnings of early addiction. I would venture to say that most people do not know how to look at their children and know that there is a chance that they may get addicted or are getting addicted. It is sometimes too late.

It will help us save lives by raising awareness about the dangers of prescription opioid medications to prevent opioid addiction in the first place and ensuring that loved ones know how to help when a friend or family member becomes addicted.

This amendment that we are asking for, this amendment that I am asking for is one that really makes sense. If we can't educate the public, then we have little chance of ever curing this epidemic.

We have had a lot of talk about the funds and how much money we are spending. We just had a final amendment that I would like to address, as there is a great need for funding to pay for substance abuse treatment.

Well, I strongly agree with my colleagues who supported Senator SHAHEEN's amendment to provide $600 million in funding, which we desperately need to support Federal programs that work to prevent opioid abuse and provide much needed treatment.

If you look at the amount of money it is costing now for incarceration, all the lost time, all of the drug-related crimes that have been committed, it would have been an investment well made, but I know there are people who believe differently.

In 2014, 42,000 West Virginians, including 4,000 youths, sought treatment for illegal drug use but failed to receive it. There was no place to get it. In your State and my State people are looking. Sometimes they are looking for this, and there is no place to put them. If you have day courts or drug courts in your State, they will tell you: We have no place to put them. There is no place to get the treatment to cure a person who truly is looking for a cure. This is just unacceptable. There are people who recognize that they need it, and they beg for it. They have been turned away because there simply weren't enough facilities, beds or health care providers in their community.

But we spend money every year building new prisons all over the country. We have a backlog, and we have an overcrowding prison population. We know from long experience that when a person asks for help, that is our opportunity. If we turn them away, they will never come back. They just don't when they are turned away. That is why I wish to introduce this amendment, and I would like a very vigorous discussion on it.

We have tobacco, which we know is very dangerous and kills people. It is harmful, and we spend a lot of money trying to prevent people from using it and young people from starting to use it. We even tax it. We tax it so that basically we can deter the use of it.

We have alcohol. We know alcohol can be very addictive and, basically, it ruins people's lives. We know that and we tax that. We have nothing on opioids—nothing.

What we are asking for is consideration of a 1-cent fee on every milligram of opiates that are produced—one penny per milligram. This fee would be levied on the pharmaceutical company, and the money raised will be used to create a permanent funding stream to strengthen the substance abuse prevention and treatment block grant.

I know so many people have taken a pledge: We are not going to pass any new taxes.

I understand that. We are really at a crunch. We basically have cut back, and our military is struggling. Every part of a program that we think is near and dear to our States and to the people in our States is having trouble. I am not asking to take away from another one. I am asking that this one penny per milligram of opioids that are produced in this country would give us permanent funding to start having the treatment centers that we so desperately need. I don't know of any other way to do it in a more compassionate way. We do it for cigarettes; we do it for alcohol. We have opiates killing more than all of that. I am just asking for that dialog, that consideration. It could be something of a bipartisan movement, because this silent killer—opiates—doesn't have a partisan home. It is not Democratic. It is not Republican. It is not Independent. It is killing Americans—all of us.

The substance abuse prevention and treatment block grant goes to the States to pay for critical substance abuse treatment programs. The new funding raised, which is based on past opiate sales—I am basing it on past opiate sales—could be anywhere between $1.5 billion to $2 billion a year, and all the States will be able to participate. Every State would participate in these moneys that would be available. They could be used by States to establish new addiction treatment facilities, to improve access to drug courts, to operate support programs for recovering addicts, to care for babies born with neonatal abstinence syndrome or to meet any other treatment need that your State or my State might face. These treatments save lives and strengthened communities. We are losing a generation, a whole generation.

Opioid producers have made billions of dollars selling their drugs over the past several decades. I am not here railing against the pharmaceuticals. They do a lot of good for our country and save a lot of lives too. This is one that doesn't, and this one has been proven that it is a killer.

This amendment asks them to contribute a small portion of their profits to help pay for this treatment. Everyone says: They are going to pass it on. Don't worry; you will be paying more. This is one time, one penny—one penny a milligram. That is all we are asking.

For the 2.1 million Americans who are addicted to their products, my amendment also provides exemptions. I am talking about the exemptions now because I know people are going to say: What about our veterans? What about those in severe chronic pain? What about those who are terminally ill?

We have, basically, exemptions built into this amendment for those people, so they are not put into hardship, and for the neediest in our country. They are not going to be put in a hardship.

This is a cost that if we look at it, I don't know of any other way to fix it. I really don't. I know people have taken pledges: We are not going to do this, not going to do that, not going to consider it. Well, you ought to consider the damage that is doing to America. I am not asking for any other program to be sacrificed at all. So I think this is responsible. This one penny. That is all I am asking for—one penny.

I am pleased the Senate is addressing this epidemic. It is in a bipartisan way. We have the CARA package in front of us. I appreciate that, and I know we all have a great passion for trying to cure this.

This is how we need to work to solve the major challenges in our country that face us. I am pleased to see we are going through regular order. We have amendments that we are able to put on and talk about. I think it is worthy to have these discussions. We must provide the critical resources needed, and I think we have a solution to that. I hope we can have that discussion. I hope all of us can have an adult discussion about how we save Americans, how we save our families, our children, and the next generations to come.

I look forward to working with all of my colleagues and with you to see if there is a better way we can strengthen and make a piece of legislation better than what it is.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I appreciate the comments from my friend from West Virginia and his work on this issue that has hit West Virginia and, particularly, southeast Ohio kind of first and hardest. But it has spread to so many other places and caused so much heartache and so much family disruption—not just for the young men or women, in the case of young people who are addicted, but the whole family. As one mother of a teenager said to me in Youngstown, OH, or in Warren, OH, one day, this is really a family affair.

I am pleased to see bipartisan support for finally tackling the opioid addiction epidemic. It has touched every State and almost every community in our country. In 2014, more people died from drug overdoses than any year on record, with 2,482 in Ohio. That is a record number of prescription drug overdoses and a record 1,177 overdoses related to heroin. People often start with pain medication, sometimes overprescribed prescription medicine that will, in far too many cases, lead to heroin addiction. Heroin is cheaper to buy on the street than for people to get OxyContin or oxycodone or Percocet or any number of legal morphine pain medications.

These numbers mean that in 1 year alone, 2,500 Ohioan families lost a loved one to addiction. What those numbers don't account for are the thousands of other families and hundreds of other communities that continue to struggle with opioid abuse. It should not be easier for Americans to get their hands on opioids than it is for them to get help to treat their addiction. It should not be easier for Americans to get their hands on opioids than it is to get help to treat their addiction.

Addiction is not an individual problem. It surely is not a character flaw,

as many people half a generation ago liked to say when it was people who didn't look like them. But the fact is it was not a character flaw then and it is not a character flaw now. It is a chronic disease.

When left untreated, it places a massive burden on our health care system and a terrible, terrible cost on families who have an addicted family member. When we think about this epidemic, we have in our minds a young worker who turned to painkillers after a back injury or a car accident, someone who started with oxycodone—maybe as a party drug—and then turned to heroin. This problem is bigger than that.

Our national conversation forgets the hundreds of thousands of seniors who often are given unsafe and duplicative prescriptions for opioids. It is not uncommon for seniors to be treated by multiple specialists and physicians. Doctors may not know they are prescribing duplicative painkillers, meaning this doctor prescribed a painkiller—maybe oxycodone or OxyContin or Vicodin or another—and this other doctor may have done the same thing. They weren't communicating, and didn't know. Seniors find it difficult to manage all of their different prescriptions far too often.

Take, for example, Ohioan Dennis Michelson. I met him at the Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging in Cleveland last August. He is one of the estimated 170,000 Medicare beneficiaries who recently battled an addiction to pain medication.

He was prescribed pain medication by his doctor to manage chronic migraines. When his primary care doctor sought to wean him off the medication, he went to other doctors and pharmacists to obtain those opioids. He was eventually arrested and charged with felonies for tampering with prescriptions. He has since recovered. He is now an advocate for reform to address the prescription drug epidemic.

After hearing his story, it strikes me that if a patient with legitimate and sometimes complex medical needs winds up getting pain medication from several different doctors—you could see how that would happen; none of those doctors know about one another—the system has failed the patient.

It is why I worked with Senator TOOMEY from Pennsylvania to introduce the Stopping Medication Abuse and Protecting Seniors Act. I was proud to see this body support it as an amendment today. We already have a proven tool to address the problem of patients getting duplicative opioids from multiple doctors and pharmacists. It is called Patient Review & Restriction Programs. But despite their success in State Medicaid programs and commercial plans, these programs aren't available in Medicare prescriptions under current law. That is the purpose of the Toomey-Brown amendment and what we are trying to fix.

The amendment will ensure that a small number of seniors who receive high doses of addictive opioids from multiple doctors get those painkillers from one doctor and one pharmacist. It is what we did on so-called Medicaid lock-in—for people who were abusing the system on purpose or more likely those who sort of fell into this trap and went from doctor to doctor, pharmacist to pharmacist, in some sense doctor shopping or pharmacy shopping—so that practice would end. We have done the same sort of thing now with so-called Medicare lock-in. It would save taxpayers $100 million over the next decade. It will reduce overprescribing, and it will crack down on fraud.

I am pleased we have bipartisan support for this commonsense measure, but this amendment and this bill are a step. We need a comprehensive approach that addresses the entire spectrum of addiction from crisis to recovery. I have introduced the Heroin and Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention and Reduction Act. It will boost prevention efforts, it will improve tools for crisis response, it will expand access to treatment, and it will provide support for lifelong recovery.

Addiction is chronic. It doesn't mean that when somebody overcomes their addiction and seems to defeat it, it won't come back later in life. If we are serious about fighting this epidemic, we have to make sure we provide a serious investment that will deliver results long term.

My colleagues, Senator SHAHEEN of New Hampshire and Senator WHITEHOUSE of Rhode Island, introduced an amendment that would have provided $600 million to fight this epidemic. It would have gone directly to public health workers, directly to law enforcement officials who are working on the frontlines of this battle every day. It would have shown constituents we are serious about addressing this crisis.

I was disappointed this body was unwilling and unable to find the money necessary to address these problems. This legislation is a good bill. Without the money, it is a good bill, but it is really only half a good bill because my colleagues are simply unwilling—maybe it is the tea party influence, maybe they are afraid of a Republican rightwing primary, whatever it is—to ante up the dollars that would fully help us deal with this epidemic. We can't do this without an investment.

I met with a number of tuberculosis experts in my office today. We have been successful in this country with eliminating smallpox, eliminating polio, and keeping Ebola from being contracted in the United States and killing any Americans. We have done all of that because we invested in a public health system. We can't address this opioid epidemic without dollars. Yet my colleagues will simply always back off and say: Well, we can't afford to do this. They can afford tax cuts for wealthy people, and they can afford continuing to pump money into expensive weapons systems, but they will not spend money to address probably the most serious public health crisis we have seen in this country in years.

Once again, I say that it should not be easier for Americans to get their hands on opioids than it is to get help to treat their addiction. This Senate should get serious about this. We should pass this bill, to be sure, but there is so much else. I am distressed my colleagues chose not to step up to the plate and do what deep down they know we should do.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, earlier today, I missed the vote on the Shaheen amendment No. 3345. If I had voted, I would have voted yea.

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

• Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for today's amendment votes in relation to S. 524, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2015.

On amendment No. 3362 by Senator FEINSTEIN, I would have voted yea.

On the motion to waive the Budget Act with respect to amendment No. 3395 by Senator WYDEN, I would have voted yea.

On the motion to waive the Budget Act with respect to amendment No. 3345 by Senator SHAHEEN, I would have voted yea.•

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, today I wish to join my colleagues in supporting the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act.

This bipartisan legislation takes a strong and balanced approach to tackling the prescription drug and heroin epidemic our Nation faces, and I am proud to be a cosponsor.

I would like to note the hard work by many of my colleagues and their staffs—Senators WHITEHOUSE, AYOTTE, COONS, KIRK, KLOBUCHAR, and PORTMAN. Their States have been especially hard hit by this epidemic, and this bill would help alleviate some of the suffering.

We are all well aware of the sobering statistics. Drug overdoses kill more than 120 Americans each day—more than motor vehicle crashes or gunshot wounds. Opioid and heroin overdoses account for more than half of these deaths. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2014, 25,760 people died from prescription drugs, and of that, 18,893 deaths were caused by opioid painkillers. Heroin caused an additional 10,574 deaths.

These numbers have continually increased over the past 15 years, and today we are in the midst of an epidemic. That is why we need this bill. We need a comprehensive response to a problem that has touched every State of our country.

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act strengthens our substance abuse prevention, treatment, recovery, and law enforcement infrastructure. While it focuses on prescription opioid abuse and heroin use, it also has the potential to help other drug problems that we face. Specifically, it authorizes a number of programs to: ensure access to appropriate, evidence-based medical treatment; address local and emerging drug threats and trends; equip first responders with lifesaving tools, such as Naloxone, an opioid overdose-reversal drug; and strengthen prescription drug monitoring programs to reduce overprescribing, doctor shopping, and ultimately overdose deaths. The bill also establishes an interagency task force on pain management and opioid painkiller prescribing. The overprescription and overuse of these drugs are a major factor in this epidemic.

Lastly, to examine ways to improve access to drug treatment, the bill requires a Government Accountability Office study on the 16-bed limit for Medicaid reimbursement to drug treatment programs, also known as the Institutions for Mental Disease exclusion.

The holistic nature of this bill is a clear step in the right direction. It also supports the administration's efforts to confront this epidemic and can help accomplish the goals laid out in the 2015 National Drug Control Strategy.

However, there are two things that I believe would have made this comprehensive bill even more effective: 1, addressing the sheer volume and availability of opioid painkillers; and 2, full funding.

First, on the widespread availability of prescription opioids, I would like to outline a few often-cited facts from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Health care providers wrote 259 million prescriptions for opioid painkillers in 2012. This was enough for every American adult to have their own bottle of pills. Since 1999, the sale of prescription opioid painkillers has increased by 300 percent. At the same time, there has been no change in the amount of pain patients reported. During this same time period, deaths from overdose of prescription opioid painkillers quadrupled.

Additionally, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, 20 percent of people ages 12 and older have used prescription drugs nonmedically at least once. The majority of those who abuse prescription opioids get them for free from a friend or relative, often from legitimate prescriptions written in excess.

And, over the past 5 years, the Drug Enforcement Administration has collected more than 5.5 million pounds of unused or unwanted drugs, including opioids.

Moreover, data from Express Scripts shows that while there are fewer individuals filling prescriptions for opioids, the overall number of prescriptions filled, as well as the number of days per prescription, both increased.

All of this shows there are simply too many pills available for diversion and abuse, and I believe better prescribing practices can play an important role in reducing excess supply.

Our doctors and health care providers must improve the way they prescribe these opioids, to ensure safe and effective pain relief, but also to prevent misuse and overdose. At the same time, we must also maintain appropriate access for legitimate medical needs.

Updated guidelines, such as those the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will soon release, will help improve prescribing practices. Increased prescriber education can also help.

I am also looking into the possibility of responsibly regulating initial opioid prescriptions to reduce risk for misuse, addiction, and diversion. In my view, a patient who has a simple dental procedure does not need a 30-day supply of Vicodin. This is the type of prescribing that I believe we need to fix. Second, a bill like this can only have a positive impact if its programs are actually funded.

My colleague from New Hampshire, Senator SHAHEEN, has introduced an amendment that would provide emergency funding for the programs authorized in this bill, and I urge its passage.

I do not need to tell you that opioid and heroin abuse are very serious problems, but today we have an opportunity to address the issue head-on and save lives. I encourage my colleagues to join me in voting for this important bill.

Thank you.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, the United States is in the midst of a full-blown drug crisis. More people died from drug overdoses in 2014 than any previous year on record, claiming more lives than car accidents across the country. Since 2000, there has been a 200 percent increase in the rate of overdose deaths involving opioid pain relievers and heroin, with 61 percent of all drug overdose deaths in 2014 involving some type of opioid.

These tragedies are proof of the fierce bonds of addiction, and it seems no State has been spared from the opioid epidemic. In my State of California, deaths involving prescription pain medications have increased by 16.5 percent since 2006. In fact, there were more than 1,800 opioid-related deaths in 2012 alone, and 72 percent of those involved prescription pain medications.

We cannot ignore the opioid crisis anymore. This is not a problem for only the local communities or State officials. This is a nationwide crisis and addressing it requires a multi-pronged response at all levels of government. Last year, California was one of only 16 States selected to receive funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC to help improve safe prescribing of opioid painkillers, an important step forward in tackling the root cause of this debilitating drug crisis.

The pain and sorrow of drug addiction knows no limits. This is a tragedy that impacts families from all backgrounds, including our servicemembers and veterans. There is substantial evidence that prescription drug use and abuse is a major contributing factor to military and veteran suicides. This has been a concern of mine for several years, and I was proud to work with my colleagues in 2013 to ensure that military and veterans hospitals were included in the Drug Enforcement Administration's prescription drug takeback efforts so that our military personnel, veterans, and their families could voluntarily dispose of unwanted or unused prescription drugs.

However, much more must be done to combat this epidemic. To address this emergency fully and effectively, we need to provide immediate funding to the key grant programs included in the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, CARA. I applaud Senator SHAHEEN and Senator WHITEHOUSE for introducing an amendment to give the Department of Justice, DOJ, and the Department of Health and Human Services, HHS, the tools they need to fund the essential prevention, treatment, and law enforcement programs to help the families and communities torn apart by drug abuse.

American lives are on the line, and we cannot wait to act. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). 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.

WHOLE WOMAN'S HEALTH V. HELLERSTEDT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today the Supreme Court heard the oral arguments in Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt. At issue in this case is a Texas law that puts restrictions on women's health clinics and providers.

Contrary to what proponents claim, these restrictions do not enhance women's health in any way. They are medically unnecessary, according to groups like the American Medical Association and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. Instead, these restrictions serve just one purpose: to restrict women's access to clinics.

If the Texas law stands, nearly three-quarters of the State's clinics will be

forced to close. That would leave just 10 clinics statewide to serve 5.4 million Texan women of reproductive age. But unfortunately, this is the type of thing we have come to expect from the State of Texas. The Texas Legislature and Governor have already passed laws that infringe on its citizens' constitutional rights.

For example, the State has passed laws that limit victims' ability to recover much-deserved damages after accidents. And they have passed one of the strictest voter ID laws in the Nation. We are seeing the results of the State's pattern of undermining their citizens' constitutional rights. Just yesterday it was reported that more than half a million registered voters in Texas can't even vote.

This is the pattern of disenfranchisement Texas is engaged in. The State's women are, sadly, the latest example of Texas infringing on important constitutional rights. Though it is not entirely surprising that the radical Republicans in Texas have targeted women's health, it is nonetheless disappointing. I hope the Supreme Court will choose to protect women's health and strike down this disastrous Texas law.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE GEORGIA PUBLIC POLICY FOUNDATION

• Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, today I am honored to recognize a great leader in Georgia politics, a leader that studies hard, presents ideas, and analyzes State public policy issues to educate citizens and enhance economic opportunity. This leader is not a person but an organization that is celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2016: the Georgia Public Policy Foundation.

Established in 1991, the foundation is an independent, State-focused think tank that proposes market-oriented approaches to public policy to improve the lives of Georgians. Whether they are aware of it or not, Georgians have benefitted from the positive line of influential leaders of this organization, including my good friend Rogers Wade. It was founded by a great Georgian, Hank McCamish, and today is led by a Georgian who will leave another great legacy of his own, Kelly McCutcheon.

Through dozens of events each year, facilitating discussions between State members and political, education, media, and business leaders, the Georgia Public Policy Foundation has lived up to its motto: ''Changing Georgia Policy, Changing Georgians' Lives since 1991.''

The Georgia Public Policy Foundation performs scholarly research and analysis of State public policy issues and works to educate citizens, policymakers, and the media. It maintains a State-focused, independent, nonpartisan, and market-oriented approach to improve the lives of Georgians, and it affords opportunities for advocacy membership and volunteering.

The Georgia Public Policy Foundation helps shape meaningful policy on education, the environment, criminal justice, government reform, health care, legal reform, regulation, spending, taxes, transportation, and welfare reform. And it walks the walk on education, too—its members donate to the Student Outreach Scholarship Program, providing assistance for lower-income students to attend college and learn about public policy issues.

The Georgia Public Policy Foundation has forged over the years many positive changes in Georgia in its nonpartisan but very specific way. It raises issues of importance above political rhetoric to a point where politicians focus on the true merits and ultimately make quality decisions.

For all the Georgia Public Policy Foundation has done on behalf of my home State over the last 25 years, I honor the foundation today.•

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGES

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13660 ON MARCH 6, 2014, WITH RESPECT TO UKRAINE—PM 43

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660 of March 6, 2014, is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2016.

The actions and policies of persons that undermine democratic processes and institutions in Ukraine; threaten its peace, security, stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity; and contribute to the misappropriation of its assets, as well as the actions and policies of the Government of the Russian Federation, including its purported annexation of Crimea and its use of force in Ukraine, continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. Therefore, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660 with respect to Ukraine.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, *March 2, 2016*.

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13288 ON MARCH 6, 2003, WITH RESPECT TO THE ACTIONS AND POLICIES OF CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE AND OTHER PERSONS TO UNDERMINE ZIMBABWE'S DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES OR INSTITUTIONS—PM 44

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency originally declared in Executive Order 13288 of March 6, 2003, and renewed every year since then, is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2016.

The threat constituted by the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions, contributing to the deliberate breakdown in the rule of law, to politically motivated violence and intimidation, and to political and economic instability in the southern African region, has not been resolved. These actions and policies continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue this national emergency and to maintain in force the sanctions to respond to this threat.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, *March 2, 2016*.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:32 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 1596. An act 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 message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 136. An act 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''.

H.R. 1132. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1048 West Robinhood Drive in Stockton, California, as the ''W. Ronald Coale Memorial Post Office Building''.

H.R. 2347. An act to amend the Federal Advisory Committee Act to increase the transparency of Federal advisory committees, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2458. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 5351 Lapalco Boulevard in Marrero, Louisiana, as the ''Lionel R. Collins, Sr. Post Office Building''.

H.R. 2814. An act to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Sevierville, Tennessee, the Dannie A. Carr Veterans Outpatient Clinic.

H.R. 3082. An act 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''.

H.R. 3274. An act 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''.

H.R. 3601. An act 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''.

H.R. 3735. An act 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''.

H.R. 4046. An act 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 message further announced that pursuant to section 4703(b) of the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Act (20 U.S.C. 4703), the Minority Leader appoints the following Member of the House of Representatives to the Board of Trustees of the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation: Mr. John B. Larson of Connecticut.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 136. An act 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''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 1132. An act 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''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2347. An act to amend the Federal Advisory Committee Act to increase the transparency of Federal advisory committees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2458. An act 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''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2814. An act to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Sevierville, Tennessee, the Dannie A. Carr Veterans Outpatient Clinic; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 3082. An act 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''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 3274. An act 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''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 3601. An act 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''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 3735. An act 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''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 4046. An act 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; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–4543. A communication from the Under Secretary, Rural Utilities Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Environmental Policies and Procedures'' (RIN0575–AC56) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2016; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4544. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Bennet S. Sacolick, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4545. A communication from the Acting Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of General John F. Campbell, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–4546. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Addition of Certain Persons and Modification of Certain Entries to the Entity List; and Removal of Certain Persons from the Entity List'' (RIN0694–AG81) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2016; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4547. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Research, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Probabilistic Risk Assessment and Severe Accident Evaluation for New Reactors'' (NUREG–0800, SRP Section 19.0) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4548. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Research, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Chapter 11, Radioactive Waste Management'' (NUREG–0800, SRP Branch Technical Positions 11–3; 11–5; and 11–6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4549. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Research, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Chapter 11, Radioactive Waste Management'' (NUREG–0800, SRP Sections 11.1; 11.2; 11.3; 11.4; and 11.5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2016; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4550. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Update of Weighted Average Interest Rates, Yield Curves, and Segment Rates'' (Notice 2016–18) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4551. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendments to the Low-Income Housing Credit Compliance-Monitoring Regulations'' ((RIN1545–BL84) (TD 9753)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4552. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Qualified Zone Academy Bond Allocations for 2015 and 2016'' (Notice 2016–20) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4553. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Reporting of Specified Foreign Financial Assets'' ((RIN1545–BM54) (TD 9752)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4554. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch,

Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''PATH Act Changes to Section 1445'' ((RIN1545–BN22) (TD 9751)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4555. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Applicable Federal Rates—March 2016'' (Rev. Rul. 2016–07) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4556. A joint communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Attorney General, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report relative to the Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control Program for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4557. A communication from the Senior Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Office of Fiscal Assistant Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards'' (RIN1505–AC48) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4558. 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 15–134); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4559. 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 15–100); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4560. 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 15–052); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4561. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2016–0022—2016–0025); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4562. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Mid-Year Changes to Safe Harbor Plans and Safe Harbor Notices'' (Notice 2016–16) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4563. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''2014 Progress Report on Understanding the Long-Term Health Effects of Living Organ Donation''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4564. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) report to Congress on the study on raising the minimum age to purchase tobacco products; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4565. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Regulations Governing Organization of the Joint Board for the Enrollment of Actuaries'' ((RIN1545–BM81) (TD 9749)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4566. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Financial Report of the United States Government for Fiscal Year 2015''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4567. A communication from the Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's calendar year 2015 Annual Report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4568. communication from the Chairman, Merit Systems Protection Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board Annual Performance Report for FY 2015 and Annual Performance Plan for FY 2016 (Final) and FY 2017 (Proposed)''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4569. A communication from the Director, Office of Government Ethics, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Explanatory Notes, Annual Performance Plan, and Annual Performance Report for the Office of Government Ethics for fiscal year 2017; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4570. A communication from the Chairman of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Buy American Act Report for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–4571. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Duwamish Waterway, Seattle, WA'' ((RIN1625–AA09) (Docket No. USCG–2015–0285)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4572. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Lake Pontchartrain, Slidell, LA'' ((RIN1625–AA09) (Docket No. USCG–2015–0814)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4573. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Missiouri River, Atchison, KS'' ((RIN1625–AA09) (Docket No. USCG–2014–0358)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4574. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Acushnet River, New Bedford and Fairhaven, MA'' ((RIN1625–AA09) (Docket No. USCG–2016–0058)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4575. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Regulated Navigation Area; Kill Van Kull and Newark Bay; Bayonne, NJ, NY'' ((RIN1625–AA11) (Docket No. USCG–2014–0002)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4576. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Regulated Navigation Area; Reporting Requirements for Barges Loaded with Certain Dangerous Cargoes, Inland Rivers, Eighth Coast Guard District; Expiration of Stay (Suspension) and Administrative Changes'' ((RIN1625–AA11) (Docket No. USCG–2013–0760)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4577. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Regulated Navigation Area; Reporting Requirements for Barges Loaded with Certain Dangerous Cargoes, Illinois Waterway System located within the Ninth Coast Guard District; Expiration of Stay (Suspension) and Administrative Changes'' ((RIN1625–AA11) (Docket No. USCG–2013–0849)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4578. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Circle Line Sightseeing Fireworks, Liberty Island, Upper New York Bay, Manhattan, NY'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2015–1048)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4579. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Pleasure Beach Bridge, Bridgeport, CT'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2015–1088)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4580. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Security Zone; Kailua Bay, Oahu, HI'' ((RIN1625–AA87) (Docket No. USCG–2015–1030)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4581. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Closure of Morro Bay Harbor Bar Entrance; Morro Bay, CA'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2015–1083)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4582. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; New Years Eve Firework Displays, Chicago River, Chicago, IL'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2015–1074)) received in the Office of the President

of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4583. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Transit Restrictions, Lower Mississippi River Mile Marker 365.0–361.0'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2016–0014)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4584. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Bayou Chene beginning at mile 130.0 on the Atchafalaya River extending through the Bayou Chene ending at Mile 85.0 on the Intercoastal Waterway Morgan City, LA'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2016–0016)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4585. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Transit Restrictions, Lower Mississippi River Mile Marker 311.0–319.0'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2016–0023)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4586. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Upper Mississippi River and Illinois River, MO and IL'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2015–1121)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4587. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; RICHLAND, Apra Harbor/Philippine Sea, GU'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2015–1101)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4588. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; James River, Newport News, VA'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2016–0044)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4589. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Bayou Petite Caillou, Boudreax Canal Floodgate, Chauvin, LA'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2015–1125)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4590. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Hudson River, Anchorage Ground 19-W'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2016–0028)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4591. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Navy UNDET, Apra Outer Harbor, GU'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2015–1096)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4592. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Moving Security Zone; Escorted Vessels; MM 90.0—106.0, Lower Mississippi River; New Orleans, LA'' ((RIN1625–AA87) (Docket No. USCG–2014–0995)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4593. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Intracoastal Waterway; Lake Charles, LA'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2015–1086)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4594. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Moving Security Zone; Escorted Vessels; MM 90.0—106.0, Lower Mississippi River; New Orleans, LA'' ((RIN1625–AA87) (Docket No. USCG–2014–0995)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4595. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Expansion of Online Public File Obligations To Cable and Satellite TV Operators and Broadcast and Satellite Radio Licensees'' ((MB Docket No. 14–127) (FCC 16–4)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4596. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Expanding Consumers' Video Navigation Choices; Commercial Availability of Navigation Devices'' ((MB Docket No. 16–42, CS Docket No. 97–80) (FCC 16–18)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 29, 2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. BARRASSO, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, without amendment:

S. 817. A bill to provide for the addition of certain real property to the reservation of the Siletz Tribe in the State of Oregon (Rept. No. 114–219).

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. GARDNER:

S. 2616. A bill to modify certain cost-sharing and revenue provisions relating to the Arkansas Valley Conduit, Colorado; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. CORNYN:

S. 2617. A bill to provide for the development of a United States strategy for greater human space exploration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. GRASSLEY:

S. 2618. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to publish a Medicaid fee-for service provider directory; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. HEITKAMP:

S. 2619. A bill to require the Secretary of Commerce to carry out a pilot program on the award of financial assistance to local governments to support the development of startup businesses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. MURPHY):

S. 2620. A bill to facilitate the addition of park administration at the Coltsville National Historical Park, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. TESTER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. SANDERS):

S. 2621. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to genetically engineered food transparency and uniformity; 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 Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. REED, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. KAINE, Mr. DURBIN, and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. Res. 384. A resolution designating March 2, 2016, as ''Read Across America Day''; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 425

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 425, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for a five-year extension to the homeless veterans reintegration programs and to provide clarification regarding eligibility for services under such programs.

S. 707

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 707, a bill to provide certain protections from civil liability with respect to the emergency administration of opioid overdose drugs.

S. 743

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 743, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to recognize the service in the reserve components of the Armed Forces of certain persons by honoring them with status as veterans under law, and for other purposes.

S. 849

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 849, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for systematic data collection and analysis and epidemiological research regarding Multiple Sclerosis (MS), Parkinson's disease, and other neurological diseases.

S. 1659

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1659, a bill to amend the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to revise the criteria for determining which States and political subdivisions are subject to section 4 of the Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1887

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1887, a bill to protect and preserve international cultural property at risk due to political instability, armed conflict, or natural or other disasters, and for other purposes.

S. 2067

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2067, a bill to establish EUREKA Prize Competitions to accelerate discovery and development of disease-modifying, preventive, or curative treatments for Alzheimer's disease and related dementia, to encourage efforts to enhance detection and diagnosis of such diseases, or to enhance the quality and efficiency of care of individuals with such diseases.

S. 2216

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor 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. 2307

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) were added as cosponsors of S. 2307, a bill to promote the strengthening of the private sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

S. 2424

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) 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. GRASSLEY, his name 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. 2496

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2496, a bill to provide flexibility for the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to increase the total amount of general business loans that may be guaranteed under section 7(a) of the Small Business Act.

S. 2531

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) were added as cosponsors of S. 2531, a bill to authorize State and local governments to divest from entities that engage in commerce-related or investment-related boycott, divestment, or sanctions activities targeting Israel, and for other purposes.

S. 2571

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2571, a bill to provide for the eligibility for airport development grants of airports that enter into certain leases with components of the Armed Forces.

AMENDMENT NO. 3290

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3290 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. 3330

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3330 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.

AMENDMENT NO. 3345

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING), the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) and the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3345 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.

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3345 proposed to S. 524, supra.

AMENDMENT NO. 3362

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) and the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3362 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.

AMENDMENT NO. 3369

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3369 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.

AMENDMENT NO. 3376

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3376 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 Mr. CORNYN:

S. 2617. A bill to provide for the development of a United States strategy for greater human space exploration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2617

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Mapping a New and Innovative Focus on Our Exploration Strategy for Human Spaceflight Act of 2016'' or the ''MANIFEST for Human Spaceflight Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. REAFFIRMATION OF POLICY AND FINDINGS.

(a) REAFFIRMATION OF POLICY.—Congress reaffirms that the long-term goal of the human space flight and exploration efforts of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration shall be to expand permanent human presence beyond low-Earth orbit and to do so, where practical, in a manner involving international partners, as stated in section 202(a) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18312(a)).

(b) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) In accordance with section 204 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–267; 124 Stat. 2813), the National Academy of Sciences, through its Committee on Human Spaceflight, conducted a review of the goals, core capabilities, and direction of human space flight, and published the findings and recommendations in a 2014 report entitled ''Pathways to Exploration: Rationales and Approaches for a U.S. Program of Human Space Exploration''.

(2) The Committee on Human Spaceflight included leaders from the aerospace, scientific, security, and policy communities. With input from the public, the Committee on Human Spaceflight concluded that many practical and aspirational rationales together constitute a compelling case for

human space exploration. These rationales include economic benefits, national security, national prestige, inspiring students and other citizens, scientific discovery, human survival, and a sense of shared destiny.

(3) The Committee on Human Spaceflight affirmed that Mars is the appropriate long-term goal for the human space flight program.

(4) The Committee on Human Spaceflight recommended that the National Aeronautics and Space Administration define a series of sustainable steps and conduct mission planning and technology development as needed to achieve the long-term goal of placing humans on the surface of Mars.

SEC. 3. HUMAN EXPLORATION STRATEGY.

(a) HUMAN EXPLORATION OF MARS.—Section 202(b) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18312(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in paragraph (4), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(5) to achieve human exploration of Mars, including the establishment of a capability to extend human presence to the surface of Mars.''.

(b) EXPLORATION STRATEGY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with this subsection, the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration shall submit an interim report and final report setting forth a strategy to achieve the objective in paragraph (5) of section 202(b) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010, as amended by subsection (a) of this section, through a series of successive, sustainable, free-standing, but complementary missions making robust utilization of cis-lunar space and employing the Space Launch System, Orion crew capsule, and other capabilities provided under titles III, IV, V, and IX of that Act (42 U.S.C. 18301 et seq.).

(2) STRATEGY REQUIREMENTS.—In developing the strategy under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall include—

(A) the utility of an expanded human presence in cis-lunar space toward enabling missions to various lunar orbits, the lunar surface, asteroids, Mars, the moons of Mars, and other destinations of interest for future human exploration and development;

(B) the utility of an expanded human presence in cis-lunar space for economic, scientific, and technological advances;

(C) the opportunities for collaboration with—

(i) international partners;

(ii) private industry; and

(iii) other Federal agencies, including missions relevant to national security or scientific needs;

(D) the opportunities specifically afforded by the International Space Station (ISS) to support high priority scientific research and technological developments useful in expanding and sustaining a human presence in cis-lunar space and beyond;

(E) a range of exploration mission architectures and approaches for the missions identified under paragraph (1), including capabilities for the Orion crew capsule and the Space Launch System;

(F) a comparison of architectures and approaches based on—

(i) assessed value of factors including cost effectiveness, schedule resiliency, safety, sustainability, and opportunities for international collaboration;

(ii) the extent to which certain architectures and approaches may enable new markets and opportunities for United States private industry, provide compelling opportunities for scientific discovery and technological excellence, sustain United States competitiveness and leadership, and address critical national security considerations and requirements; and

(iii) the flexibility of such architectures and approaches to adjust to evolving technologies, partners, priorities, and budget projections and constraints;

(G) measures for setting standards for ensuring crew health and safety, including limits regarding radiation exposure and countermeasures necessary to meet those limits, means and methods for addressing urgent medical conditions or injuries, and other such safety, health, and medical issues that can be anticipated in the conduct of the missions identified under paragraph (1);

(H) a description of crew training needs and capabilities (including space suits and life support systems) necessary to support the conduct of missions identified under paragraph (1);

(I) a detailed plan for prioritizing and phasing near-term intermediate destinations and missions identified under paragraph (1);

(J) an assessment of the recommendations of the report prepared in compliance with section 204 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–267; 124 Stat. 2813), including a detailed explanation of how the Administrator has ensured such recommendations have been, to the extent practicable, incorporated into the strategy under paragraph (1); and

(K) technical information as needed to identify interest from potential stakeholder or partner communities.

(3) INDEPENDENT REVIEW.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall enter into an arrangement with the National Academy of Sciences to review and comment on each interim report pursuant to paragraph (1). Under the arrangement, the National Academy of Sciences shall review each interim report on the strategy described in paragraph (1) and identify the following:

(i) Matters in such interim report agreed upon by the National Academy of Sciences.

(ii) Matters in such interim report raising concerns for the National Academy of Sciences.

(iii) Such further recommendations with respect to matters covered by such interim report as the National Academy of Sciences considers appropriate.

(B) TIMING OF REVIEW AND COMMENT.—The Administrator shall ensure that the review and comment on an interim report provided for pursuant to subparagraph (A) is conducted in a timely manner to comply with the requirements of this subsection and, to the maximum extent practicable, to facilitate the incorporation of the comments of the National Academy of Sciences pursuant to subparagraph (A) into the applicable final report required by this subsection.

(4) DEADLINES.—

(A) INTERIM REPORTS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and not less than every five years thereafter, the Administrator shall submit to the National Academy of Sciences an interim report on the strategy required by paragraph (1) in order to facilitate the independent review and comment on the strategy as provided for by paragraph (3).

(B) FINAL REPORTS.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and not less than every five years thereafter, the Administrator shall submit to Congress a final report on the strategy required by paragraph (1), which shall include and incorporate the response of the National Academy of Sciences to the most recent interim report pursuant to paragraph (3).

By Ms. HEITKAMP:

S. 2619. A bill to require the Secretary of Commerce to carry out a pilot program on the award of financial assistance to local governments to support the development of startup businesses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I am introducing the Startup Entrepreneur Empowerment Delivery, SEED, Act today to address the challenges faced by startup businesses in North Dakota, as well as other rural States and small cities, by helping them get the early stage funding they need to grow their business.

Access to capital is one of the single largest barriers between startup businesses and success. This bill addresses the unique needs of startup companies in our country's more rural States by creating a pilot program through the U.S. Department of Commerce aimed at providing small amounts of capital to qualifying startups.

Innovation does not just happen in Silicon Valley or at our country's biggest research institutions. Innovative ideas are blooming in our heartland and startups are forming on our main streets making the entrepreneurial ecosystem of our smaller cities stronger than ever before. But too often, we hear the same challenges from startups and small businesses that they are trying to fit a square peg into a round hole, meaning they run into the barrier of not being able to qualify for Federal support or Federal programs because they are asking for too little funding. We can't let these innovators slip through the cracks.

The Startup Entrepreneur Empowerment Delivery, SEED, Act would grant financial assistance to ten small sized cities across the country which then would make awards directly to startups to use for marketing, infrastructure, recruitment and hiring resources. This bill directly addresses the concerns that I continue to hear from startups in North Dakota and will help drive them to success and reinvest and diversify the local economies of our Nation's more rural areas.

With my SEED Act, we can invest in small cities, in rural States, like North Dakota, helping drive startups to success. Just like anyone from a small or rural town, we know how to make a little go a long way, and this bill will help make that possible. The SEED Act will allow the Federal Government to continue its priority of investing in innovation and will ensure those investments are felt in America's heartland.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. TESTER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. SANDERS):

S. 2621. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to genetically engineered food transparency and uniformity; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, the genius of America was a government designed, as President Lincoln so eloquent summarized, ''Of the people, by the people, for the people.''

I will be rising periodically to address issues that affect Americans across our country and that this Chamber should be addressing. This week I am using my speech to highlight the labeling of genetically modified foods. This is truly a ''We the people'' versus ''We the Titans'' battle because citizens routinely poll in very high numbers about their desire to know what is in their food, and they like the idea of being alerted when their food contains genetically modified organisms or GMOs, but that is not necessarily the consequence, as when we go through the legislative process, often the ''We the people's'' commonsense vision is lost in favor of pressures applied by powerful interest groups. We are in the middle of a debate like that right now. So that is why I thought it appropriate to rise at this moment to address this.

This is a debate about whether you believe that in a democracy, citizens have a right to know or whether that right to know is going to be taken away from them. I guess it goes to whether you feel that citizens have the minds they are put on this Earth with to make decisions of their own versus being told what decisions to make by a Federal Government.

This debate over genetically modified organisms is a debate that gets complicated because there are tremendous differences in the types of genetic changes in plants. Let me give you some examples. You might have a crop where the crop has been modified genetically in the laboratory to produce natural toxins that defend plants against root-dwelling insect pests. Perhaps as a result of that, the farmers can reduce the amount of synthetic pesticides they apply to crop lands. That might be a very positive thing. It might save a lot of money, and it also might save a lot of runoff of pesticides. That is one example.

Other crops have been modified to fortify foods with vitamins and nutrients. For example, golden rice, developed by the International Rice Institute, provides greater amounts of vitamin A to reduce the deficiency of this essential vitamin in our diets. There are other positive impacts. For example, you have transgenic carrots—carrots that have been modified genetically to produce drugs inside the carrot to treat the genetic disorder known as Goucher's disease. Other genetic modifications have been used to attempt to increase crop yields through more efficient photosynthesis.

So that is a whole variety of different ways of trying to make plants contribute better to our nutrition and certainly in terms of the dynamics to the farming environment, but there are also changes that are made that raise concerns among some of our citizens. For example, most of the genetically modified crops grown in the United States have been altered to confer resistance to a chemical herbicide known as glyphosate. I was looking at a chart. I do not have it to display, but I will describe it. After the introduction of these GMO crops in the early 1990s, the amount of acreage that has been planted with glyphosate-resistant crops has gone to nearly 100 percent. With soybeans, it went to 100 percent by about 2005—just about every soybean plant in America. Glyphosate-resistant cotton, virtually all cotton, falls into that category, and a great deal of the corn, the vast majority of the corn planted in our country falls into that category.

So now we have millions of acres being sprayed with glyphosate. At first glance, one might say: Well, that is a great thing because it is an easy way to reduce weeds—but often Mother Nature is complicated. For example, when you have all of that glyphosate being sprayed on acre after acre, millions of acres, the weeds start to evolve a resistance to it. Then that resistance means you have to put more herbicides on than before. So that is a concern or, for example, as you put more glyphosate on, you have more glyphosate runoff, and that runoff becomes a concern because you have herbicides running off into our waterways, and that can have an impact on sensitive aquatic species, including fish, mussels, amphibians, microorganisms. So it merits study, but it is certainly something to be concerned about.

You can also have the impact of going to a separate item in which you have, as I mentioned as a positive, the fact that plants have been genetically modified to resist certain bugs that attack the roots. Western corn rootworm is an example of that, but now it appears to be evolving to eat the corn that was bioengineered to kill it because, over time, with millions and millions of acres, there is some genetic change, and some worm that would have been killed because it has a genetic diversity and genetic changes is now resistant. It produces offspring, and suddenly you have a bug that is sometimes referred to as superbugs that are evolving to be resistant to pesticides. What is the impact of that?

Let me give you another example. We had a huge drop in the population of Monarch butterflies, magnificent creatures. I think humans just see a Monarch and they fall in love, just seeing one beautiful butterfly. Of course, these butterflies manage to travel thousands of miles in the course of their lives, which is just stunning that such a fragile, beautiful, little creature could travel so far to go way south in order to reproduce and come way back north. When we apply huge amounts of glyphosate herbicides, one of the side effects is that it kills a lot of the plants; that is, the milkweed, that the Monarch eats. So you have an attack on the Monarch. That is not the only impact on the Monarch, but it is a contributing factor, and the result is that it has contributed to a crash in this population.

To summarize, you have many potential positive impacts of genetic engineering, and you have many potential concerns from genetically engineered crops.So there are considerations that need to be balanced. Some individuals hear that and are not concerned at all. They say: It is fine. I want to buy products that are genetically engineered or I would like to buy these and not those. Others say: I am really concerned about a specific feature of genetically modified crops, and I don't want to use my dollars to buy that crop and contribute to the problem I am concerned about. This is an adult conversation. It is a complex conversation. There are benefits and there are disadvantages and there are more studies to be done to discover just how much the concern should be. Some individuals are concerned that with this huge amount of biphosphate being sprayed—and biphosphate is now a known carcinogen—is there any residue that stays on the crops that people harvest and eat. So they are concerned about that.

That is why labeling is leveling the field. It allows those who are concerned to know what is going on. It allows those who are not concerned to not pay attention. My daughter happens to like to look at ingredient lists and tries not to consume high-fructose corn syrup. It is helpful to her to know what is in it, and she can exercise her consumer preference. Other folks don't want to have excessive salt or maybe they are allergic to peanuts, so peanuts are on the ingredients list, and it is helpful to them to be able to make that decision.

Honoring our citizens' right to know seems to be disappearing on Capitol Hill because we have powerful special interests that don't want to let citizens make these judgments, make these evaluations, between the advantages and the disadvantages. Last summer, a few hundred yards from here in the House of Representatives, the majority voted for a law that blocks States from passing laws to provide this type of information on a label.

Just yesterday in the Senate, the Senate Agricultural Committee voted out a law to block the rights of citizens to know whether GMOs are in their food. That is an outrageous—outrageous—bill. It would halt any progress in ensuring that consumers can simply and easily access information about GMO ingredients through labeling.

This bill that was passed out of committee also included a proposal that the Secretary of Agriculture do an education campaign touting the economic, nutritional, humanitarian, and scientific benefits of GMOs, but the bill didn't say—and educate consumers about the substantial concerns the scientific community has, about the impact on the evolution of weeds, about the impact on the evolution of bugs, about potential residues that are on

the crops, about the runoff that is in our waterways affecting how healthy our waterways are and the organisms that live in our streams and in our rivers.

So this is a very unbalanced presentation to the American public. It is the type of thing that government shouldn't be involved in—basically, running a promotional campaign on taxpayers' dollars to not create a balanced understanding of an issue but instead an unbalanced understanding of an issue.

The truth is, all Americans have the right to know what is in their food. They are buying food to feed their children. They have the right to know the ingredients so they can make responsible decisions. Providing information regarding genetically modified ingredients is a commonsense way to empower consumers to make their own personal decisions on issues they care about on the food they purchase. It is a pretty emotional issue when you start talking about the food you are putting in your own mouth or the food you are feeding your children.

Campbell's Soup has begun taking steps to voluntarily disclose on all of their soups whether the products contain genetically modified ingredients. Why are they doing this? They say they have a relationship of integrity with their customers. They want their customers to know full information about their products and let the customer decide what the customer wants, and they will provide information about the type of genetic modifications and what they mean so the customer will have enough information to make a decision. There are advantages and disadvantages to GMO ingredients.

Our Federal Government already requires the labeling of ingredients and basic nutritional information in order to protect the public and guard against false product marketing. These food labels tell consumers many things. They are supposed to tell how many calories. They tell how much there is of a variety of vitamins. They list the ingredients and do so in order of how prominent they are in the product. Our labeling laws even say that when fish are sold in large supermarkets, they have to state whether a fish is farm raised or wild caught. Why do we require supermarkets to label the fish as farm raised or wild caught? Because our consumers care about that. There are implications of whether a product was grown in an artificial lake or whether it was caught in the wild. Consumers want to know and use their own minds to make these decisions. That is something about being in a free society—you get to make your own decisions based on disclosure. We make the information available.

This type of labeling about genetic modifications or genetically modified organisms in the ingredients is routine around the world. Sixty-five other countries, including twenty-eight members of the European Union, plus Japan, plus Australia, plus China, plus Brazil, already require mandatory GM labeling. Has it come to the point that we in America are denying information that is routinely required in China for consumers? Is that the point we are coming to on this bill, this DARK Act, Denying Americans the Right to Know Act? This is not the direction we should be going.

Instead, we believe in our American citizens, we believe in education, we believe in individual decisionmaking, and consumer information on the label honors that. Blocking States from being able to provide information that those State legislators or those State citizens, by initiative, say they want, that is an overstepping of Federal authority to crush States' rights on an issue important to citizens.

That is why today I am introducing a compromise bill, a bill trying to bring this conversation to a commonsense compromise. It is called the Biotechnology Food Labeling and Uniformity Act. I am introducing this bill today with Senator TESTER and Senator LEAHY. It would give the FDA the authority to develop a uniform Federal standard for on-package disclosure of genetically modified ingredients.

I have met with industry groups. I have met with the pro-label groups. I tried to find that area of compromise between the two. What I found is a great deal of flexibility on the labeling groups. Those groups said there doesn't have to be information on the front of the package. It is OK if it is on the ingredients list on the back of the can or the back of the package. It doesn't have to be in supersized print. It is OK if it is in the same small print that the ingredients are printed in. In fact, they are open to many different versions of how a company discloses this information, as long as a person can go to the store, pick up the package, turn it over, and quickly find out if there is a GMO impact.

These are some of the ideas—and there are a variety—that are acceptable to the labeling side of the world. One is on the ingredients area. After the ingredient, it could either say it is genetically modified or put in a code like GM—it doesn't take up much space, it is on the list of ingredients—or if there are several ingredients and you would rather use an asterisk, you would rather put an asterisk and put what the asterisk means: ''This ingredient has been genetically modified,'' or ''May contain genetically modified ingredients.'' So a simple phrase at the bottom or a symbol. Brazil uses a symbol. They use a T. This is an example of using a symbol T for transgenic—not all of them at once, just each of them would be fine. It will take effort for consumers to look and see it. It is not upfront. They have to pick up the product. They have to look. It can be typed in small print, but it gives a person who cares the ability to get to the bottom of the question. Then, if they want, they can look up at the Web site the product, through a quick response code, and get more details. That range of flexibility is where the compromise can be honoring a citizen's right to know, while not taking up a lot of space on a package or not doing anything on the front of the package that says that this product is healthy or unhealthy or otherwise. It means the share of Americans who want this information—just as there is a share of Americans who want to know if there is high-fructose corn syrup, there is a share of Americans who want to know if fish is farmed or wild fish—can in fact find this out.

This also addresses the big issue manufacturers have been raising. They don't want a patchwork across the country of 50 different States having different labeling laws. Our supply inventory doesn't work that way. We don't have a warehouse that only serves one State. Quite frankly, it gets very complicated and even more so on the East Coast, where the States are all packed together, than it does back home in Oregon. That is a legitimate concern. So there are big concerns. About 50 different versions of the law or maybe counties even having different laws is addressed.

I am going to simply conclude with this understanding: Citizens have a right to know in a free society what is in their food. Let's honor that. Should the DARK Act—the Deny Americans the Right to Know Act that passed out of the Agriculture Committee—come to this floor, many of us will stand up to fight it in every possible way. It shortchanges American citizens, denies them critical information, and takes the right of a fundamental privilege in our society. It strips our States. It is a Federal overreach, and it is an assault on consumer information and consumer rights. It is just wrong, and we will oppose it vigorously.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 384—DESIGNATING MARCH 2, 2016, AS ''READ ACROSS AMERICA DAY''

Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. REED of Rhode Island, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. KAINE, Mr. DURBIN, and Mrs. CAPITO) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 384

Whereas reading is a basic requirement for quality education and professional success and is a source of pleasure throughout life;

Whereas the people of the United States must be able to read if the United States is to remain competitive in the global economy;

Whereas Congress has placed great emphasis on reading intervention and providing additional resources for reading assistance, including through the programs authorized by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.) and through annual appropriations for library and literacy programs; and

Whereas more than 50 national organizations concerned about reading and education

have joined with the National Education Association to designate March 2, the anniversary of the birth of Theodor Geisel (commonly known as ''Dr. Seuss''), as a day to celebrate reading: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 2, 2016, as ''Read Across America Day'';

(2) honors Theodor Geisel (commonly known as ''Dr. Seuss'') for his success in encouraging children to discover the joy of reading;

(3) celebrates the 19th anniversary of Read Across America Day;

(4) encourages parents to read with their children for at least 30 minutes on Read Across America Day in honor of the commitment of the Senate to building a country of readers; and

(5) encourages the people of the United States to observe Read Across America Day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3386. Mr. COCHRAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) 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 3387. Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3388. Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Ms. AYOTTE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3389. Mr. WYDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3390. Mr. DAINES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3391. Mr. DAINES (for himself and Mr. PETERS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3392. Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Ms. STABENOW) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3393. Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. PAUL, Mr. REID, Mr. BENNET, Mr. WYDEN, Mrs. MURRAY, and Ms. WARREN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3394. Mr. LEAHY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3395. Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra.

SA 3396. Mr. WICKER (for himself, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. COCHRAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3397. Mr. HATCH (for himself and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3398. Mr. UDALL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3399. Ms. HEITKAMP submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3400. Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. KIRK) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3401. Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. KIRK) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3402. Mr. WYDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3403. Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3404. Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3405. Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3406. Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3407. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3408. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3409. Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. LANKFORD) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3410. Mr. REID submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3411. Mr. TESTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3412. Mr. MERKLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3413. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. TESTER, Mr. COCHRAN, and Ms. COLLINS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3414. Mr. BARRASSO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3415. Mr. BARRASSO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3416. Mr. BARRASSO 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 3386. Mr. COCHRAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) 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. ATTORNEY GENERAL COORDINATION WITH NATIONAL GUARD.

The Attorney General shall coordinate with the Chief of the National Guard Bureau to maximize the utilization and support of existing training facilities and programs of the National Guard, including counterdrug training centers, in carrying out this title, including by giving priority to entities seeking grants made under this title that utilize the National Guard training facilities and programs.

SA 3387. Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) 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. 7___. GAO REPORT ON GRANTS TO INDIAN TRIBES.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term ''Indian tribe'' has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603).

(2) TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.—The term ''tribal organization'' has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 250 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report—

(1) listing each Federal grant relating to mental health or substance abuse available to an Indian tribe or a tribal organization;

(2) describing the number of Indian tribes and tribal organizations receiving a grant described in paragraph (1);

(3) listing each Indian tribe and tribal organization that received a grant described in paragraph (1) during the period beginning on October 1, 2011, and ending on the date of enactment of this Act;

(4) identifying areas in which Federal agencies can increase coordination and collaboration to improve the ability of an Indian tribe or tribal organization to receive a grant described in paragraph (1); and

(5) identifying barriers that Indian tribes or tribal organizations frequently encounter when seeking a grant described in paragraph (1).

SA 3388. Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Ms. AYOTTE) 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—OPIOID OVERDOSE REDUCTION ACT

SEC. 801. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Opioid Overdose Reduction Act of 2016''.

SEC. 802. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

(a) 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 fivefold among women over the past decade.

(3) Nationwide, drug overdoses now claim more lives than car accidents.

(4) Overdose deaths from heroin and other opioids can be prevented if the person who overdosed is timely administered an opioid overdose drug.

(5) Medical personnel as well as non-medical personnel can be trained to administer opioid overdose drugs safely and effectively.

(6) On April 13, 2014, the Food and Drug Administration approved a prescription opioid overdose drug hand-held auto-injector for use by family members and caregivers to treat a person known or suspected to have had an opioid overdose.

(7) Several States, including Massachusetts, have established programs allowing for the administration of opioid overdose drugs by non-medical personnel, and those programs have saved lives.

(8) The willingness of medical and non-medical personnel to administer opioid overdose drugs may be deterred by potential civil liability, and the willingness of physicians to prescribe opioid overdose drugs to persons other than a patient may also be deterred by potential civil liability.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this title is to save the lives of people who intentionally or inadvertently overdose on heroin or other opioids by providing certain protections from civil liability with respect to the emergency administration of opioid overdose drugs.

SEC. 803. DEFINITIONS.

In this title—

(1) the term ''health care professional'' means a person licensed by a State to prescribe prescription drugs;

(2) the term ''opioid overdose drug'' means a drug that, when administered, reverses in whole or part the pharmacological effects of an opioid overdose in the human body; and

(3) the term ''opioid overdose program'' means a program operated by a local health department, community-based organization, substance abuse treatment organization, law enforcement agency, fire department, other first responder department, or voluntary association or a program funded by a Federal, State, or local government that works to prevent opioid overdoses by in part providing opioid overdose drugs and education to individuals at risk of experiencing an opioid overdose or to an individual in a position to assist another individual at risk of experiencing an opioid overdose.

SEC. 804. PREEMPTION AND ELECTION OF STATE NONAPPLICABILITY.

(a) PREEMPTION.—Except as provided in subsection (b), this title preempts the law of a State to the extent that such law is inconsistent with this title, except that this title shall not preempt any State law that provides additional protection from liability relating to the administration of opioid overdose drugs or that shields from liability any person who provides or administers opioid overdose drugs.

(b) ELECTION OF STATE REGARDING NONAPPLICABILITY.—Sections 805, 806, and 807 shall not apply to any civil action in a State court against a person who administers opioid overdose drugs if—

(1) all parties to the civil action are citizens of the State in which such action is brought; and

(2) the State enacts legislation in accordance with State requirements for enacting legislation—

(A) citing the authority of this subsection;

(B) declaring the election of the State that such sections 805, 806, and 807 shall not apply, as of a date certain, to any civil actions covered by this title; and

(C) containing no other provisions.

SEC. 805. LIMITATION ON CIVIL LIABILITY FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS WHO PROVIDE OPIOID OVERDOSE DRUGS.

(a) LIMITATION ON LIABILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a health care professional who prescribes or provides an opioid overdose drug to an individual at risk of experiencing an opioid overdose, or who prescribed or provided an opioid overdose drug to a family member, friend, or other individual in a position to assist an individual at risk of experiencing an opioid overdose, shall not be liable for harm caused by the use of the opioid overdose drug if the individual to whom such drug is prescribed or provided has been educated in accordance with paragraph (2) about opioid overdose prevention and treatment by the health care professional or as part of an opioid overdose program.

(2) EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS.—For purposes of paragraph (1), an individual who has been educated in accordance with this paragraph shall have been trained on—

(A) when to administer the opioid overdose drug;

(B) how to administer the opioid overdose drug; and

(C) the steps that need to be taken after administration of the opioid overdose drug.

(b) EXCEPTION.—Subsection (a) shall not apply to a health care professional if the harm was caused by the gross negligence or reckless misconduct of the health care professional.

SEC. 806. LIMITATION ON CIVIL LIABILITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WORKING FOR OR VOLUNTEERING AT A STATE OR LOCAL AGENCY OPIOID OVERDOSE PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, except as provided in subsection (b), no individual who provides an opioid overdose drug shall be liable for harm caused by the emergency administration of an opioid overdose drug by another individual if the individual who provides such drug—

(1) works for or volunteers at an opioid overdose program; and

(2) provides the opioid overdose drug as part of the opioid overdose program to an individual authorized by the program to receive an opioid overdose drug.

(b) EXCEPTION.—Subsection (a) shall not apply if the harm was caused by the gross negligence or reckless misconduct of the individual who provides the drug.

SEC. 807. LIMITATION ON CIVIL LIABILITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO ADMINISTER OPIOID OVERDOSE DRUGS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, except as provided in subsection (b), no individual shall be liable for harm caused by the emergency administration of an opioid overdose drug to an individual who has or reasonably appears to have suffered an overdose from heroin or other opioid, if—

(1) the individual who administers the opioid overdose drug—

(A) obtained the drug from a health care professional or as part of an opioid overdose program; or

(B) is doing so pursuant to a prescription for an opioid overdose drug under section 505 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355) or is licensed under section 351 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 262); and

(2) was educated in accordance with section 805(a)(2) by the health care professional or an opioid overdose program.

(b) EXCEPTION.—Subsection (a) shall not apply to an individual if the harm was

caused by the gross negligence or reckless misconduct of the individual who administers the drug.

SA 3389. Mr. WYDEN 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).

SEC. ___. INCREASED ANTI-KICKBACKS PENALTIES.

Paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 1128B(b) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320a–7b(b)) are each amended by inserting ''(or, beginning January 1, 2017, $50,000)'' after ''$25,000''.

SEC. ___. CENTER FOR MEDICARE AND MEDICAID INNOVATION TESTING OF OPIOID ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAM MODEL FOR PART D PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN ENROLLEES.

Section 1115A of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1315a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(2)(A), by adding at the end the following new sentence: ''The models selected under this subparagraph shall include the model described in subsection (h).''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(h) OPIOID ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAM MODEL.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall test a model requiring prescription drug plans under part D of title XVIII to have in place, directly or through appropriate arrangements, an opioid abuse treatment program for applicable enrollees in lieu of the medication therapy management program under section 1860D–4(c)(2) with respect to such applicable enrollees.

''(2) START DATE.—The model under this subsection shall start in plan year 2018.

''(3) SELECTION.—The Secretary shall select a limited number of Medicare part D regions in which to the model, giving priority to regions based on the number of total opioid prescriptions in the region.

''(4) REQUIREMENTS FOR PROGRAM.—Under an opioid abuse treatment program, the PDP sponsor offering the plan shall—

''(A) establish a care team that includes at least—

''(i) a pharmacist;

''(ii) a physician; and

''(iii) an individual licenced in a State with expertise in behavioral health (as determined by the Secretary), which may be the physician described in clause (ii); and

''(B) develop, in consultation with the applicable enrollee and with input from the prescriber to the extent necessary and practicable, a care plan for the applicable enrollee that is intended to treat the applicable enrollee's pain and limit any unnecessary opioid prescriptions when possible.

''(5) PAYMENT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Under the model under this subsection, the Secretary shall make a monthly payment to the PDP sponsor offering the prescription drug plan for each applicable enrollee who receives services under the opioid abuse treatment program.

''(B) SHARED SAVINGS.—Under the model under this subsection, the Secretary shall (using a methodology determined appropriate by the Secretary) make payments (in addition to the payments under subparagraph (A)) to the PDP sponsor offering the prescription drug plan if the Secretary determines that total spending under parts A, B, and D of title XVIII (and including the payments under subparagraph (A)) for applicable enrollees who receive services under the opioid abuse treatment program is less than a historical benchmark of total spending under such parts A, B, and D for such enrollees or similar enrollees. Such benchmark shall be adjusted at the Secretary's discretion for changes in law or regulation, unforeseen circumstances, or advances in medical practice.

''(6) QUALITY.—Under the model under this subsection, the Secretary shall measure the quality of care furnished by opioid abuse treatment programs, including elements related to access to care, the unnecessary use of opioids, pain management, and the delivery of behavioral health services.

''(7) APPLICABLE ENROLLEE.—In this subsection, the term 'applicable enrollee' means an individual who is, with respect to a prescription drug plan—

''(A) enrolled with the plan; and

''(B) an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse (as defined in section 1860D–4(c)(5)(C)).

''(8) MODEL NOT APPLICABLE TO MA–PD PLANS.—The model under this subsection shall not apply to MA–PD plans or enrollees of such plans.

''(9) CLARIFICATION OF APPLICATION.—For purposes of the preceding provisions of this section (including paragraphs (3) and (4) of subsection (b) and subsections (d) and (f)), the model under this subsection shall be deemed to be a model under subsection (b).''.

SA 3390. Mr. DAINES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) 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 8, after line 25, insert the following:

(19) Veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder are also at a high risk of substance abuse. According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, more than 20 percent of veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder also have a substance abuse disorder.

SA 3391. Mr. DAINES (for himself and Mr. PETERS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) 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 66, strike line 5 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.''.

SA 3392. Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Ms. STABENOW) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) 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. EXPANSION OF THE EXCELLENCE IN MENTAL HEALTH ACT.

Section 223(d)(3) of the Protecting Access to Medicare Act of 2014 (42 U.S.C. 1396a note) is amended by striking ''8'' and inserting ''24''.

SA 3393. Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. PAUL, Mr. REID, Mr. BENNET, Mr. WYDEN, Mrs. MURRAY, and Ms. WARREN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

TITLE ____—MARIJUANA BUSINESSES ACCESS TO BANKING

SEC. __01. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Marijuana Businesses Access to Banking Act of 2016''.

SEC. __02. SAFE HARBOR FOR DEPOSITORY INSTITUTIONS.

A Federal banking regulator may not—

(1) terminate or limit the deposit insurance or share insurance of a depository institution under the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1811 et seq.) or the Federal Credit Union Act (12 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.) solely because the depository institution provides or has provided financial services to a marijuana-related legitimate business;

(2) prohibit, penalize, or otherwise discourage a depository institution from providing financial services to a marijuana-related legitimate business;

(3) recommend, incentivize, or encourage a depository institution not to offer financial services to an individual, or to downgrade or cancel the financial services offered to an individual solely because—

(A) the individual is a manufacturer or producer, or is the owner or operator of a marijuana-related legitimate business;

(B) the individual later becomes an owner or operator of a marijuana-related legitimate business; or

(C) the depository institution was not aware that the individual is the owner or operator of a marijuana-related legitimate business; and

(4) take any adverse or corrective supervisory action on a loan to an owner or operator of—

(A) a marijuana-related legitimate business solely because the business owner or operator is a marijuana-related business; or

(B) real estate or equipment that is leased to a marijuana-related legitimate business solely because the owner or operator of the real estate or equipment leased the equipment or real estate to a marijuana-related legitimate business.

SEC. __03. PROTECTIONS UNDER FEDERAL LAW.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In a State or political subdivision that allows the cultivation, production, manufacturing, transportation, display, dispensing, distribution, sale, or purchase of marijuana pursuant to a law (including regulations) of the State or political subdivision, a depository institution and the officers, director, and employees of the depository institution that provides financial services to a marijuana-related legitimate business may not be held liable pursuant to any Federal law (including regulations)—

(1) solely for providing the financial services pursuant to the law (including regulations) of the State or political subdivision; or

(2) for further investing any income derived from the financial services.

(b) FORFEITURE.—A depository institution that has a legal interest in the collateral for a loan made to an owner or operator of a marijuana-related legitimate business, or to an owner or operator of real estate or equipment that is leased to a marijuana-related legitimate business, shall not be subject to criminal, civil, or administrative forfeiture of that legal interest pursuant to any Federal law for providing the loan.

SEC. __04. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this title shall require a depository institution to provide financial services to a marijuana-related legitimate business.

SEC. __05. REQUIREMENTS FOR FILING SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY REPORTS.

Section 5318(g) of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(5) REQUIREMENTS FOR MARIJUANA-RELATED BUSINESSES.—A financial institution or any director, officer, employee, or agent of a financial institution that reports a suspicious transaction pursuant to a marijuana-related legitimate business (as defined in section 6 of the Marijuana Businesses Access to Banking Act of 2016) shall comply with appropriate guidance issued by the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network. The Secretary shall ensure that the guidance is consistent with the purpose and intent of the Marijuana Businesses Access to Banking Act of 2016 and does not inhibit the provision of financial services to a marijuana-related legitimate business in a State or political subdivision of a State that has allowed the cultivation, production, manufacturing, transportation, display, dispensing, distribution, sale, or purchase of marijuana pursuant to law or regulation of the State or political subdivision.''.

SEC. __06. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) DEPOSITORY INSTITUTION.—The term ''depository institution'' means—

(A) a depository institution as defined in section 3(c) of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1813(c));

(B) a Federal credit union as defined in section 101 of the Federal Credit Union Act (12 U.S.C. 1752); or

(C) a State credit union as defined in section 101 of the Federal Credit Union Act (12 U.S.C. 1752).

(2) FEDERAL BANKING REGULATOR.—The term ''Federal banking regulator'' means each of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the National Credit Union Administration, or any Federal agency or department that regulates banking or financial services, as determined by the Secretary of the Treasury.

(3) FINANCIAL SERVICE.—The term ''financial service'' means a financial product or service as defined in section 1002 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (12 U.S.C. 5481).

(4) MANUFACTURER.—The term ''manufacturer'' means a person who manufactures, compounds, converts, processes, prepares, or packages marijuana or marijuana products.

(5) MARIJUANA-RELATED LEGITIMATE BUSINESS.—The term ''marijuana-related legitimate business'' means a manufacturer, producer, or any person that—

(A) participates in any business or organized activity that involves handling marijuana or marijuana products, including cultivating, producing, manufacturing, selling, transporting, displaying, dispensing, distributing, or purchasing marijuana or marijuana products; and

(B) engages in such activity pursuant to a law established by a State or a political subdivision of a State.

(6) MARIJUANA.—The term ''marijuana'' has the meaning given the term ''marihuana'' in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802).

(7) MARIJUANA PRODUCT.—The term ''marijuana product'' means any article which contains marijuana, including an article which is a concentrate, an edible, a tincture, a marijuana-infused product, or a topical.

(8) PRODUCER.—The term ''producer'' means a person who plants, cultivates, harvests, or in any way facilitates the natural growth of marijuana.

(9) STATE.—The term ''State'' means each of the several States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and any territory or possession of the United States.

SA 3394. Mr. LEAHY 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. ____. OPIOID ADDICTION TREATMENT.

Section 303(g)(2)(B)(ii) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(g)(2)(B)(ii)) is amended by adding at the end the following: ''Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016, the federally regulated opioid addiction treatment infrastructure shall be organized according to the hub and spoke model, so that the following goals are met without causing undue burden on physician practices:

''(I) Opioid addicted individuals who are patients in a federally regulated opioid addiction treatment program should be educated about all treatment options and strategies.

''(II) Each patient shall be offered an individualized assessment, followed by a treatment plan developed with the patient's involvement.

''(III) Patient compliance and progress should be monitored to protect against medication diversion and to guide changes to the treatment plan as needed.

''(IV) All practitioners participating in a federally regulated opioid addiction treatment program shall offer, either directly or by referral, the treatments that are most appropriate for the patient.

''(V) Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services shall ensure training on all available treatments as well as treatments that may become available in the future.''.

SA 3395. Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) 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; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. INCREASED ANTI-KICKBACKS PENALTIES.

Paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 1128B(b) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320a–7b(b)) are each amended by inserting ''(or, beginning January 1, 2017, $50,000)'' after ''$25,000''.

SEC. ____. CENTER FOR MEDICARE AND MEDICAID INNOVATION TESTING OF OPIOID ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAM MODEL FOR PART D PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN ENROLLEES.

Section 1115A of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1315a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(2)(A), by adding at the end the following new sentence: ''The models selected under this subparagraph shall include the model described in subsection (h).''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(h) OPIOID ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAM MODEL.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall test a model requiring prescription drug plans under part D of title XVIII to have in place, directly or through appropriate arrangements, an opioid abuse treatment program for applicable enrollees in lieu of the medication therapy management program under section 1860D–4(c)(2) with respect to such applicable enrollees.

''(2) START DATE.—The model under this subsection shall start in plan year 2018.

''(3) SELECTION.—The Secretary shall select a limited number of Medicare part D regions in which to the model, giving priority to regions based on the number of total opioid prescriptions in the region.

''(4) REQUIREMENTS FOR PROGRAM.—Under an opioid abuse treatment program, the PDP sponsor offering the plan shall—

''(A) establish a care team that includes at least—

''(i) a pharmacist;

''(ii) a physician; and

''(iii) an individual licenced in a State with expertise in behavioral health (as determined by the Secretary), which may be the physician described in clause (ii); and

''(B) develop, in consultation with the applicable enrollee and with input from the prescriber to the extent necessary and practicable, a care plan for the applicable enrollee that is intended to treat the applicable enrollee's pain and limit any unnecessary opioid prescriptions when possible.

''(5) PAYMENT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Under the model under this subsection, the Secretary shall make a monthly payment to the PDP sponsor offering the prescription drug plan for each applicable enrollee who receives services under the opioid abuse treatment program.

''(B) SHARED SAVINGS.—Under the model under this subsection, the Secretary shall (using a methodology determined appropriate by the Secretary) make payments (in addition to the payments under subparagraph (A)) to the PDP sponsor offering the prescription drug plan if the Secretary determines that total spending under parts A, B, and D of title XVIII (and including the payments under subparagraph (A)) for applicable enrollees who receive services under the opioid abuse treatment program is less than a historical benchmark of total spending under such parts A, B, and D for such enrollees or similar enrollees. Such benchmark shall be adjusted at the Secretary's discretion for changes in law or regulation, unforeseen circumstances, or advances in medical practice.

''(6) QUALITY.—Under the model under this subsection, the Secretary shall measure the quality of care furnished by opioid abuse treatment programs, including elements related to access to care, the unnecessary use of opioids, pain management, and the delivery of behavioral health services.

''(7) APPLICABLE ENROLLEE.—In this subsection, the term 'applicable enrollee' means an individual who is, with respect to a prescription drug plan—

''(A) enrolled with the plan; and

''(B) an at-risk beneficiary for prescription drug abuse (as defined in section 1860D–4(c)(5)(C)).

''(8) MODEL NOT APPLICABLE TO MA–PD PLANS.—The model under this subsection shall not apply to MA–PD plans or enrollees of such plans.

''(9) CLARIFICATION OF APPLICATION.—For purposes of the preceding provisions of this section (including paragraphs (3) and (4) of subsection (b) and subsections (d) and (f)), the model under this subsection shall be deemed to be a model under subsection (b).''.

SA 3396. Mr. WICKER (for himself, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. COCHRAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) 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 DIRECT PAYMENT TO PHARMACIES FOR CERTAIN COMPOUNDED DRUGS THAT ARE PREPARED BY THE PHARMACIES FOR A SPECIFIC BENEFICIARY FOR USE THROUGH AN IMPLANTED INFUSION PUMP.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The first sentence of section 1842(b)(6) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395u(b)(6)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''and'' before ''(H)''; and

(2) by inserting before the period at the end the following: '', and (I) in the case of covered compounded drugs that are prepared by a pharmacy for a specific individual, are dispensed, directly or indirectly, to the individual, are necessary for the effective use of, or therapeutic benefit from, an implanted infusion pump (regardless who refills the pump), and are billed directly by the pharmacy, payment shall be made to the pharmacy''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply to drugs dispensed on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3397. Mr. HATCH (for himself and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) 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—ENSURING PATIENT ACCESS AND EFFECTIVE DRUG ENFORCEMENT ACT

SEC. 801. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Ensuring Patient Access and Effective Drug Enforcement Act of 2016''.

SEC. 802. REGISTRATION PROCESS UNDER CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES ACT.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—

(1) FACTORS AS MAY BE RELEVANT TO AND CONSISTENT WITH THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY.—Section 303 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(j) In this section, the phrase 'factors as may be relevant to and consistent with the public health and safety' means factors that are relevant to and consistent with the findings contained in section 101.''.

(2) IMMINENT DANGER TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH OR SAFETY.—Section 304(d) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 824(d)) is amended—

(A) by striking ''(d) The Attorney General'' and inserting ''(d)(1) The Attorney General''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) In this subsection, the phrase 'imminent danger to the public health or safety' means that, due to the failure of the registrant to maintain effective controls against diversion or otherwise comply with the obligations of a registrant under this title or title III, there is a substantial likelihood of an immediate threat that death, serious bodily harm, or abuse of a controlled substance will occur in the absence of an immediate suspension of the registration.''.

(b) OPPORTUNITY TO SUBMIT CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN PRIOR TO REVOCATION OR SUSPENSION.—Subsection (c) of section 304 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 824) is amended—

(1) by striking the last three sentences;

(2) by striking ''(c) Before'' and inserting ''(c)(1) Before''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) An order to show cause under paragraph (1) shall—

''(A) contain a statement of the basis for the denial, revocation, or suspension, including specific citations to any laws or regulations alleged to be violated by the applicant or registrant;

''(B) direct the applicant or registrant to appear before the Attorney General at a time and place stated in the order, but not less than 30 days after the date of receipt of the order; and

''(C) notify the applicant or registrant of the opportunity to submit a corrective action plan on or before the date of appearance.

''(3) Upon review of any corrective action plan submitted by an applicant or registrant pursuant to paragraph (2), the Attorney General shall determine whether denial, revocation, or suspension proceedings should be discontinued, or deferred for the purposes of modification, amendment, or clarification to such plan.

''(4) Proceedings to deny, revoke, or suspend shall be conducted pursuant to this section in accordance with subchapter II of chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code. Such proceedings shall be independent of, and not in lieu of, criminal prosecutions or other proceedings under this title or any other law of the United States.

''(5) The requirements of this subsection shall not apply to the issuance of an immediate suspension order under subsection (d).''.

SEC. 803. REPORT TO CONGRESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—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, the Administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the Director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in coordination with the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration and in consultation with the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, shall submit a report to the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives, the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate, and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate identifying—

(1) obstacles to legitimate patient access to controlled substances;

(2) issues with diversion of controlled substances;

(3) how collaboration between Federal, State, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies and the pharmaceutical industry can benefit patients and prevent diversion and abuse of controlled substances;

(4) the availability of medical education, training opportunities, and comprehensive clinical guidance for pain management and opioid prescribing, and any gaps that should be addressed;

(5) beneficial enhancements to State prescription drug monitoring programs, including enhancements to require comprehensive prescriber input and to expand access to the programs for appropriate authorized users; and

(6) steps to improve reporting requirements so that the public and Congress have more information regarding prescription opioids, such as the volume and formulation of prescription opioids prescribed annually, the dispensing of such prescription opioids, and outliers and trends within large data sets.

(b) CONSULTATION.—The report under subsection (a) shall incorporate feedback and recommendations from the following:

(1) Patient groups.

(2) Pharmacies.

(3) Drug manufacturers.

(4) Common or contract carriers and warehousemen.

(5) Hospitals, physicians, and other health care providers.

(6) State attorneys general.

(7) Federal, State, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies.

(8) Health insurance providers and entities that provide pharmacy benefit management services on behalf of a health insurance provider.

(9) Wholesale drug distributors.

(10) Veterinarians.

(11) Professional medical societies and boards.

(12) State and local public health authorities.

(13) Health services research organizations.

SA 3398. Mr. UDALL 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. ____. PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE TRAINING AND SCREENING PROGRAMS.

A practitioner who registers or renews a registration under section 303(f) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(f)) shall, at the time of registering, certify to the Attorney General that such practitioner has completed continuing medical education or nursing continuing education, as applicable—

(1) in the case of a practitioner registering for the first time, with respect to prescription drug abuse; and

(2) in the case of a practitioner renewing a registration, with respect to medical understanding of the proper use of all drugs listed in the schedules under section 202 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812).

SA 3399. Ms. HEITKAMP 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 VI, add the following:

SEC. 602. COORDINATION OF PRESCRIPTION DRUG MONITORING PROGRAMS WITH THE INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE.

(a) DEFINITION OF ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—In this section, the term ''eligible entity'' means—

(1) a State; or

(2) an Indian tribe (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b)).

(b) GRANTS FOR COORDINATION PILOT PROGRAMS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General, subject to the availability of appropriations, may award grants to eligible entities under the Harold Rogers Prescription Drug Monitoring Program established under the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2002 (Public Law 107–77; 115 Stat. 748) to carry out a pilot program described in paragraph (2).

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—An eligible entity awarded a grant under paragraph (1) to carry out a pilot program shall coordinate with 1 or more service units of the Indian Health Service in the State or on the applicable Indian land and meaningfully consult and engage in a timely manner with Indian tribes served by the service units to improve the connection, coordination, and interoperability of each applicable Indian health program (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603)) with the prescription drug monitoring program of the applicable State.

(c) GAO STUDY.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall study and submit to the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a report identifying barriers to, and potential solutions to improve, coordination between—

(1) each applicable Indian health program (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603)); and

(2) prescription drug monitoring programs in the United States.

SA 3400. Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. KIRK) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) 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. _____. HIGH INTENSITY DRUG TRAFFICKING AREAS PROGRAM.

Section 707 of the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 1998 (21 U.S.C. 1706) is amended—

(1) in subsection (o)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by inserting '', heroin, opioid, and synthetic drugs'' after ''methamphetamine''; and

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by inserting '', heroin, opioid, and synthetic drug'' after ''methamphetamine'';

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by inserting '', heroin, opioids, synthetic drugs,'' after ''methamphetamine''; and

(iii) in subparagraph (C), by inserting '', heroin, opioids, synthetic drugs,'' after ''methamphetamine'';

(2) in subsection (p)(5), by striking ''fiscal year 2011'' and inserting ''fiscal years 2016 through 2020''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(r) HEROIN AND OPIOID RESPONSE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION.—Using discretionary funds made available under this section, the Director, in consultation with the official in charge of each high intensity drug trafficking area, is authorized to implement a heroin and opioid response strategy in high intensity drug trafficking areas on a nationwide basis by—

''(1) coordinating multi-disciplinary efforts to address the threat of heroin and opioids;

''(2) increasing data sharing among public safety and public health officials concerning heroin and opioid abuse trends and related crime; and

''(3) enabling collaborative deployment of intervention, enforcement, and prevention resources to address heroin and opioid addiction and heroin and opioid trafficking.''.

SA 3401. Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. KIRK) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr.

COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) 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. _____. HEROIN RESPONSE STRATEGY.

Section 707 of the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 1998 (21 U.S.C. 1706) is amended—

(1) in subsection (o)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by inserting ", heroin, opioid, and synthetic drugs" after "methamphetamine"; and

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by inserting ", heroin, opioid, and synthetic drug" after "methamphetamine";

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by inserting ", heroin, opioids, synthetic drugs," after "methamphetamine"; and

(iii) in subparagraph (C), by inserting ", heroin, opioids, synthetic drugs," after "methamphetamine"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

"(r) HEROIN AND OPIOID RESPONSE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION.—Using discretionary funds made available under this section, the Director, in consultation with the official in charge of each high intensity drug trafficking area, is authorized to implement a heroin and opioid response strategy in high intensity drug trafficking areas on a nationwide basis by—

"(1) coordinating multi-disciplinary efforts to address the threat of heroin and opioids;

"(2) increasing data sharing among public safety and public health officials concerning heroin and opioid abuse trends and related crime; and

"(3) enabling collaborative deployment of intervention, enforcement, and prevention resources to address heroin and opioid addiction and heroin and opioid trafficking.".

SA 3402. Mr. WYDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) 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 COVERAGE PROTECTION FOR PREGNANT AND POST-PARTUM WOMEN WHILE RECEIVING INPATIENT TREATMENT FOR A SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER.

(a) MEDICAID STATE PLAN.—Section 1905(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence: "In the case of a woman who is eligible for medical assistance on the basis of being pregnant (including through the end of the month in which the 60-day period beginning on the last day of her pregnancy ends),who is a patient in an institution for mental diseases for purposes of receiving treatment for a substance use disorder, and who was enrolled for medical assistance under the State plan immediately before becoming a patient in an institution for mental diseases or who becomes eligible to enroll for such medical assistance while such a patient, the exclusion from the definition of 'medical assistance' set forth in the subdivision (B) following paragraph (29) of the first sentence shall not be construed as prohibiting Federal financial participation for medical assistance for items or services that are provided to the woman outside of the institution.".

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) RULE FOR CHANGES REQUIRING STATE LEGISLATION.—In the case of a State plan 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 3403. Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) 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 2997(a)(2)(A) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as added by section 103 of the bill, insert after "1997" the following: ", or is an Indian tribe".

In section 2997(a)(2)(B) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as added by section 103 of the bill, in the matter preceding clause (i), insert "or tribal" after "local".

In section 2997(a)(3)(A) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as added by section 103 of the bill, insert "or tribal" after "local".

In section 2997(a)(3)(B) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as added by section 103 of the bill, insert "or tribal" after "local".

In section 2997 of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as added by section 103 of the bill, redesignate subsections (e), (f), and (g) as subsections (f), (g), and (h), respectively, and insert after subsection (d) the following:

"(e) GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION.—The Attorney General 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.

SA 3404. Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) 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 201(a)(1), strike "Indian tribe," and insert the following: "Indian tribe (as defined in section 901(a) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3791(a))),".

In section 201(b)(2), strike "between State criminal justice systems and State substance abuse systems" and insert "between State or tribal criminal justice systems and State or tribal substance abuse systems".

In section 201(c)(2)(A), insert ", or in the case of an Indian tribe, Federal or tribal agencies," after "local government agencies".

In section 201(c)(2)(B), insert "if feasible," before "demonstrate".

In section 201(c)(2)(C), insert ", or in the case of an Indian tribe, a tribal criminal justice planning agency" after "agency".

SA 3405. Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) 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 201(h)(1), insert after "between the agencies," the following: "or between the agencies and tribal governments,".

In section 201(h), insert after paragraph (1) the following:

(2) a State, unit of local government, or nonprofit organization that submits an application that proposes to use grant funds to facilitate or enhance planning and collaboration with Indian tribes; and

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SA 3406. Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) 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 2999(b) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as added by section 204, in the matter preceding paragraph (1), strike "State law enforcement agencies" and insert "State, tribal, or local law enforcement agencies, or Indian tribes served by the Bureau of Indian Affairs,".

SA 3407. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) 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. REFUGEES AND UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN.

(a) EQUITABLE TREATMENT OF UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 235(a)(2) of the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008 (8 U.S.C. 1232(a)) is amended—

(A) by striking the paragraph heading and inserting ''RULES FOR UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN.—'';

(B) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''who is a national or habitual resident of a country that is contiguous with the United States''; and

(C) in subparagraph (C)—

(i) by striking the subparagraph heading and inserting ''AGREEMENTS WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES.—''; and

(ii) by striking ''countries contiguous to the United States'' and inserting ''Canada, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, and any other foreign country that the Secretary determines appropriate''.

(2) APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply to any unaccompanied alien child who was apprehended on or after October 1, 2015.

(b) EXPEDITED REMOVAL AUTHORITY FOR UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN FROM CERTAIN COUNTRIES.—Section 235(a)(5)(D) of the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008 (8 U.S.C. 1232(a)(5)(D)) is amended—

(1) by striking the subparagraph heading and inserting ''EXPEDITED REMOVAL FOR UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN.—'';

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

(A) by inserting ''described in paragraph (2)(A) who is'' after ''Any unaccompanied alien child''; and

(B) by striking '', except for an unaccompanied alien child from a contiguous country subject to exceptions under subsection (a)(2),''; and

(3) by amending clause (i) to read as follows:

''(i) placed in an expedited removal proceeding in accordance with section 235 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1225);''.

(c) INCREASING THE NUMBER OF REFUGEE ADMISSIONS FROM CERTAIN COUNTRIES.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the President, in determining the number of refugees who may be admitted under section 207(a) for fiscal years 2016 and 2017, shall authorize the admission, in each such fiscal year, of—

(1) up to 5,000 refugees from El Salvador;

(2) up to 5,000 refugees from Guatemala; and

(3) up to 5,000 refugees from Honduras.

SA 3408. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of the amendment, add the following:

SEC. 705. UNLAWFULLY HINDERING IMMIGRATION, BORDER, AND CUSTOMS CONTROLS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Transnational Criminal Organization Illicit Spotter Prevention and Elimination Act''.

(b) ENHANCED PENALTIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 9 of title II of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1351 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 295. UNLAWFULLY HINDERING IMMIGRATION, BORDER, AND CUSTOMS CONTROLS.

''(a) ILLICIT SPOTTING.—Any person who knowingly transmits, by any means, to another person the location, movement, or activities of any Federal, State, local, or tribal law enforcement agency with the intent to further a Federal crime relating to United States immigration, customs, controlled substances, agriculture, monetary instruments, or other border controls shall be fined under title 18, imprisoned not more than 10 years, or both.

''(b) DESTRUCTION OF UNITED STATES BORDER CONTROLS.—Any person who knowingly and without lawful authorization destroys, alters, or damages any fence, barrier, sensor, camera, or other physical or electronic device deployed by the Federal Government to control the border or a port of entry or otherwise seeks to construct, excavate, or make any structure intended to defeat, circumvent, or evade any such fence, barrier, sensor camera, or other physical or electronic device deployed by the Federal Government to control the border or a port of entry—

''(1) shall be fined under title 18, imprisoned not more than 10 years, or both; and

''(2) if, at the time of the offense, the person uses or carries a firearm or who, in furtherance of any such crime, possesses a firearm, that person shall be fined under title 18, imprisoned not more than 20 years, or both.

''(c) CONSPIRACY AND ATTEMPT.—Any person who attempts or conspires to violate subsection (a) or (b) shall be punished in the same manner as a person who completes a violation of such subsection.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in the first section of the Immigration and Nationality Act is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 294 the following:

''Sec. 295. Unlawfully hindering immigration, border, and customs controls.''.

(c) PROHIBITING CARRYING OR USE OF A FIREARM DURING AND IN RELATION TO AN ALIEN SMUGGLING CRIME.—Section 924(c) of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by inserting '', alien smuggling crime,'' after ''crime of violence'' each place that term appears; and

(B) in subparagraph (D)(ii), by inserting '', alien smuggling crime,'' after ''crime of violence''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(6) For purposes of this subsection, the term 'alien smuggling crime' means any felony punishable under section 274(a), 277, or 278 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1324(a), 1327, and 1328).''.

(d) STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS.—Section 3298 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting '', 295, 296, or 297'' after ''274(a)''.

SA 3409. Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. LANKFORD) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) 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. ____. EVALUATION OF THE HOSPITAL CONSUMER ASSESSMENT OF HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS AND SYSTEMS (HCAHPS) SURVEY; MORATORIUM ON THE USE OF PAIN MANAGEMENT MEASURES TO ASSESS HOSPITAL PERFORMANCE SCORES UNDER THE MEDICARE VBP PROGRAM IN ORDER TO ALLOW TIME FOR EVALUATION.

(a) EVALUATION.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services (in this section referred to as the ''Secretary'') shall conduct an evaluation of the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) survey, including items on such survey related to pain management. Such evaluation shall include an analysis of—

(1) any implications of using such survey under the Medicare hospital value-based purchasing program under section 1886(o) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395ww) on opioid prescribing practices;

(2) how best to revise such survey and any effect that such revisions may have on quality of care; and

(3) other areas determined appropriate by the Secretary.

(b) INPUT.—As part of conducting the evaluation under subsection (a), the Secretary shall convene a group that includes the Interagency Pain Research Coordinating Committee, hospital representatives, physicians and other health care providers, experts in the fields of pain research and addiction research, and representatives of the addiction community, pain management professional organizations, and pain advocacy groups to provide the Secretary with input on the items to be evaluated.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than March 1, 2017, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the evaluation conducted under subsection (a), together with recommendations for such legislation and administrative action as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

(d) MORATORIUM ON THE USE OF PAIN MANAGEMENT MEASURES TO ASSESS HOSPITAL PERFORMANCE SCORES UNDER THE MEDICARE VBP PROGRAM IN ORDER TO ALLOW TIME FOR EVALUATION.—Section 1886(o)(5)of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395ww(o)(5)) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence of subparagraph (A), by striking ''subparagraph (B)'' and inserting ''subparagraphs (B) and (C)''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(C) MORATORIUM ON USE MEASURES OF PAIN MANAGEMENT TO ASSESS HOSPITAL PERFORMANCE SCORES.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—With respect to payments for discharges occurring during fiscal year 2017, the performance of a hospital on measures of pain management during the performance period for such fiscal year shall not be used in assessing the hospital performance score of the hospital for such performance period.

''(ii) NO AFFECT ON REPORTING OF SELECTED MEASURES.—Nothing in the clause (i) shall affect the requirement for a hospital to report measures selected under paragraph (2), including any measures related to pain management.''.

SA 3410. Mr. REID submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) to the bill S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I, add the following:

SEC. ____. SUPPORT FOR STATE RESPONSE TO SUBSTANCE ABUSE PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS AND URGENT MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated, and are appropriated, out of monies in the Treasury not otherwise obligated, $750,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 and 2017, to the Secretary of Health and Human Services (referred to in this section as the ''Secretary'') to award grants to States to address the substance abuse public health crisis or to respond to urgent mental health needs within the State. In awarding grants under this section, the Secretary may give preference to States with an incidence or prevalence of substance use disorders that is substantial relative to other States or to States that identify mental health needs within their communities that are urgent relative to such needs of other States. Funds appropriated under this subsection shall remain available until expended.

(b) USE OF FUNDS.—Grants awarded to a State under subsection (a) shall be used for one or more of the following public health-related activities:

(1) Improving State prescription drug monitoring programs.

(2) Implementing prevention activities, and evaluating such activities to identify effective strategies to prevent substance abuse.

(3) Training for health care practitioners, such as best practices for prescribing opioids, pain management, recognizing potential cases of substance abuse, referral of patients to treatment programs, and overdose prevention.

(4) Supporting access to health care services provided by Federally certified opioid treatment programs or other appropriate health care providers to treat substance use disorders or mental health needs.

(5) Other public health-related activities, as the State determines appropriate, related to addressing the substance abuse public health crisis or responding to urgent mental health needs within the State.

SA 3411. Mr. TESTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) 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(c)(1), strike subparagraphs (H) and (I) and insert the following:

(H) the National Institutes of Health;

(I) the Office of National Drug Control Policy; and

(J) the Indian Health Service;

In section 101(d)(1)(C), strike ''State and'' and insert ''State, tribal, and''.

In section 101(f)(2), strike the period at the end and insert ''and the Indian Health Service.''.

In section 2997(a) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.) (as amended by section 103), strike paragraph (2) and insert the following:

(2) the term ''eligible entity'' means an organization that—

(A)(i) 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

(ii) has documented, using local or tribal 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 subclause (I)), over a sustained period of time; or

(B) is a tribal organization (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603));

In section 201(b)(1)(B)(vii), strike ''and veterans treatment courts'' and insert ''veterans treatment courts, and tribal courts''.

In section 201(b)(2), insert ''and tribal'' after ''State criminal''.

In section 201(c)(2)(A), strike ''State and'' and insert ''State, tribal, and''.

In section 201(c)(2)(D), strike ''and'' at the end.

In section 201(c)(2)(E), strike the period at the end and insert ''; and''.

At the end of section 201(c)(2), add the following:

(F) demonstrate consultation with affected Indian tribes.

At the end of section 201, add the following:

(k) TRIBAL SET-ASIDE.—Not less than 5 percent of the amounts made available to carry out this section for a fiscal year shall be made available to Indian tribes and tribal organizations (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603)).

At the end of section 203, add the following:

(c) TRIBAL SET-ASIDE.—Not less than 5 percent of the amounts made available to carry out this section for a fiscal year shall be made available to Indian tribes and tribal organizations (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603)).

In section 2999(b) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.) (as added by section 204), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), insert ''and tribal'' after ''State''.

In section 302(e)(1), strike ''and'' at the end.

In section 302(e)(2)(B), strike the period at the end and insert ''; and''.

At the end of section 302(e), add the following:

(3) consults with affected Indian tribes.

At the end of section 302, add the following:

(i) TRIBAL SET-ASIDE.—Not less than 5 percent of the amounts made available to carry out this section for a fiscal year shall be made available to Indian tribes and tribal organizations (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603)).

In section 2999B(a)(1)(D) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.) (as added by section 303), strike ''or'' at the end.

In section 2999B(a)(1)(E) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.) (as added by section 303), strike the period at the end and insert ''; or''.

At the end of section 2999B(a)(1) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.) (as added by section 303), add the following:

(F) a Bureau of Indian Education-funded school.

In section 2999D(a) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.) (as added by section 401), strike the period at the end and insert ''or tribal organization.''.

In section 2999D(b)(5) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.) (as added by section 401), insert ''Tribal Colleges and Universities (as defined in section 316(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1059c(b)))'' after ''universities,''.

In section 402(b)(2)(B)(i), insert ''Indian affairs,'' after ''employment,''.

In subsection (r)(3)(B) of section 508 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb–1) (as amended by section 501(b)(2)), insert ''Indian tribes and tribal organizations,'' after ''agencies,''.

In section 2999E of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc et seq.) (as added by section 702), strike the period at the end and insert '', of which not less than 5 percent shall be made available to Indian tribes and tribal organizations (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603)).''.

SA 3412. Mr. MERKLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3378 proposed by Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. DURBIN) 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. ____. IMPROVING MEDICARE COVERAGE FOR BENEFICIARIES WITH DRUG AND ALCOHOL ADDICTIONS.

(a) ENSURING COVERAGE OF OPIOID DETOXIFICATION UNDER MEDICARE PART A.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1812 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395d) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(h) Coverage for opioid detoxification (as defined by the Secretary) shall be available under this part in a similar manner as the coverage for alcohol detoxification is available under this part.''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall apply to discharges occurring on or after October 1, 2016.

(b) INCLUSION OF METHADONE AS A COVERED PART D DRUG.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1860D–2(e)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–102(e)(1)) is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''or'' at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking the comma at the end and inserting ''; or''; and

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

''(C) methadone for the treatment of opioid dependence,''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by paragraph (1) shall apply to plan year 2017 and subsequent plan years.

(c) PERMITTING SUBSTANCE ABUSE COUNSELORS TO FURNISH ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE THERAPY SERVICES UNDER MEDICARE PART B.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1842(b)(18)(C) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395u(b)(18)(C)) is amended by adding at the end the following new clause:

''(vii) A substance abuse counselor (as defined by the Secretary) with respect to the furnishing of alcohol and drug abuse therapy services (as defined by the Secretary) that

such counselor is authorized to furnish under State law.''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall apply to items and services furnished on or after January 1, 2017.

SA 3413. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. TESTER, Mr. COCHRAN, and Ms. COLLINS) 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, INCLUDING ALTERNATIVES TO OPIOIDS, FOR EFFECTIVE PAIN MANAGEMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Out of any money appropriated to the National Institutes of Health (referred to in this section as the ''NIH'') not otherwise obligated, the Director of the NIH may intensify and coordinate fundamental, translational, and clinical research of the NIH with respect to—

(1) the understanding of pain;

(2) the discovery and development of therapies for chronic pain; and

(3) the development of alternatives to opioids for effective pain treatments.

(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 3414. Mr. BARRASSO 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:

In section 101(d)(1)(C), strike ''and local'' and insert '', tribal, and local''.

In section 101(f)(2), insert ''and the Indian Health Service'' before the period at the end.

SA 3415. Mr. BARRASSO 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:

In section 302(c)(2)(A), insert ''or, in the case of an Indian tribe, Federal or tribal agencies'' before ''; and''.

In section 302(e)(1), strike ''and'' at the end.

In section 302(e)(2), strike subparagraph (B) and insert the following:

(B) concluded that the law described in subparagraph (A) provides adequate civil liability protection applicable to such persons; and

(3) consults with affected Indian tribes.

In section 508(r)(3)(B) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb–1) (as amended by section 501(b)(2)), insert ''Indian tribes,'' after ''agencies,''.

In section 601(b)(4)(C)(vi), insert ''and affected Indian tribes'' before ''; and''.

In section 601(b)(5)(E), strike ''and'' at the end.

In section 601(b)(5)(F), strike the period at the end and insert ''; and''.

In section 601(b)(5), add at the end the following:

(G) ensures consultation with affected Indian tribes.

SA 3416. Mr. BARRASSO 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:

In section 402(a), strike ''or State'' and insert '', State, or tribal''.

In section 402(b)(2)(B)(iii), strike ''State and'' and insert ''State, tribal, and''.

In section 402(c)(1)(A), strike ''or State'' and insert '', State, or tribal''.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 2, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SR–253 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled ''Oversight of the Federal Communications Commission.''

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

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 2, 2016, at 9:30 a.m., in room SD–406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Economic Opportunities from Land Cleanup Programs and a Legislative Hearing on S. 1479, Brownfields Utilization, Investment, and Local Development Act of 2015, S. 2446, Improving Coal Combustion Residuals Regulation Act of 2016 and Discussion Draft of Good Samaritan Cleanup of Orphan Mines Act of 2016.''

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

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 2, 2016.

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 2, 2016, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Economic and Geopolitical Implications of Low Oil.''

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

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 2, 2016.

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

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 2, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD–G50 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Tim Brown, a research follow on my team, be allowed privileges of the floor.

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

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Jennifer DeVito, a fellow in my office, be granted the privilege of the floor for the duration of consideration of S. 524.

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

READ ACROSS AMERICA DAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 384, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 384) designating March 2, 2016, as ''Read Across America Day.''

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. 384) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 2016

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m. tomorrow, Thursday, March 3; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of S. 524.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senators CASEY and BENNET.

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

The Senator from Colorado.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I am here tonight to discuss the Supreme Court vacancy caused by Justice Antonin Scalia's death.

First, I think it is important to reflect on Justice Scalia's life and profound contribution and influence on the Court and our country. He was one of the longest serving Justices in our Nation's history, and, as far as I can tell, every single day he served, he applied his considerable intellect, integrity, and wit to the work before him.

Although I disagreed with many of his decisions, I never doubted his commitment to the rule of law. He was a principled originalist. He was loyal to his country. By all accounts, including moving testimony from his children, he was devoted to his family and to his friends, including to Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, with whom he often disagreed.

Judge Scalia's judicial philosophy was well understood when President Reagan nominated him to the Supreme Court in 1986. Many Senators then opposed his judicial approach, but in an echoing indictment of today's Senate and its partisanship, 30 years ago the U.S. Senate confirmed Justice Scalia 98 to 0—a vote that testifies to Justice Scalia's qualifications and to the integrity of Members of this body who disagreed with his vision of the Constitution but, exercising their constitutional duty, refused to withhold their support for a qualified nominee.

Here is what article II, section 2, clause 2 says about our and the President's duty: The President ''shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint . . . Judges of the supreme Court.''

When a vacancy arises, the President shall nominate a replacement and the Senate shall advise and consent by voting on that nominee. That is what the plain language of the Constitution requires, and that is what Presidents and the Senate have done throughout our history. That is why, in the past 100 years, the Senate has taken action on every single Supreme Court nominee—even those made during a Presidential election year. Throughout our history, there have been at least 17 nominees confirmed by the Senate in Presidential election years. The last of these was Justice Kennedy in 1988.

This history reveals that when the chairman of the Judiciary Committee said last week that ''[t]he fact of the matter is that it's been standard practice over the last 80 years to not confirm Supreme Court nominees during a presidential election year,'' he was incorrect. The fact of the matter is that since the founding of this country, the Senate has done its job even in an election year. In fact, during one election year, the Senate voted to confirm not just one but three Justices to fill vacancies on the Court. The President was none other than George Washington, and he was in the fourth year of his second term when that happened. That Senate included some of our Founders, delegates to the Constitutional Convention. But, come to think about it, what did they really know about the Constitution?

On that subject, by the way, it has been incredible in the truest sense of the word to hear people—Senators and even candidates for President who claim to be, as Justice Scalia surely was, constitutional originalists or textualists—willfully ignore the plain meaning of the Constitution in favor of this so-called standard practice. That is not a form of constitutional interpretation with which I am familiar, but it seems to be guiding the majority leader and the chairman of the Judiciary Committee away from the text they claim to revere. They wrote together in the Washington Post:

It is today the American people, rather than a lame-duck President whose priorities and policies they just rejected in the most-recent national election, who should be afforded the opportunity to replace Justice Scalia.

I have a chart. I redlined the actual words of the Constitution with the claim of the majority leader and the chairman of the Judiciary Committee. We can see they bear no relationship to one another. In fact, only seven words—the black words—remain from the original constitutional text, including in those seven words a conjunction, a definite article, and a preposition—otherwise known as ''and,'' ''the,'' and ''of.''

Oh, and by the way, if we want to talk about a real standard practice, the President becomes a lameduck only after the election that is coming up and only until the inauguration.

When we look at the history, it is telling that, unlike almost all our other work, the Senate's consideration of Supreme Court nominees has been remarkably expeditious. On average, the Senate has voted 70 days after the President's nomination. When Justice Scalia died, 342 days remained in the President's term—nearly a full quarter of his final term in office. Why has the Senate, notorious for its glacial slowness, historically acted with such deliberate speed when it comes to our consideration of Supreme Court Justices?

I suspect there are three principal reasons: first, the constitutional clarity that commands us; second, the unique nature of the responsibility—no one else, including the House of Representatives, can exercise it; and third, the essential importance of the Supreme Court's composition.

With respect to the Supreme Court's composition, no less of an authority than Justice Scalia himself explained it well. Asked to recuse himself from a case involving Vice President Cheney, Justice Scalia rejected the suggestion that he should ''resolve any doubts in favor of recusal.'' He observed that such a standard might be appropriate if he were on the court of appeals, where his ''place would be taken by another judge, and the case would proceed normally. On the Supreme Court, however, the consequence is different: The court proceeds with eight Justices, raising the possibility that, by reason of a tie vote, it will find itself unable to resolve the significant legal issue presented by the case.''

Justice Scalia then quoted the Supreme Court's own recusal policy observing that, ''[e]ven one unnecessary recusal impairs the functioning of the Court.'' If even one unnecessary recusal impairs the Court, imagine what a 14-month vacancy would do. Imagine if, in 2016, we had a repeat of 2000, when the Supreme Court decided Bush v. Gore, except with only eight Justices on the bench. Imagine the constitutional crisis our Nation would have to endure.

I know it has become fashionable for Washington politicians to tear down rather than work to improve the democratic institutions that generations of Americans have built. But to impair so cavalierly the judicial branch of our government is pathetic. It is a standard one would expect of a lawless nation, rather than a nation committed to the rule of law. It is the behavior of a petty kangaroo court, not of the U.S. Senate. And it threatens to deny justice to millions of Americans in the name of petty politics. It is time for the Senate to do its job, as every Senate before us has done.

I am not asking my colleagues to support the nominee. That is a matter of conscience for each of us. But what is unconscionable is that the majority, if it keeps its word, will have no hearing, will hold no vote, and refuse even the courtesy of a meeting with the President's nominee.

Speaking of doing our job, in view of the seriousness of the Court's nomination, we should reconsider the majority's proposed 7-week summer recess for the Senate. In July and August alone, we are barely in session for 8 days. Unlike our responsibility to vote on Supreme Court nominees, the Senate schedule is not enshrined in the Constitution. It is set by the majority.

In that connection, I am glad to invite any of my colleagues to my office to watch a video of a constituent of mine whom I met 2 weeks ago in Pueblo West. She manages a retail store and struggles every month to keep it going. Unlike the Senate, she has 22 vacation days a year, not a month. Instead, she works a second job to pay for childcare so she can keep her main job. Millions of Americans are watching the Senate take the entire summer off and claim there isn't time to do our job. That doesn't meet the standard of a great nation or a great parliamentary body. What is worse is that this whole charade has become an extension of playground politics, the childish pettiness that has metastasized in this Presidential primary season.

How far have we drifted from our simple constitutional obligations when one side refuses to even meet with any prospective nominee? What message does that send to the people of Colorado and across the country? Where I come from, taking your ball and going home isn't acceptable behavior on the playground. How could it possibly be acceptable in the U.S. Senate?

Senate greatness, the national interest as a legislative guide, maturity, and comity will not be restored overnight or with a single decision. It has taken far too long for us to travel down this destructive road to deadlock, ideological rigidity, and bitter partisanship for restoration of greatness to the Senate to occur quickly, but we should begin—we must begin, and we can begin—with our treatment of some of our most serious, even sacred duties: the confirmation of the next Justice of the Supreme Court.

We are not here to pacify a political base or satisfy one or more special constituencies or rally our political parties. We are here to elevate our Republic, to make it a beacon for the world, to demonstrate how mature representatives of sovereign States govern a mature nation.

This Supreme Court nomination is not a test of strength between the executive and legislative branches. It is a test of our strength as leaders with an honorable history and a heritage of wisdom and maturity. How we manage our constitutional duty to provide serious consideration and deliberation to a rare appointment to the Nation's highest judicial office will determine whether we deserve the respect of Americans who rightly expect us to exhibit dignity, mutual respect, and wisdom on their behalf.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I, too, rise this evening to discuss the vacancy on the Supreme Court and the need for the Senate to do its job and give fair consideration to any nominee made by President Obama to fill this seat on the Supreme Court. Many of my Republican colleagues have vowed to block any nominee out of hand, and every single Republican member of the Judiciary Committee has likewise vowed to refuse any nominee a fair hearing. The Senate majority leader, along with several other Republican Senators, went as far to say they would not even meet with the nominee. I am not sure I ever heard anything like that in my 9 years in the Senate, going on 10. This is inconsistent, totally inconsistent with our duty as U.S. Senators.

Let me start tonight by saying to my Republican colleagues, respectfully: Do your job. Do your job, consider this nominee, and then vote whichever way you want.

We know the Supreme Court cannot permanently function as the Constitution intends with only eight members. Last week I asked questions of a panel of experts, constitutional scholars, including Georgetown law professor Peter Edelman at a steering committee hearing in the Senate. These constitutional experts confirmed that because split decisions defer to the holding of the lower court, it is entirely possible we could see a string of split decisions that would undermine the primary purpose of the Supreme Court; that is, to resolve differences in the opinions coming out of the various circuit courts across the country.

This is no doubt why the Constitution provides specific instructions on filling Supreme Court vacancies. Article II, section 2 of the Constitution states, in part, ''[The President] shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall Appoint . . . Judges of the Supreme Court.''

In both instances, the word ''shall'' is used. There is no equivocation. It doesn't say ''shall appoint at a certain time in a presidency'' or ''may appoint.'' It is very clear from the Constitution what the Senate must do and what the President must do.

Barack Obama is the President of the United States. According to the Constitution, in the event of a vacancy on the U.S. Supreme Court, the President of the United States shall nominate a replacement. Nothing more needs to be said to counter the, what I would argue, outrageous calls for the President to refrain from nominating a replacement simply because his 323 days left in office are fewer than 365 days. To refrain would violate the letter of the Constitution.

Republican Senators, for whatever reason, seem to disagree with the original intent of the Framers in this situation. Often those same Republican Senators come to the floor and make floor statements inciting the Constitution, but now they would completely ignore a constitutional directive.

The Constitution is also clear with respect to the Senate's duty to advise and consent on the President's nominee. No sincere reading could lead to the conclusion that the Senate would be within its rights and upholding its responsibility if it refused any potential nominee fair consideration. My Republican colleagues argue they are absolved of their responsibility to give fair consideration to a nominee simply because the Senate is constitutionally allowed to withhold its consent.

That is one argument. It doesn't make sense, but that is the argument they make. The other argument is that ''we should let the American people decide'' by refusing to consider any nominee until the next President takes office. This denies precedent. Justice Kennedy was confirmed in the last year of President Ronald Reagan's final term under a Democratic Senate, and the Senate has confirmed 17 Supreme Court nominees in Presidential election years.

This point of view also neglects the obvious fact that the American people already decided in twice electing Barack Obama to be our President. Both the President and his office deserve to be treated with respect. Denying the President's legitimate authority to nominate a candidate for Supreme Court is more than just an irresponsible attempt to score political points; it is a distortion of the separation of powers unprecedented in modern times.

Senate Republicans have not been granted authority to prematurely terminate Presidential powers. They have not been granted that authority. The Senate has taken action on every Supreme Court nominee in the last 100 years, regardless of whether the nomination was made in a Presidential election year, and not since the Civil War has the Senate taken longer than a year to fill a Supreme Court vacancy. These nominees have always been seen as entitled to timely consideration as well. Since 1975, the Senate has taken an average of just 70 days from the date of nomination to the date of confirmation.

Like many Senators here—virtually every Senator who serves in this body receives mail all the time from our constituents. On this issue, I have received thousands of letters urging the Senate to fulfill its duty and give fair consideration to the Supreme Court nominee that the President chooses.

One particular letter came from a woman by the name of Jane from Southeastern Pennsylvania, a community outside of Philadelphia. The letter Jane sent me was profound in its simplicity. Jane said that having an understaffed Court would be ''unfair to the process of justice.''

Jane's words, not mine. A fully functioning Supreme Court is not about obscure details of Senate procedure to Jane. It is about something more than that. To her, one of my constituents, it is also not about who said what 10 years ago, nor is it about Presidential politics. It is about something else. Access to justice is what matters to Jane. It is what should matter to every Senator.

Jane ended this letter she sent me with a reminder that I will repeat in the hope that my Republican colleagues will take it to heart, as I did. Jane said the ''opportunity to take part in a Justice's nomination is a privilege and deserves respect.''

I agree. Consideration and casting a vote regarding a Supreme Court nominee nominated by the President of the United States to serve as one of only nine Justices on the Supreme Court, you bet, that is a privilege and it deserves respect.

To my Republican colleagues, I say, again, do your job, as I must do my job, and give this duty that you have—the duty to consider and to vote on a Supreme Court nominee—this rare privilege, the respect it deserves.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands adjourned until 9:30 a.m. tomorrow morning.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:44 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, March 3, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

LIONEL R. COLLINS, SR. POST OFFICE BUILDING

SPEECH OF

HON. STEVE SCALISE

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Mr. SCALISE. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2458 and thank my colleague and friend Congressman CEDRIC RICHMOND for his leadership in bringing this important bill to the House floor. The Honorable Lionel R. Collins Sr. is a true Louisiana and American hero, and this bill honors his life and achievements with a fitting tribute.

Judge Collins served on the bench in the 24th Judicial District Court in Gretna, Louisiana and was the first African-American elected to public office in my home parish of Jefferson, Louisiana. He also led the efforts to integrate Jefferson Medical Center and helped integrate Jefferson Parish public schools.

Judge Collins had an innate sense of justice. His colleagues described him as a 'hard-working, fair and honest judge . . . tough when he had to be tough, but he had a sense of fairness.'

While we can never fully repay Lionel Collins for his distinguished public service, we can honor his life and legacy as a pioneering civil rights attorney and an education champion in southeast Louisiana by passing this legislation. Judge Collins made meaningful impacts that advanced equality, justice, health care, and access to quality education. In fact, the Ames Montessori elementary school in Marrero was renamed Judge Lionel R. Collins Elementary in 2011.

Our community is better for the life and service of Judge Collins.

I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this measure to memorialize a respected defender of civil liberties, and I urge passage of this legislation by Congressman RICHMOND.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, on February 25, 2016, I regret that I was otherwise detained and unable to cast a vote on roll call vote no. 88, on the motion to recommit with instructions H.R. 3624, the Fraudulent Joinder Prevention Act. Had I been present, I would have voted yes.

HONORING DR. MIGUEL ENCINIAS

HON. BEN RAY LUJÁN

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of Dr. and Lt. Col. Miguel Encinias, who passed away on February 20th in Albuquerque at the age of 92.

A native of Las Vegas, New Mexico, Dr. Encinias served in World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War during his long and distinguished military career. After joining the New Mexico National Guard at the age of 16, in the heart of the Great Depression, he applied for and was accepted to the air cadet academy following the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, where he was one of the very few Hispanic pilots in the academy. Dr. Encinias was shot down over Italy in 1944 and became a German prisoner of war until the Russians liberated his camp in 1945. He also flew in the Korean and Vietnam Wars before retiring as a lieutenant colonel in 1971. During his career, he earned the Distinguished Flying Cross, two Purple Hearts, and fourteen Air Medals, making him one of New Mexico's most decorated veterans.

Dr. Encinias continued to serve his country after his time in the Air Force when President Clinton asked him to join the World War II Memorial Advisory Board in 1995, where he helped oversee the creation of the World War II Memorial, a Washington, D.C. landmark that reminds us of the bravery, triumph, and sacrifice of our soldiers who fought for our freedom.

Dr. Encinias was also a passionate scholar, studying at Georgetown, the Institute of Political Studies in Paris, and earning his doctorate in Hispanic literature and Education at the University of New Mexico. He taught throughout the state of New Mexico and helped develop New Mexico's Bilingual Education program. He also wrote several books on the rich history of New Mexico.

I want to personally thank Dr. Encinias for his many decades of service to his country and his state. His bravery on the battlefield, passion for New Mexico, and love for his family and friends will be sorely missed. I extend my sincere condolences to Dr. Encinias' family—Jeannine, his wife of 52 years; his three children; and four grandchildren—and hope that during this sad time they find comfort in the enduring legacy that Dr. Encinias leaves behind.

RECOGNIZING JOHN H. FOLWELL IV FOR EARNING ALL 141 BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA MERIT BADGES

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge John H. Folwell IV of Fairport, NY. John is currently a senior at McQuaid Jesuit High School and is a member of Troop 31 of the Boy Scouts of America who has completed all 141 merit badges, and I rise today to recognize that achievement.

To put this remarkable feat in perspective, Stephen Hoitt, Scout Executive of the Seneca Waterways Council of the Boy Scouts of America, has been involved with the organization for twenty-four years and notes that John is the first Scout under his tutelage to complete all of the merit badges. With this achievement, John H. Folwell IV joins the elite number of approximately 270 Scouts nationwide who have earned every merit badge offered by the organization.

Joining the Boy Scouts of America was a natural step for John. His father, John H. Folwell III, in fact serves as a Scoutmaster for Troop 31. Mr. Folwell has dutifully guided his son throughout this journey, including the Cycling badge. In addition to several other biking excursions, the Folwells traveled along the historic Erie Canal for fifty miles, completing their trip in the required time of eight hours, despite a flat tire.

Equally impressive is the level of determination put forth by John to maximize his experiences as a Boy Scout. Stating he "didn't want to leave Scouting knowing that I had not done it to its fullest," his quest has taken him in many directions. He traveled to the Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico where he earned the backpacking badge, appeared on stage in the role of Jud Fry in Oklahoma!, and instead of relaxing over a holiday break, created a Morse code telegraph for the Signaling badge.

Clearly, John represents the spirit and tenacity of the 25th Congressional District of New York, and I'm proud to represent him and all my constituents in the Rochester area.

RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OCKLAWAHA CHAPTER, DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge a special occasion for the Ocklawaha Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution of Eustis, Florida. In 1916, the Ocklawaha Chapter, named after the area Ocklawaha River basin, was established and this year they celebrate their 100th anniversary. It is my pleasure to recognize them on their Centennial.

Since their establishment on March 31, 1916, the Ocklawaha Chapter's goal and focus of serving the community through efforts of volunteerism, patriotism and education has remained constant. The Ocklawaha Chapter is dedicated to supporting local schools with donations and awards, and since their inception has awarded hundreds of Good Citizen Awards to local high school students, ROTC awards to cadets, and donated to National Society Daughters of the American Revolution founded schools. They donate American flags to organizations such as post offices, courthouses, schools, and veterans' groups, in

need of our flag. In 1976, the Ocklawaha Chapter created and presented Bicentennial flags to the cities of Eustis, Mount Dora, and Tavares.

The Ocklawaha Chapter is dedicated to promoting patriotism, preserving American history, and safeguarding America's future through better education for children. Their motto encapsulates that philosophy: "for God, Home, and Country." Through the strong leadership displayed by the Ocklawaha Chapter, they have earned both state and national recognition. They have been honored with many awards including DAR Project Patriot, Celebrate America Award, Chapter Achievement Level 1 and 2, Bronze Honoring the Flag, State and National Honor Roll, Literacy Promotion, Service for Veterans, and American History.

The excellence with which the Ocklawaha Chapter serves the Central Florida community is evident from their history and recognitions. I commend them for their many achievements and I am pleased to congratulate them on the celebration of their 100th anniversary. May their leadership, service and patriotism inspire many to follow in their footsteps.

HONORING NEW HAMPSHIRE STATE REPRESENTATIVE ROBERT A. LUTHER FOLLOWING HIS PASSING ON FEBRUARY 20, 2016

HON. FRANK C. GUINTA

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor New Hampshire State Representative Robert Luther of Laconia, New Hampshire.

On February 20, 2016, the State of New Hampshire lost a true public servant with Robert's passing. During this time of great sadness, we remember and celebrate the life of not only a dedicated law enforcement officer and legislator, but also a father, husband and friend.

Representative Luther devoted his life to serving our communities and protecting our families, first as a member of the U.S. Navy from 1965–1968, then as a police officer and security officer in the Laconia area from 1973–2009. A devoted public servant, he stayed engaged in local and state issues, serving as a member of the Laconia City Council and most recently as a member of the New Hampshire House of Representatives.

As his family, friends, neighbors and all who knew Robert would say, he was really one of a kind. The dedication and compassion he demonstrated during his years of service are not—and will not—be forgotten. So let us take a moment today and pause, reflect, and celebrate the life of Representative Robert Luther.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I was absent on Tuesday, March 1, 2016. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following ways:

Yes on Roll Call 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.

Yes on Roll Call No. 104—The Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 3735, the Maya Angelou Memorial Post Office.

COLONY MEADOWS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CELEBRATES 25 YEARS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Colony Meadows Elementary School on 25 years of nurturing and educating our young children.

For the past quarter of a century, teachers and educators at Colony Meadows in Sugar Land, TX, have helped to develop the bright minds of students in a fun and educational atmosphere.

A lot has changed since this school opened its doors 25 years ago but one thing has remained the same—Colony Meadows commitment to excellence. It has remained a great place for our future leaders to learn and grow. Thank you to the many teachers and faculty members who've worked so hard to make CMES great throughout the years.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations to Colony Meadows Elementary School on 25 successful years of educating our leaders of tomorrow.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to cast my floor vote on roll call vote number 102. Had I been present for the vote, I would have voted "yes" on roll call vote number 102.

HONORING NEW HAMPSHIRE STATE POLICE LT. JAMES 'JIM' GERAGHTY AFTER HIS PASSING ON FEBRUARY 27, 2016

HON. FRANK C. GUINTA

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Granite State hero and fallen state police officer Lt. James Geraghty of Bedford, New Hampshire.

On February 27, 2016, the State of New Hampshire lost a true Granite State hero when Lt. Geraghty succumbed to cancer. During this time of great sadness, we remember and celebrate the life of not only a tremendous police officer, but also a father, husband and friend.

Geraghty devoted his life to protecting our families and our communities through his military service with the U.S. Army, and his time as a police officer in the Town of Hudson before joining the New Hampshire State Police.

As his family, friends, neighbors and fellow police officers knew, Geraghty was really one of a kind. The dedication and compassion he demonstrated during his years of service are not—and will not—be forgotten.

It takes a remarkable individual like James Geraghty to risk their life daily to keep us safe and protect us from harm. So let us take a moment today and pause, reflect, and celebrate the life and valor of Lt. Geraghty. He put his life on the line to protect the Granite State, and we are forever grateful.

TRIBUTE TO INDEPENDENT NEWSGROUP EDITOR BILL CONSTINE

HON. JOHN R. MOOLENAAR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. MOOLENAAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the late Independent Newsgroup editor, Bill Constine. As the son of Vincent and Veronica, the husband of Beth and the father of Mindy, Chad and Kevin, Bill made many contributions to Owosso, Shiawassee County and the great state of Michigan.

Bill's news career began in 1973 at WOAP, where he started as a DJ and became a popular radio personality. Under his leadership as news director, the station was recognized by the Michigan Associated Press for its excellence. Bill would go on to work at The Flint Journal and then WJSZ, a local radio station that he owned until 1994. For the past 25 years, Bill worked as a reporter and editor at the Independent Newsgroup, which publishes local weekly and biweekly papers in Shiawassee County, bringing our communities the local news they need.

As a leader, Bill challenged his employees to go out of their comfort zone, but never allowed them to fail. He took people under his wing and helped them discover a love for writing. Known for his great attention to detail, enthusiasm for pursuing stories, caring manner for his staff and his passion for Shiawassee County history, Bill's positive impact on the community will be felt for generations.

On behalf of the Fourth Congressional District of Michigan, I am honored today to recognize Bill Constine for his lifetime of work as an editor and community leader.

IN RECOGNITION OF MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT SENIOR CHIEF SPECIAL WARFARE OPERATOR (SEAL) EDWARD C. BYERS, JR., UNITED STATES NAVY

HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize United States Navy Senior Chief Special Warfare Operator (SEAL) and Ohio native, Edward Byers, as the recipient of the Medal of Honor for his brave and heroic actions during Operation Enduring Freedom on December 8–9, 2012.

The citation for the Medal of Honor states:

''For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty as Hostage Rescue Force Team Member in Afghanistan in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM on 8–9 December 2012. As the rescue force approached the target building, an enemy sentry detected them and darted inside to alert his fellow captors. The sentry quickly reemerged, and the lead assaulter attempted to neutralize him. Chief Byers with his team sprinted to the door of the target building. As the primary breacher, Chief Byers stood in the doorway fully exposed to enemy fire while ripping down six layers of heavy blankets fastened to the inside ceiling and walls to clear a path for the rescue force. The first assaulter pushed his way through the blankets, and was mortally wounded by enemy small arms fire from within. Chief Byers, completely aware of the imminent threat, fearlessly rushed into the room and engaged an enemy guard aiming an AK–47 at him. He then tackled another adult male who had darted towards the corner of the room. During the ensuing hand-to-hand struggle, Chief Byers confirmed the man was not the hostage and engaged him. As other rescue team members called out to the hostage, Chief Byers heard a voice respond in English and raced toward it. He jumped atop the American hostage and shielded him from the high volume of fire within the small room. While covering the hostage with his body, Chief Byers immobilized another guard with his bare hands, and restrained the guard until a teammate could eliminate him. His bold and decisive actions under fire saved the lives of the hostage and several of his teammates. By his undaunted courage, intrepid fighting spirit, and unwavering devotion to duty in the face of near certain death, Chief Petty Officer Byers reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.''

I extend my deepest thanks to Chief Byers on his service to our nation and upon his receiving our nation's highest military award, the Medal of Honor.

CONGRATULATING COLONEL STEVEN W. NOTT FOR HIS YEARS OF SERVICE AT FORT McCOY, WISCONSIN

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished service of Colonel Steven W. Nott, whose tenure as Garrison Commander at Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, concludes March 11, 2016. Colonel Nott assumed his duties as Garrison Commander on February 29, 2012.

Colonel Nott's 31 years of dedicated service in the U.S. Army is noteworthy in every respect. He earned a bachelor's degree in History from the University of Wisconsin—Platteville; a master's degree in Education from Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pa.; and a master's degree in Strategic Studies from the Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pa. His military education includes Ranger School, Airborne School, Air Assault School, the Infantry Officer Advanced Course, and the Command and General Staff College.

Colonel Nott received his commission as an Infantry Officer in May 1986 and served one year in the Iowa National Guard. He entered active duty in April 1987 and served in Germany with the 1st Battalion, 41st Infantry Regiment. He next served on the 1st Brigade staff and then Commander of B Company, 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment within the 10th Mountain Division. From 1995 to 1998 he was a Military Science Instructor at Lehigh University Military Science Department. Nott entered the Active Guard Reserve program in 1999 with the 98th Division (Institutional Training) in Rochester, N.Y. In 2003 he was assigned to the 99th Regional Readiness Command in Pittsburgh, Pa., as the Training Officer. In 2005 he was assigned to the 166th Aviation Brigade, Fort Riley, Kan., as the Brigade Executive Officer. From 2007 to 2009 he served as Commander, United States Army Garrison, Fort Devens, Mass. Nott became the Senior Operations Officer within the Office of the Chief Army Reserve Employer Partnership Office, Washington, D.C. in 2010.

Colonel Nott deployed to Operations Desert Shield/Storm in Iraq, Hurricane Andrew Relief in Florida, Operation Restore Hope in Somalia, and Operations Restore and Uphold Democracy in Haiti.

Colonel Nott has committed his life to serving our country and has received many deserving awards and decorations, including the Purple Heart, Meritorious Service Medal with seven Oak Leaf Clusters, Army Commendation Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, Army Achievement Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, National Defense Service Medal with Bronze Service Star, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal with Bronze Service Star, Southwest Asia Service Medal with two Bronze Service Stars, Global War on Terrorism Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal with Bronze Service Star, United Nations Medal (Somalia), Kuwait Liberation Medals, Combat Infantry Badge, Expert Infantry Badge, Joint Meritorious Unit Award, the Valorous Unit Award, and the Army Staff Identification Badge.

Under Colonel Nott's outstanding leadership, Fort McCoy has taken it to the next level as one of the most capable and desirable Reserve Component training installations in the Army, providing stellar base operations support to over 150,000 Soldiers annually. During his tenure, Colonel Nott focused on the importance of Fort McCoy's Strategic Plan and ensuring that the base was a good neighbor and community partner. Thanks to Colonel Nott, Fort McCoy is well positioned for the future.

It has been an honor for me to serve as U.S. Representative for Wisconsin's Third Congressional District during Colonel Nott's tenure at Fort McCoy. I know Colonel Nott's leadership will be greatly missed at the base and surrounding communities, but I am thankful for his leadership and contributions to ensuring that Fort McCoy remains a shining star in the nation's military training infrastructure.

On behalf of my constituents in Wisconsin and a grateful nation, I would like to thank and commend Colonel Steven W. Nott for his years of dedicated service in the U.S. Army and in particular as Garrison Commander at Fort McCoy. I wish him, his wife Charlotte and their children Christian, Elissa, Bethany and Ethan the very best as they turn the page on the next chapter of their lives.

RECOGNIZING CONNIE HUNT'S 80TH BIRTHDAY AND HER POLITICAL ACTIVISM

HON. BLAKE FARENTHOLD

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 80th birthday of Ms. Connie Hunt. Born on March 7, 1936, Connie spent her career in civil service. She served the government at every post where she, and her husband lived until her retirement in 1986.

She has also been active in the Calhoun County Republican Party for over 20 years, serving as Chairman or Vice Chairman for 18 of those years. While volunteering as a tutor for high school students, she worked tirelessly to bring civics to life for Calhoun High School students with the Calhoun High School Young Republican Club.

Connie Hunt is a proud Texan and a tremendous friend to the conservative cause. She has been an enthusiastic supporter of the principles that make our country what it is, and her dedication and achievements are the types of things that make the United States so exceptional. I am so proud to have constituents like Connie. Happy birthday.

CONGRATULATING ANNAMARIE GULINO GENTILE

HON. DANIEL M. DONOVAN, JR.

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Annamarie Gulino Gentile on receiving the Community Service Award from the Italian American Women of Staten Island.

Ms. Gentile graduated magna cum laude from the State University of New York at Albany and received her J.D. from Brooklyn Law School. She then rose to become the Supervising Partner at Angiuli & Gentile, LLP, where she handles matters such as real estate, family and matrimonial law, personal injury law, and, particularly, elder law. With her extensive background as an elder law attorney, Annamarie advises families in the event that a loved one requires long-term care.

As a member of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA) and as a Department of Veterans Affairs-Accredited Attorney, Annamarie has worked tirelessly to give our local veterans any and all legal advice they may need. Moreover, she is a passionate volunteer for various causes in support of senior citizens and those with special needs. But her service to the community doesn't stop there. She is also the Chair of the Board of Directors of the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce as well as Chair of the Community Agency for Senior Citizens (CASC). Ms. Gentile was also a recipient of the Staten Island Friends for Hospice Care Couple of the Year Award, and was an honoree of the Garibaldi's Meucci Annual Luncheon for her involvement as an Italian American in the Staten Island community.

Mr. Speaker, I can think of no one more deserving of this award than Annamarie Gulino Gentile. I thank her for all she has done for

our community, and I am proud to call her my constituent.

ISIS

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the definition of genocide is clear: it is the deliberate and systematic destruction of a racial or cultural group. ISIS has been specifically and intentionally targeting Christians and other minorities for extermination for the past five years. Genocide is exactly what ISIS is doing. ISIS is trying to destroy all those that do not conform to its beliefs.

ISIS has already forced hundreds of thousands of Christians to leave their ancestral homes. For the first time since the time of Christ, there are almost no Christians left in some of these areas. Some of those who could not get out before ISIS came in have been tortured, crucified, and executed. ISIS has also targeted the Yezidi community of Iraq. It slaughtered almost all the men of one community on Mount Sinjar and sold the women and girls to satisfy the evil desires of their fighters.

ISIS is proud of these horrible atrocities. ISIS fighters post videos and pictures online of their barbaric beheadings of Christians and others who refuse to bow to their ideology. They hate, kidnap, and murder because Christians and other ancient minority communities will not renounce their faith.

The world, including the United States, needs to be clear about what ISIS is doing. America must denounce murder because of a person's religious belief.

I am a cosponsor of H. Con. Res. 75 and support its passage. Justice demands that ISIS be held accountable and justice is what must be done because justice is what we do in America.

And that's just the way it is.

WILLIAM G. JONES

HON. BRAD R. WENSTRUP

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress and the Second District of Ohio, I wish to commemorate the life of Sgt. William G. Jones and recognize his receipt of the Montford Point Marines Congressional Gold Medal.

A Virginia native, Sgt. William Jones moved to southern Ohio as a young man to attend the University of Cincinnati, where he studied Business Administration. Upon graduation Sgt. Jones spent a few years in the workforce, but was soon called to serve his country. During the height of World War II from 1942–1945, Sgt. Jones proudly served in the United States Marine Corps, one of the first 100 African Americans to do so.

When he returned to the United States, Sgt. Jones continued to serve his country and his community. He became a member of the Montford Point Marine Association, a veterans' group that preserves the legacy of the nation's first African American Marines, and was elected the group's first Vice President. Sgt. Jones went on to found and head the Cincinnati chapter of the association.

Sadly, Sgt. Jones passed away on September 29, 1988 at the age of 70. But the impact of his service lives on.

The freedom that our nation now enjoys is due in large part to the sacrifices made by so many individuals, like Sgt. Jones, who have committed themselves to our nation through service in our Armed Forces. On behalf of a grateful nation, I sincerely thank Sgt. Jones and all of the Montford Point Marines for their commitment to protecting us and our freedoms.

RECOGNIZING CAROLINA PANTHERS HEAD COACH RON RIVERA FOR BEING NAMED THE 2015 NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE COACH OF THE YEAR

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Carolina Panthers Head Coach Ron Rivera, who was named the National Football League Coach of the Year for the second time in three years. Coach Rivera did an outstanding job this year leading the Carolina Panthers, and he should be extremely proud of this impressive distinction he has so rightly earned.

Before this NFL season started, few people expected the Carolina Panthers to win enough games to seriously compete for a spot in the postseason playoffs. However, Coach Rivera never let the detractors get in the way of preparing his team to focus only on the challenge directly in front of them. What happened over the course of the season is almost unbelievable, even to the most devoted Panthers fans. The Panthers won 15 of 16 games during the regular season, making the Panthers only the seventh team in NFL history to win 15 games, and set a franchise record for the most victories in a single season. In the postseason, the Panthers hosted the NFC Championship in Charlotte for the first time in the franchise's history and earned a spot in the Super Bowl for only the second time since the team's first season in 1995. Needless to say, this was a fantastic season that will long be remembered by the players, coaches and fans.

Coach Rivera deserves much of the credit for the Panthers' success this year, and this award is a testament to the outstanding job he did preparing for each game and putting his players in the best position to achieve success. While he already had a reputation as a tough player and as one of the top defensive minds in the sport, I believe this award, along with the continued success of the Panthers during his tenure as head coach, shows Coach Rivera is quickly becoming known as one of the finest coaches in the game.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Carolina Panthers Head Coach Ron Rivera for earning the 2015 NFL Coach of the Year award. I look forward to seeing Coach Rivera build upon this historic season and further cement the Panthers' status as one of the best teams in the NFL. Go Panthers and Keep Pounding!

KELVIN ZHANG SPELLS HIS WAY TO A WIN

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Kelvin Zhang for winning the 2016 Alvin Independent School District (ISD) Spelling Bee.

Kelvin, a fifth-grader at York Elementary School, competed against 18 other students from 4th through 8th grade within the Alvin ISD. Over the course of 36 rounds, Kelvin won his Spelling Bee title by perfectly spelling the word ''toboggan.'' He advances to the Houston Public Media Spelling Bee on April 2nd. We are very proud of Kelvin and wish him luck at the Houston Public Media Spelling Bee.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Kelvin for winning the Alvin ISD Spelling Bee. Keep up the great work.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, due to unforeseen circumstances, I missed the following votes:

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'' on this 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''. Had I been present, I would have voted ''YES'' on this bill.

NORWOOD VIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CENTENNIAL

HON. BRAD R. WENSTRUP

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress and the Second District of Ohio, I congratulate the students and teachers, past and present, of Norwood View Elementary School on their 100th anniversary.

Providing a first-rate education for America's youth is one of our greatest responsibilities and is essential to creating the educated, productive, and innovative citizens who will shape our nation.

For the past 100 years, Norwood View Elementary School has demonstrated a strong commitment to the children in our community. Thousands of students have graduated with a quality education and countless memories.

I sincerely thank the school for their contribution to the Norwood community, and I look forward to their continued success in the years to come.

IN RECOGNITION OF EXETER BOROUGH POLICE CHIEF JOHN ''MAXIE'' MCNEIL FOR FORTY-ONE YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished career of Exeter, Pennsylvania's Police Chief John ''Maxie'' McNeil, as he celebrates his retirement from an extensive career in law enforcement. Chief McNeil will be honored by friends and family on March 5, 2016. For forty-one years, Chief McNeil dedicated his life to ensuring the safety and welfare of the people of Exeter, thirty-two years as police chief.

Chief McNeil led his department with dedication, honesty, and integrity. Over the years, he guided his beloved police department from a small town force into a skilled and mobile law enforcement agency capable of providing safety and security to the residents of a changing Exeter. Under his leadership, he has helped make Exeter and the surrounding communities a safer place for everyone.

I am grateful for Chief McNeil and the Exeter Police Department for their dedicated service. These courageous individuals face each moment not knowing for certain of the peril that may wait with the next challenge of the job. Yet they carry on, made strong by a resolve to protect and serve. Police officers, be they big city beat cops or small town sheriffs, defend what is dear to us, including our loved ones, and we owe them a great deal of gratitude for standing as a shield from harm.

It is an honor to recognize John for his contribution to the safety of his community. I am immensely thankful for his many contributions to the security of Exeter throughout his long career of public service. I wish him all the best in retirement.

DANA CLEMENT CHILD ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Dana Clement for being named the 2015 Child Advocate of the Year at the Child Advocates of Fort Bend's Annual Volunteer Celebration.

The non-profit agency, Child Advocates of Fort Bend, aims to serve as many children within their community as possible. Their mission is to stop child abuse in its tracks and help give these children a voice. The 200 trained volunteers they have make it possible to help serve more than 400 kids on a monthly basis. Dana is a critical volunteer for this agency thanks to her dedication through her time, energy and resources. We are so proud of Dana for helping to serve these kids through her love and positive attitude. Thank you for making the community of Fort Bend a safer place for its residents.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Dana Clement for being named Child Advocate of the Year. We appreciate all of her selfless and hard work.

RECOGNIZING THE GATHERING PLACE

HON. EARL L. ''BUDDY'' CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize The Gathering Place in Brunswick, Georgia and to congratulate them on their 35th anniversary.

Started by college students from the University of Georgia in 1979, this year marks the 35th anniversary that The Gathering Place has served the spiritual growth and development of youth in Glynn County.

The Gathering Place was originally known as ''Sunday Night Live at 8:45,'' and after 2 successful summers of singing, skits, and messages about Jesus, the college students expanded the program and officially founded The Gathering Place in June, 1981.

The Gathering Place has expanded since 1981 developing into a year round leadership development youth ministry with a highly diverse group of attendees. Beginning with around 100 participants, The Gathering Place now has approximately 1,000 people attending ''The Main Event,'' taking place each summer night which includes lights, music, videos, gifts, speakers, and more.

The ministry of The Gathering Place has accomplished major spiritual achievements in the youth of coastal Georgia as the organization's goal is to reach students with the word of Jesus Christ, equip them to be Christian leaders, and to then send the students to spiritually impact their local communities.

I am thankful to have The Gathering Place in the First Congressional District of Georgia and am proud to recognize the impact that it is making in young Georgians' lives.

RECOGNITION OF THE CAREER AND RETIREMENT OF MR. JOHN MATTHEWS

HON. MARK POCAN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career of a respected advocate and relentless fighter for public education in my district. For nearly half a century, John Matthews has been at the helm of Madison Teachers Inc. (MTI), steering the union through such volatile events as the 1976 teachers' strike, the recent public uprising against Act 10 and everything in between.

It is a testament to John's work and what his union has continually done for them that in November, Madison teachers voted overwhelmingly to recertify their union.

Today, when a pregnant teacher does not have to resign her job as her pregnancy begins to show—something she once had to do in Wisconsin—she can credit John, who successfully fought that policy all the way to the Supreme Court in 1971. That was precisely the kind of battle and victory he relished.

John's career began as an English and history teacher in his native state of Montana, where his grandfather was a Supreme Court justice. He immediately became involved in his union and started, as he puts it, ''raising a little hell,'' in contract negotiations over health insurance. Six years later, he was in the middle of a primary race to serve in the Montana House of Representatives when he withdrew his candidacy because he was offered the opportunity to pursue his true passion as executive director of Madison Teachers Inc. (And no one who knows John will be surprised to hear—he won that race anyway).

At that time in 1968, MTI had 900 members—it now has more than 4,000. Other victories John secured on behalf of the teachers and other educational workers he represents included the right to take time off for their religious holidays. In 1976, he led workers in a teachers' strike that cemented his reputation as a fierce advocate and fighter on behalf of the people and causes he represents. As Capital Times Editor Emeritus Dave Zweifel put it when John's retirement was announced: ''No one I've known has been more committed to public education and what it means to American democracy than Matthews.'' He not only stood up for his members, he served the children and families of our community sitting on the board of such groups as Fair Wisconsin, Citizens Against Handgun Violence, Fighting Bob Fest, the Social Justice Center and the Citizens Utility Board.

Yet John seeks to meet and converse with opponents in an open and friendly fashion, making regular lunch or coffee dates with adversaries. The day former Madison Schools Superintendent Art Rainwater stepped into that job, he phoned John right away that morning to talk about building bridges and asked when they could get together. John quickly replied: ''How about noon?'' In articles announcing his planned January 2016 retirement, glowing quotes of praise for his work came as frequently from his adversaries as from his allies. Anyone who has worked with him also knows him to be a caring, warm friend with a great wit and deep dedication to his colleagues and friends.

It is an honor to recognize five decades of dedication, passion and advocacy in John's career with MTI. Anyone who knows John will not be at all surprised to hear that when asked by reporters what he plans to do in his retirement, he answered that he would remain committed to social justice issues and helping people. After all, it's what he's been doing for the past 50 years.

RECOGNIZING CAROLINA PANTHERS QUARTERBACK CAM NEWTON FOR BEING NAMED THE 2015 NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE MOST VALUABLE PLAYER

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Carolina Panthers Quarterback Cam

Newton, who was named the 2015 National Football League Most Valuable Player (MVP). In his fifth season at the helm of the Carolina Panthers offense, Cam has become one of the NFL's best players and has established himself as a leader his teammates trust and depend upon.

Throughout the season, Cam played a crucial role in the team's success. With Cam as quarterback, the Panthers were one of the best offenses in the league—averaging over 30 points per game—and set a franchise record for most wins in a regular season after winning 15 of their 16 games. Cam also led the Panthers to their second NFC Championship with a commanding 49–15 victory over the Arizona Cardinals, completing 19 of his 28 passes for 335 yards and two touchdowns while also scoring two touchdowns running the football. This performance demonstrated Cam's importance to the team and is a clear example of why he deserved the league's MVP award.

In addition to his outstanding performance and exceptional leadership on the field, Cam has been an active member of the community and has made public service an important priority in his life. Shortly after arriving in the NFL, he established the Cam Newton Foundation to help the young people of Charlotte, and in his hometown of Atlanta. Through this foundation, Cam has been able to provide many young people the resources and support they need to pursue their childhood dreams and ambitions.

While Cam earned this award by distinguishing himself as one of the most gifted players in the game today, and his dedication to helping others and serving as a role model to young people across the country further exemplifies why he is a champion both on and off the field. I look forward to seeing Cam back on the field next season, building off this historic season and further establishing himself as one of the most elite quarterbacks in the game.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Carolina Panthers Quarterback Cam Newton for being named the 2015 NFL MVP, and thanking him for his continued service to the people of our community. Go Panthers and Keep Pounding!

U.S.-TURKEY BILATERAL RELATIONS

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the strong and important relationship between the Republic of Turkey and the United States. For years, Turkey has been an indispensable strategic, geopolitical and economic partner of the U.S.

Turkey is a significant ally in confronting the challenges of the 21st century, such as international terrorism, ethnic and religious extremism, energy security, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Ankara is a central stakeholder in the ongoing efforts to resolve the Syrian Civil War and aid its victims. I witnessed this firsthand when I visited a refugee camp in Kilis, Turkey. The Turkish government and other surrounding nations have made selfless investments to meet the humanitarian needs of the Syrian people and must be applauded for these efforts.

In addition to our strong geopolitical ties, economic cooperation is increasingly becoming a major aspect of the Turkey-U.S. bilateral relationship. Turkey has become an indispensable U.S. trading partner, constituting a large and growing market for United States exports. In 2015, Turkey was identified as Europe's third-fastest growing economy, and its increasing energy demand makes it an appealing market for continued U.S. investment.

Mr. Speaker, with the continuing threat of the Islamic State, the uncertainty of the situation in Syria, and an ever increasingly globalized economy it is now more important than ever to reaffirm our commitment to, and cooperation with, the Republic of Turkey. I look forward to strengthening and growing the U.S.-Turkey relationship in the years ahead.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE PEOPLE OF NAGORNO-KARABAKH

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleague, Representative DEVIN NUNES, to recognize the people of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Over the course of the past century, the Armenian people have been subject to some of the worst treatment in modern history. From the Armenian genocide and the repressive years under Soviet rule, to the pogroms committed against Armenians in the cities of Sumgait, Kirovabad, and Baku, the tragic plight of the Armenian people in their search for freedom cannot be overstated.

As a nation built on the concept of freedom, the United States must support those who put their safety on the line in the pursuit of that most basic human right. The people of Nagorno-Karabakh have suffered enough under Azerbaijan's aggressive policies, and it is time for the international community to recognize their right to self-determination.

Today, I rise to recognize the Armenian people, especially the people of Nagorno-Karabakh, who struggle for the same things the United States fought for over 200 years ago: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

JOY GASSAMA WINS CRITICAL LANGUAGE SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Joy Gassama of Sugar Land, TX for winning a U.S. State Department Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) Award for 2015.

Joy is currently a student at the University of Texas-Austin. Through her CLS scholarship, she was hosted in Meknes Morocco, where she became proficient in Advanced Beginning level Arabic. CLS recipients, like Joy, are sent abroad to study the language and the culture of the region they are hosted in. These prestigious scholarships are funded by the State Department through their Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The Critical Language Scholarship program aims to spread diversity and critical language skills to all of its awardees. We are proud of Joy for all of her hard work, and congratulate her on her scholarship.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Joy for winning the Critical Language Scholarship Award. Keep up the great work.

IN HONOR OF DOMENIC LALLI OF WATERTOWN, MA

HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Domenic Lalli in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the Xaverian Brothers High School in Westwood, Massachusetts, and to commend him for forty years of dedication to the education of young men.

An accomplished athlete, Mr. Lalli excelled in football at Watertown High School, and was inducted into the Watertown High School Hall of Fame. He served as football coach there as well. Further, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Lalli was captain of the football team at Boston University, and he was the USA Natural Bodybuilding Champion in 1991. He went on to win the Mr. Massachusetts Master's Division in 2004.

Mr. Lalli received a Bachelor of Science in Human Movement Health and Leisure from Boston University and earned a Master's in Education from Boston State College. He is also a graduate of the Catholic Schools Leadership Program at Boston College.

Mr. Lalli began his career at Xaverian in 1976, teaching Physical Education and coaching track and football. In 1984, he was appointed as the Administrator of Students. Mr. Lalli was appointed Principal of Xaverian in 1991, the same year that Brother Daniel Skala, C.F.X. became Headmaster.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Lalli has influenced several generations of young men and is beloved by countless alumni, parents, and trustees. An outstanding leader, he has shaped a strong community where respect for everyone, no matter their differences, is the norm. He has served as an extraordinary role model in his care and concern for all. Throughout his tenure at Xaverian, Mr. Lalli has touched the lives of 7,951 students, in addition to the current student body of 950.

Mr. Lalli was born and raised in Watertown, MA where he lives today with his wife Lydia. They are the proud parents of two children, Daniel, a graduate of Xaverian, and Victoria, and they are blessed with two grandchildren, Connor and Colbie.

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to take the floor of the House today to join with Domenic Lalli's family, friends, and contemporaries to thank him for his forty years of remarkable service to Xaverian Brothers High School.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to cast my floor vote on roll call vote numbers 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100 and 101.

Had I been present for the vote, I would have voted "no" on roll call vote numbers 95, 96, 97, 98, and 101.

Had I been present for the vote, I would have voted "yes" on roll call vote numbers 92, 93, 94, 99, and 100.

RECOGNIZING MS. DIXIE WHITMAN'S WORK FOR THE MILITARY WORKING DOG TEAM SUPPORT ASSOCIATION

HON. TOM PRICE

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to speak in honor of Dixie Whitman. The organization she cofounded, Military Working Dog Team Support Association, Inc., supports American military working canines and their handlers.

Ms. Whitman started the organization ten years ago in her garage, back when it was only a group of a few neighbors and friends in Georgia. Under Ms. Whitman's leadership and through her tireless work the non-profit has expanded to eight more states. All of the workers are volunteers who are united in the common good of serving both human and canine soldiers. Since the founding in 2006, MWDTSA has sent over 3,500 care packages to currently deployed Military Working Dog teams. These packages contain everything from dog treats and boots for the dogs to DVDs for the handlers.

Mr. Speaker, Dixie had to step down from the organization that she poured her heart and soul into this year but she will continue to be the heartbeat of the Military Working Dog Team Support Association. On behalf of the Sixth District of Georgia, I would like to thank Ms. Whitman for supporting and being a voice for human and canine soldiers alike.

SOFIA AHMED WINS CRITICAL LANGUAGE SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Sofia Ahmed of Katy, TX for winning a U.S. State Department Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) Award for 2015.

Sofia is currently a student at the University of Texas–San Antonio. Through her CLS scholarship, she was hosted in Beijing, China, where she became proficient in Advanced level Chinese. CLS recipients, like Sofia, are sent abroad to study the language and the culture of the region they are hosted in. These prestigious scholarships are funded by the State Department through their Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The Critical Language Scholarship program aims to spread diversity and critical language skills to all of its awardees. We are proud of Sofia for all of her hard work, and congratulate her on her scholarship.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Sofia for winning the Critical Language Scholarship Award. Keep up the great work.

HUNGER

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman MCGOVERN for the tireless work he does every day for hungry families and children.

I rise as Chair of the Democratic Whip's Task Force on Poverty, Income Inequality, and Opportunity, which Congressman MCGOVERN is also a member of and I want to thank him for that and for our SNAP challenge almost 3 years ago. That was truly an eye opener and so important to make sure we stop any cuts from this critical program.

Mr. Speaker, persistent hunger is truly a stain on our nation.

Fourteen percent of households in America—that's nearly one in seven—are food insecure.

These are people, who despite working full time, simply don't earn enough to feed their families. For these families, putting food on the table is a constant struggle.

It is truly a disgrace that in the richest and most powerful nation, that this many families are going hungry every day.

And this burden is hard on children. More than 15.3 million American children are living in food-insecure households today. Let me say that again: more than 15 million kids are at risk of going to bed hungry—every night.

And hunger is far from color blind.

We know that communities of color are disproportionately affected by hunger. For example in 2014:

One in four African American households and

One in five Latino families were food insecure.

And for rural families, food insecurity is coupled with other barriers including lack of access to transportation and limited job opportunities. More than 17% of rural households—that's 3.3 million households—are food insecure.

We know that hunger is a problem that affects people in every zip code. It is endemic in our counties, rural communities, urban streets and suburban neighborhoods.

I've seen its impact in my community, Alameda County, where one in five residents have turned to our local food bank for help. These families are forced to make impossible choices to feed their children. Many must decide between food and medicine, food and school clothes, or food and paying the electric bill.

One Alameda County mother, Claire, said "My kids need milk, but we can't afford it. So, I buy condensed milk and water it down."

This is the tragic reality of millions of families in our country. And this epidemic of hunger is the direct result of persistent poverty and continued cuts to vital safety net programs.

As a young mother, I struggled to keep food on the table for my two little boys. Food stamps, or SNAP as we call it now, was a bridge over troubled water for my family. Thanks to this safety net, I was able to get my degree, start a small business, and eventually be elected to Congress.

Surely we should be providing these benefits for all families?

Programs like SNAP, housing vouchers, Head Start, Medicaid and Pell Grants help families lift themselves out of poverty and were critical to President Johnson's War on Poverty.

And SNAP—which is our nation's first line of defense against hunger—is also a critical tool in the fight against poverty. In 2015, it kept nearly 5 million Americans—including 2.2 million children—out of poverty in 2014.

We should be strengthening these programs instead of cutting them.

Mr. Speaker, we need real solutions to these very real problems. My legislation, the Half in Ten Act (H.R. 258), would develop a national strategy to cut poverty in half over the next decade. That's more than 23 million Americans lifted out of poverty and into the middle class in just the next 10 years.

We must recognize that addressing food insecurity in America is a critical first step in this ongoing war on poverty. We can do this, and we can do so much more.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GEORGE HOLDING

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, on roll call No. 99, I would have voted "Nay" on roll call vote No. 99, on the Huffman Amendment to H.R. 2406, to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes, on February 26, 2016. I missed the vote due to being unavoidably detained.

GRAZIA ITALIAN KITCHEN HAS THE "BEST BITES"

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Pearland Restaurant, Grazia Italian Kitchen, for winning both Reserve Grand Champion in the People's Choice Award category and the Rookie Award at the "Rodeo Uncorked! Roundup and Best Bites Competition" at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo.

Grazia's Chef, Steve Haug, former chef at Del Frisco's Double Eagle Steakhouse, created a dish that pleased not only the judges, but 5,500 guests as well. The Houston Rodeo's Best Bites Competition this year consisted of 102 competing restaurants at the NRG Center on February 21, and sold-out due to its overwhelming attendance. The Best

Bites Competition is the kick-off to the Houston Rodeo, one of the most popular and attended attractions in Houston. We are so proud of Grazia's and can't wait to taste their delicious meals for ourselves.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to the entire team at Grazia Italian Kitchen for being recognized at the Houston Rodeo Roundup Best Bites Competition.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 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 $19,125,455,057,425.90. We've added $8,498,578,008,512.82 to our debt in 6 years. This is over $8 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHAEL E. CAPUANO

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, this week I missed a roll call vote. I wish to state how I would have voted had I been present: Roll Call No. 102—"yes."

TRIBUTE TO AIR FORCE 2ND LIEUTENANT ESTEBAN HOTESSE, TUSKEGEE AIRMAN, DOMINICAN-AMERICAN

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, as Dominican-Americans across our great nation celebrated their heritage and their compatriots commemorated Dominican Independence Day over the weekend, on February 27th, today I rise to posthumously honor and pay tribute to Tuskegee Airman Second Lieutenant Esteban (Stephen) Hotesse (Service Number 32218759).

Esteban Hotesse, a Dominican native who immigrated to the country as a child, enlisted during World War II, and served in the lauded Tuskegee Airmen brigade. Though his team was scheduled to go into battle, they never saw combat abroad. As a member of the all-black unit, Hotesse was among a group of 101 Tuskegee Airmen officers arrested for refusing to follow Jim Crow orders from a white commanding officer at a base near Seymour, Indiana, where the KKK had a strong presence.

In March 1945, the last of the Tuskegee groups, the 477th Medium Bombardment Group, was moved from Godman Field, adjacent to Fort Knox, to Freeman Field because of the latter's better flight facilities. Tensions between the 477th and the white command structure on the base were tense as soon as the 477th arrived, and shortly thereafter, an incident occurred unparalleled in Air Corps history.

Upon their arrival at Freeman, the commanding officer of the base, Colonel Robert R. Selway, moved quickly to set up and enforce a segregated system. The group was housed in a dilapidated building. Col. Selway also created a novel system to deny the Airmen entry into the officers' club. He classified the Black airmen as "trainees," even though they had all finished flight school, and therefore were all commissioned officers. As trainees, they were forced to use a rundown, former noncommissioned officers club nicknamed "Uncle Tom's Cabin." This all occurred despite an order issued in 1940 issued by President Roosevelt himself that no officer should be denied access to any officer's club. On April 5, 1945 a group of the Airmen peacefully entered the officers' club in protest. Sixty-one were arrested within 24 hours. This act of disobedience later became known as the Freeman Field Mutiny. Hotesse perished later that year in an accidental plane crash. His obituary in a Dominican newspaper lists his cause of death as a B–25 crash in the Ohio River in Indiana.

Esteban (Stephen) Hotesse was born on February 2, 1919 in Moca, Dominican Republic, and he came to the U.S. at the age of 4 with his mother, Clara Pacheco, who at the time was 25 years old. Hotesse was also accompanied by his sister Irma Hotesse, age 2. They came through the famous port of Ellis Island and, like many Dominicans at the time, went to live in my Congressional District within Upper Manhattan. At the time of his enlistment, he was living with his wife, Iristella Lind, who was Puerto Rican. They applied for U.S. citizenship in April 1943 after he'd served almost a year. The couple had two daughters before he enlisted. Today, one of his daughters, Mary Lou Hotesse, resides in New York City and two granddaughters, one named Iris Rivera, live in the South.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and our distinguished colleagues join me in paying tribute to one of our nation's heroes. In life, he immigrated to our shores to join ranks with our military force in the advancement of peace, justice, and freedom here and abroad.

DON'T WRESTLE WITH CINCO RANCH GIRLS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Queena Chen, Charlotte Fowler, Taylor Rosario, and Kayla De Leon for winning the state championship 6A trophy at the University Interscholastic League (UIL) Girls Wrestling Championships.

Queena, Charlotte, Taylor and Kayla are students at Cinco Ranch High School in the Katy Independent School District. The four Lady Cougars racked up a total of 87 points, all placing in the top four; a new achievement. The 2016 UIL State Wrestling Championships were held at the Berry Center in Cypress, Texas on February 19th and 20th. Senior Taylor Rosario has a standing record of 40–1, Senior Charlotte Fowler's record is 48–1, Senior Queena Chen's record is 41–15, and finally, Sophomore Kayla De Leon has a record of 49–0. These talented students have made the Katy community proud.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Queena, Charlotte, Taylor, and Kayla for winning the UIL 6A State Championship. We can't wait to see what these talented ladies do next.

TRIBUTE TO REPRESENTATIVE DIANA HOPPE

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today to recognize the passing of Representative Diane Hoppe on February 27th, 2016. Rep. Hoppe was a beloved and distinguished community leader and longtime state lawmaker.

Rep. Hoppe grew up in Sterling and devoted her life to improving Colorado. In 1999 she was elected to House District 65 of the Colorado House of Representatives, where she served through 2006. During her service she was Chair of the House Agriculture, Livestock & Natural Resources Committee; Chair of the Water Resources Review Committee; and House Minority Whip.

In addition to her leadership in the Colorado legislature, Governor Hickenlooper appointed her to the Colorado Water Conservation Board in 2012. She was later elected as Chair in 2015. In addition, she was presented the Colorado Water Congress 2013 Wayne N. Aspinall Award for Outstanding Water Leader. Rep. Hoppe's limitless knowledge of agriculture and water has made a lasting impact on Colorado.

It is the hard work Rep. Hoppe embodied throughout her life that makes Colorado an exceptional place to live. She has shown true service to her industry and community. I extend my deepest sympathies to Rep. Hoppe's family and friends.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Representative Diane Hoppe for her commitment to family, community, and the State of Colorado. She will be sorely missed.

THE RULES OF THE U.S. HOUSE DENY MEMBERS THE ABILITY TO FULFILL OUR CONSTITUTIONAL ROLE

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, the rules of the U.S. House prohibit congressionally directed spending. This prohibition undermines the ability of Members of Congress to represent their constituents, denies Members the opportunity to respond to critical needs that are in the national interest, and it strips Members of their authority pursuant to Article 1,

section 9, clause 7 of the U.S. Constitution—the authority to appropriate funds. Members of Congress are not even allowed the opportunity to offer amendments to a bill to be voted on by a committee or the Committee of the Whole on a construction project or research program deemed to be in contrary to the rule.

What the ban on congressionally directed spending does do is empower the Executive Branch to dictate to Congress projects, programs and priorities without input from Members. It denies Members the ability to advance alternatives to the President's priorities that better reflect the needs of states, communities and constituents. With this rule, Congress has unilaterally diminished our own power and ceded excessive power to the President. The House of Representatives' "power of the purse" must be more than simply rubber stamping funding for whatever project or program the President proposes.

My attached letter to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies highlights an example of how the ban on congressionally directed spending denies me—a member of the Appropriations Committee—the opportunity to advocate for a project that has been approved by the Department of Defense, in the Department's funding queue, and is now delayed for arbitrary budget reasons without any consultation with Congress. House rules deny me the opportunity to amend this decision. I find this outrageous and a clear example of how this Congress cedes power to unelected federal officials in the Executive Branch.

It is time to change the rules, repeal the prohibition on congressionally directed spending, and allow Members of Congress to do our job on behalf of the people who elected us.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 1, 2016.

Hon. CHARLIE DENT,
Chair, Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies, Washington, DC.

Hon. SANFORD BISHOP,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIR DENT AND RANKING MEMBER BISHOP: I am extremely concerned that the President's FY2017 budget proposal has failed to fund a shovel ready Minnesota Army National Guard project that has been in the pipeline since the release of the FY13 budget for FY17. The $39,000,000 for the Army National Guard Readiness Center in Arden Hills, MN (Project Number 270132 in the Department of the Army, Army National Guard FY17 Military Construction budget) now has been moved to FY18. This delay will directly affect the ability of members of the Minnesota National Guard to train effectively and carry out their duties to their utmost potential.

This facility is necessary to house the Headquarters and Headquarters Company and Company A 34th Infantry Division currently assigned to the Rosemount, MN Readiness Center, and Company B 34th Infantry Division currently assigned to the Inver Grove Heights, MN Readiness Center. Both of these facilities are undersized and seriously lacking in critical areas that support mission readiness. The construction of the Readiness Center in Arden Hills is long overdue and necessary to relieve over population in other aging National Guard facilities in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

What is truly outrageous is that this Congress has ceded the authority of Members, and particularly Appropriators, under the Constitution, to fund critically significant federal investments in our communities. Congress, by giving up the authority to direct spending and projects, has conceded a vital authority to the Administration. This Military Construction, Veterans Affairs bill makes it clear that the House and the Appropriations Committee now takes its guidance from Administration staff and the Office of Management and Budget, which I find unacceptable. Meanwhile the representatives elected by the American people, including Appropriators, are denied the opportunity to advance vital projects unless granted permission by the Executive Branch.

Therefore, I will not be submitting any requests to the Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies because if I were to advocate for the members of the Minnesota Army National Guard and attempt to get funding reinstated in this year's appropriations bill, I would presumably be in violation of the ban on congressionally directed spending.

It is time to change this flawed system.

Sincerely,

BETTY MCCOLLUM,
Member of Congress.

KAY THACKER

HON. CARLOS CURBELO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today we honor the life of Kay Thacker, a woman who worked to make politics nobler and spent every hour of her life dedicated to helping others. As a visitor to the Keys since childhood and a 27-year resident, we will miss Kay Thacker tremendously. She was a woman who embodied the heart of the small and tight-knit community that we are.

Though born in Kentucky, Kay spent much of her life in Indiana. In the late 1960s and into the early 1970s she ran her own salon, Casa de Kay. She received her degree from the University of Indiana and then proceeded to earn the title of Vice President of Sales for Metal Honing Inc. Thankfully, she then decided to make Key Largo her home where she embodied the role of a passionate civic activist.

Tenacious and firm in her principles, Kay stood proudly as an environmental conservationist, advocate for the Arts and a staunch overseer of spending by public agencies. Even in the face of fierce adversity, Kay was a woman who refused to back down. Well known for her stubbornness, Kay knew when to put her foot down and fight for her beliefs, all the while never making that fight personal.

Kay Thacker's impact on our community is far reaching and universally appreciated, even from those that she stood up to. She will forever be remembered for her unyielding devotion to the community that we are all fortunate to call our own.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF ELLINGTON, MO

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 100th anniversary of the United Methodist Church of Ellington, MO. The occasion was marked by four services held at the church: a morning Dedication Service, an Afternoon Service, a Youth Service, and an Evangelistic Service held later in the evening, presided over by Pastor Sandy Estes.

United Methodist Church was founded in 1887 by five trustees, Marian Copeland, Leon Daniels, P.B. Smith, U.G. Barnes, and Jefferson Wadlow. It was originally located on Cemetery Hill on land donated by Copeland. As the church grew, so did the congregation, eventually surpassing the capacity of the original property.

In 1909, the church founded the Women's Missionary Society, who purchased the land on which the current church stands today. The cornerstone of the church was laid in 1913, and the construction concluded with a Dedication Ceremony on August 20, 1916. Although the building has since been renovated, much of the Sanctuary is original, including the stained glass and bell tower, which still rings every Sunday service.

The surnames of the five original trustees are still common to the Ellington area, a true testament to the enduring legacy of the United Methodist Church. The church has long served as a staple in the local community, offering a valuable service and place of worship for citizens. Thus, it is my pleasure to recognize its impressive history before the House of Representatives.

TRIBUTE TO SOSY ROBINSON

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication and contributions to the community of Canyon Lake in Riverside County, California are exceptional. On Friday, March 11th, Sosy Robinson will be honored as the Citizen of the Year by the Canyon Lake Chamber of Commerce.

Born in Pasadena, California, Sosy Robinson was the first American citizen in her family which migrated to this country from the Middle East. Sosy's family moved to Canyon Lake in 2012 from Orange County and she went on to graduate from Temescal Canyon High School. Sosy and her husband, A.J., have six children, whose ages range from two to 25 years old.

In Canyon Lake, Sosy is serving for the second consecutive year as President of the Family Matters Club. The club hosted over 38 events, meetings and family meet-ups last year alone. Sosy is also a member of the Canyon Lake Lioness Club, serves as the official bingo caller at the Canyon Lake Senior Center, and graciously delivers groceries for homebound seniors in need. The nomination

of Sosy for the Citizen of the Year award summed it up well: ''Our community is made a much, much better place because of Sosy and all her hard work and dedication.''

In light of all that Sosy has done for the community of Riverside County and the city of Canyon Lake, it is only fitting to honor her as Citizen of the Year. Sosy has contributed immensely to the betterment of our region and I am proud to call her a fellow community member, American and a constituent of the 42nd Congressional District. I add my voice to the many who will be congratulating Sosy Robinson on being named Citizen of the Year by the Canyon Lake Chamber of Commerce.

IN RECOGNITION OF JIM PERRY'S SERVICE TO OUR COMMUNITY

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Jim Perry for his 35 years of distinguished service at the Downriver Community Conference located in Southeast Michigan. Jim's commitment to the downriver community has touched the lives of many and is significantly responsible for this regions collective and coordinated success.

The Downriver Community Conference (DCC) is one of the oldest and most successful interlocal agreements in the State of Michigan and the United States. Representing twenty communities in Wayne County, the DCC coordinates and supports a vast array of initiatives for its communities including; Economic Development, Job Training and Placement, Veterans Services, Public Safety Coordination, Transportation, Weatherization, Energy Assistance, Senior Support Programs, and Youth Support Programs. In addition to these programs, the DCC also acts as a critical voice in the region, advocating for the interests of its communities with elected officials and government agencies. It is a model nationwide for communities working together on many issues to the benefit of the entire region. The DCC is a remarkable success story, and Jim Perry has been a critical component of that success for the last 35 years. Humble in his success, he reminds me that it is only by putting together an extraordinary team that he can do great things. I entirely agree with that, and I stand here today to say that Jim Perry is a remarkable recruiter, coach and leader.

Jim was born and raised in Allen Park, MI, graduated from Allen Park High School, and went on to play basketball at the University of Houston, where he excelled. He returned to Michigan and in 1981, began working at the DCC and has worked there ever since. In the year 2000, Jim was named executive director of the DCC, making him the youngest person to have served in that role. He has given so much of his time and talent to our region, serving on a wide variety of boards and commissions including; the Michigan Department of Human Services Board where he served as chair, the Southeast Michigan Substance Abuse Services Board, Wayne County Head Start Board, and the Detroit-Wayne Mental Health Authority Board, and the Allen Park Parks and Recreation Commission. Jim gives his time because it is who he is, and it is what our community needs.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today to honor my friend Jim Perry for his 35 years of service to our communities. I thank him for his leadership and wish him many more years of success.

INTRODUCTION OF THE NO LEAD IN THE AIR ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the No Lead in the Air Act. The bill prohibits the use of lead in aircraft fuel by 2021. Lead exposure can have harmful effects on children as well as adults. Since 1980, the amount of lead in the air has decreased 89 percent, but while lead gas for automobiles has been banned since 1995, the piston-engine aircraft industry and airports that supply their fuel continue to use leaded aircraft fuel. Without a federal ban, they will continue to do so and put our communities and children at risk.

Lead particles from airplane exhaust can fall widely during flight and there may be high concentrations of lead near airports. It is estimated that 16 million people live and three million children go to school within a half-mile of airports that sell leaded aircraft fuel, called avgas. The health effects of lead in children include behavioral and learning problems, lower IQ, hyperactivity, slowed growth, hearing problems, and anemia. Lead exposure can cause premature births and spontaneous abortions in pregnant women, and adults can suffer from increased blood pressure, decreased kidney function, and reproductive problems.

Seventy-five percent of piston-engined aircraft already operate safely with fuel that does not use lead. However, small airports continue to only sell leaded avgas for these piston-engine aircraft. But small airports will have to comply if the federal government bans the use of leaded fuel. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which implements the Clean Air Act, announced plans in 2010 to phase out leaded aviation fuel, but in the intervening six years we still have not seen a proposed rule. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has created a task force of government and aviation industry stakeholders to study alternative fuels for piston-engine aircraft that do not use lead, and the agency has indicated it may certify lead-free aviation fuel sometime in 2018.

With so much evidence of the harmful impacts of lead exposure, we can no longer put our communities at risk. My bill would give enough time for a full phase-out of lead in aircraft fuel—five years—by directing the FAA Administrator, in consultation with the EPA Administrator, to issue regulations prohibiting the use of leaded fuel in aircraft in U.S. airspace beginning January 1, 2021.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

TRIBUTE TO NEW YORK'S 7TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a special group of my neighbors who are an incredible part of the Williamsburg, Brooklyn community—Holocaust survivors. I am privileged to represent approximately one thousand Holocaust survivors in New York's 7th Congressional District.

These individuals arrived from across Eastern Europe fleeing unspeakable horrors. Many of them had lost their mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters during one of the darkest periods in our history. They survived concentration camps and came to the U.S. as refugees looking to launch a fresh start, rebuild anew and escape the horrific crimes they had suffered in their pasts.

From a small group of survivors that arrived after World War II in Williamsburg, this community has grown and flourished by tens of thousands. From meager beginnings, they rebuilt their families, religion and traditions, and established a wonderful part of our City that, to this day, contributes to New York's diverse cultural mosaic. Their accomplishments are a testament to the perseverance and persistence of the Holocaust survivors.

In 1966, Holocaust survivors created the United Jewish Organizations (UJO) of Williamsburg which is celebrating its 50th year of service to the community. The UJO was conceived as a vehicle to help the Yiddish-Speaking population adapt to life in the United States, participate in the civic sphere and ensure access to public benefits.

Throughout their jubilee of activity the UJO has put the needs of Holocaust survivors at the forefront. They work closely with the Claims Conference and the NYC Department for the Aging to help survivors age gracefully and independently with a wide array of social services and in-home care. They have truly evolved into a community anchor for all of Brooklyn and New York. I salute their many achievements.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in acknowledging all that our nation's Holocaust Survivors have not only endured, but also accomplished. We must never forget the horrors they underwent, but, likewise, we must also honor the achievements they secured in the face of enormous adversity. Their spirit and strength are a credit to the Williamsburg community, to our City and, indeed, to our entire nation.

CLERMONT COUNTY COMMISSIONER BOB PROUD

HON. BRAD R. WENSTRUP

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate Clermont County Commissioner Bob Proud on a distinguished career serving the residents of Clermont County and southern Ohio.

A seven-term Clermont County Commissioner, Bob has effectively guided Clermont County into the 21st Century. Involved in everything from the construction of a new Clermont County Animal Shelter in 2002, to the reclamation of the former Ford transmission plant on State Route 32, to his service for senior citizens as a Meals on Wheels volunteer, to his work on the Coalition for a Drug-Free Clermont County, Bob has served Clermont with integrity and class.

Bob is also a champion for our troops, both at home and abroad. He has been nationally recognized for his work on behalf of our military and has even founded a local military family support group.

For the last twenty-five years, Bob has served as Chairman of the Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission (OVRDC), a public regional planning commission that serves twelve southern Ohio counties, the majority of which are in Ohio's Second Congressional District. As he prepares to retire from this position, I commend him for his hard work and leadership to make Southern Ohio a better place to live and work.

Thank you Bob, and God bless you.

IN HONOR OF T&M ASSOCIATES

HON. DONALD NORCROSS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my congratulations to T&M Associates of New Jersey on the occasion of their 50th anniversary and for their tireless work meeting the engineering needs of communities throughout New Jersey and the United States.

On March 21, 1966, Richard T. Noble and Richard M. Schulz founded T&M Associates and over the past five decades it has grown from a seven-person local operation to a nationally-recognized professional services firm, with 400 professionals stationed in offices throughout the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic and Midwestern states. Even with this remarkable growth, the enduring mission of T&M Associates has remained the same: to improve quality of life and create sustainable value for their employees, clients and partner communities.

Over the years, T&M Associates has demonstrated a remarkable commitment to providing high-value consulting, technical and engineering solutions to promote the vitality of their community and business partners. This commitment to community improvement goes beyond just business interests, as demonstrated by their "50 Ways of Giving" community service campaign—a company wide effort to bring employees together to participate in 50 acts of volunteerism that give back to their communities. Through its reputation for excellence and commitment to community improvement, T&M Associates has proven itself to be a source of pride for New Jersey and a true asset to the New Jersey business community.

Mr. Speaker, I join with all of New Jersey in congratulating T&M Associates on their Golden Anniversary and encouraging them to continue providing quality consulting, engineering, and technical services throughout the United States.

RECOGNIZING THE CAROLINA PANTHERS FOR THEIR NFC CHAMPIONSHIP VICTORY

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my hometown team, the Carolina Panthers, for representing the National Football Conference in Super Bowl 50 after winning the NFC Championship. I would like to congratulate the entire Panthers organization on this outstanding accomplishment and thank them for the excitement the team brought the entire Panthers fan base this season.

Before this NFL season started, few people expected the Carolina Panthers to win enough games to seriously compete for a spot in the postseason playoffs. However, Head Coach Ron Rivera and star quarterback Cam Newton led the Panthers to victory in 15 of their 16 games during the regular season, making the Panthers only the seventh team in NFL history to win 15 games and set a franchise record for the most victories in a single season. In the postseason, the Panthers hosted the NFC Championship in Charlotte for the first time in the franchise's history and earned a spot in the Super Bowl for only the second time since the team organized in 1995. Needless to say, this was a fantastic season that will long be remembered by the players, coaches and fans.

While the team's success on the football field this season is certainly extraordinary, what is even more impressive about the Carolina Panthers is the culture of the organization. The Carolina Panthers are one of the most highly respected organizations in the National Football League; filled with high-character individuals who continually display an active commitment to community service. A great example of their community-centered focus is the grant fund the Carolina Panthers established after the historic flooding that took place in South Carolina during October of 2015. This fund awarded $250,000 in grants to assist 19 high school athletic departments in the region repair or replace damaged or lost athletic equipment, supplies and infrastructure. This is just one of the many ways the Carolina Panthers give back to their community through charitable acts and community service programs.

In addition to their long list of charitable acts and dedication to serving the community off the field, the Carolina Panthers are frequently recognized as having players and coaches who play the game with character and integrity. This year alone, several players have been recognized for their sportsmanship and leadership on the field. Cam Newton was recognized as the league's Most Valuable Player and Thomas Davis, a linebacker on the Panthers' defense, was awarded the Bart Starr Award, given to a player who exemplifies character and leadership on and off the field. Head Coach Ron Rivera was also recognized as the league's Coach of the Year and was honored by the Panthers for two consecutive years as its Salute to Service Award nominee. This award is given by the NFL in partnership with the United Services Automobile Association to a member of the NFL community who demonstrates a commitment to honor and support members of the armed services, veterans and their families.

Clearly, the Carolina Panthers are a first-class organization both on and off the field. This can be attributed to one man, Carolina Panthers' founder and owner Jerry Richardson. Mr. Richardson is the epitome of dignity and class, and is one of the finest men I have ever known. In everything he does, Mr. Richardson carries himself as a true professional and Southern gentleman. He always looks for opportunities to give back to the community he loves and to assist those who are in need. Mr. Richardson is a loyal and patient man who genuinely cares about those who work for him, and I would argue he is one of the finest owners in NFL history. Without Mr. Richardson, there would be no Carolina Panthers and the success this franchise has achieved on the field and the superior culture established within the organization would not be possible. There is no one more deserving of this championship than Mr. Richardson, and I look forward to him leading the Carolina Panthers to even greater success in the future.

Mr. Speaker, please join me again in congratulating the Carolina Panthers for their NFC Championship victory, and thanking Mr. Richardson and the entire Panthers organization for their tireless efforts to better our community. Go Panthers and Keep Pounding!

CINCO RANCH SWIM TEAM RACES TO STATE

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Cinco Ranch High School Swimming Program from Katy, TX for earning Gold, Silver and Bronze medals and for setting a state record at the 2016 Division 6A finals of the University Interscholastic League (UIL) Swimming and Diving Championships.

The Cinco Ranch Cougars took home three gold medals, two silver, and three bronze in addition to a State Record for the 200-yard freestyle relay at the UIL State Competition on February 20th, 2016. In addition to this impressive standing, both girls and boys teams were in the top 10 ranking within the division 6A tier; how impressive. Athletes compete in the Breaststroke, Medley, Freestyle, Diving, Butterfly, and Backstroke categories. We are proud of our Cinco Ranch Cougars and can't wait to see what they do next.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to the Cinco Ranch High School Swimming Program for all of their success at the UIL meet. Keep up the great work.

IN RECOGNITION OF RICHARD ''RICK'' D. DEGRAW

HON. KYRSTEN SINEMA

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the retirement of an Arizona political legend, a recognized business leader, an advocate for worker's rights and a dedicated

husband and father. Richard "Rick" DeGraw has been a fixture in Arizona public service for three decades, working for Governor Bruce Babbitt, the Arizona Legislature and the Maricopa County Community College District.

Mr. DeGraw is now retiring after serving as the Executive Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer at CopperPoint Mutual Insurance Company, Arizona's largest provider of worker's compensation insurance. Mr. DeGraw came to CopperPoint in 2006 to create and oversee the Communications and Public Affairs Division. In this role he oversaw the successful rebranding of the company and was responsible for the Legal Division, Human Resources, Facilities, Real Estate Operations, Security, Public Affairs, Legislative Affairs, Community Development, Corporate Outreach and Executive Administration and Support.

In addition to his more than full-time job, Mr. DeGraw spearheaded the effort to build a memorial honoring the 119 fallen firefighters and paramedics who have died in the line of duty in Arizona. Mr. DeGraw has long been an advocate and friend to the Professional Fire Fighters of Arizona, even earning their coveted award of Honorary Fire Fighter many years ago, one of only ten individuals in the State of Arizona to earn the title.

Mr. DeGraw has been an advisor and a mentor for generations of Arizona elected officials and their staff on both sides of the aisle. He has worked on over 100 political campaigns and is credited with helping create true political change in Phoenix and across Arizona. Mr. DeGraw is also a social worker and served as a pastor and a Chaplain in his youth. I can personally attest to Rick's political genius, calming warmth, and dedication to public service. I am proud to call him my friend and I know he will continue to bring positive change to our community for many years to come.

CELEBRATING THE INSTALLATION OF A HISTORIC MARKER FOR JIMMIE LEE JACKSON

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today, the Alabama Tourism Department will honor the life of Voting Rights martyr, Jimmie Lee Jackson, by installing a historic marker in front of the courthouse in Marion, Alabama. I want to join in acknowledging this great honor and the tremendous personal sacrifice of the family of Jimmie Lee Jackson who lost his life in the fight for voter equality in America.

At the age of 26, Jimmie Lee Jackson, a Marion, Alabama native, was brutally killed at the hands of an Alabama State Trooper on February 18, 1965. He was killed while trying to protect his mother and 82 year old grandfather after attending a voting rights rally. The state trooper confronted the family at Mack's Café in Marion and shot Jimmie Lee Jackson at point blank range for simply shielding his family from the intimidation and retribution being carried out by law enforcement. It is heartbreaking to think that it was the audacity of this young man and his family to peacefully protest for their constitutional rights that led to his brutal murder at the hands of law enforcement.

The senseless murder of Jimmie Lee Jackson served as the catalyst for the voting rights movement in Selma. Jimmie Lee Jackson deserves to have his proper place in American history as a true agent of change. Likewise, I was honored to sponsor the National Park Service efforts that led to the City of Marion being added to the Selma to Montgomery Historic Trail as the starting point of the historic road of the Voting Rights Movement.

So today, March 2, 2016, it is befitting that the State of Alabama would honor Jimmie Lee Jackson with the installation of a historic marker at the front of the courthouse in Marion. The marker will commemorate the bravery and sacrifice of Jimmie Lee Jackson, and will also serve as a reminder for generations to come that freedom is not free—but rather freedom is paid for at a hefty cost.

The senseless killing of Jimmie Lee Jackson shocked the consciousness of the American public and galvanized the local folks to be even more resolved to fight against the inequalities in voting. Jimmie Lee Jackson's death helped reignite the push for federal voting protections and led James Bevel of the SCLC to organize the Selma to Montgomery march.

On February 24, 2016, the United States Congress awarded the Congressional Gold Medal to the Foot Soldiers who participated in the 1965 Voting Rights Marches from Selma to Montgomery. While Jimmie Lee Jackson did not live to participate in the Selma to Montgomery March, he was there in spirit. It was his spirit that gave strength to the weak, that gave courage to the scared, and that gave hope to the hopeless.

To the family of Jimmie Lee Jackson, I say this Nation owes a debt of gratitude for your personal sacrifice for which we will never be able to fully repay. My hope is that the national recognition of the special role that Jimmie Lee Jackson played and today's historic marker by the State of Alabama is a powerful tribute to his life and the significance of his sacrifice.

Today we celebrate Jimmie Lee Jackson, but we are also reminded that the fight for voting rights still continues. Jimmie Lee Jackson did not stand on the sidelines, waiting patiently for justice to come. Nor should we. We must continue the fight to renew the full protections of the Voting Rights Act, to ensure that every eligible voter is able to cast their ballot, and that every vote matters.

Jimmie Lee Jackson recognized the importance of the vote. He recognized the power that the ballot box held. Accordingly, we owe it to ourselves and to the memory of Jimmie Lee Jackson to continue his fight.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, March 3, 2016 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MARCH 8

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine United States Central Command, United States Africa Command, and United States Special Operations Command.

SD–G50

10 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of the Treasury.

SD–138

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Forest Service.

SD–366

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine State Department reauthorization, focusing on an opportunity to strengthen and streamline United States diplomacy.

SD–419

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Homeland Security.

SD–342

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of Homeland Security

To hold hearings to examine measuring results and proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for Customs and Border Protection and Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

SD–138

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Airland

To hold hearings to examine Air Force modernization in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR–222

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Personnel

To hold hearings to examine military personnel posture in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SH–216

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Subcommittee on Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure, Safety and Security

To hold hearings to examine the state of the United States maritime industry, focusing on the Federal role.

SR–253

3 p.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Legislative Branch
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Government Accountability Office and the Congressional Budget Office.
SD–192

MARCH 9

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Environment and Public Works
To hold hearings to examine cooperative federalism, focusing on state perspectives on Environmental Protection Agency regulatory actions and the role of states as co-regulators.
SD–406

Committee on the Judiciary
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Department of Justice.
SD–226

10 a.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Indian Health Service.
SD–124

Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the nominations of General Joseph L. Votel, USA, for reappointment to the grade of general and to be Commander, United States Central Command, and Lieutenant General Raymond A. Thomas III, USA, to be general and Commander, United States Special Operations Command.
SD–G50

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
Business meeting to consider S. 1878, to extend the pediatric priority review voucher program, S. 1077, to provide for expedited development of and priority review for breakthrough devices, S. 1101, to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to provide for the regulation of patient records and certain decision support software, S. 2055, to amend the Public Health Service Act and the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to national health security, S. 1767, to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to combination products, S. 1597, to enhance patient engagement in the medical product development process, S. 2512, to expand the tropical disease product priority review voucher program to encourage treatments for Zika virus, and the nomination of John B. King, of New York, to be Secretary of Education.
SD–106

10:30 a.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Department of Defense
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Defense Health Program.
SD–192

2 p.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Agriculture.
SD–124

Committee on the Judiciary
Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the enforcement of the antitrust laws.
SD–226

2:15 p.m.
Committee on Indian Affairs
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for Indian Country.
SD–628

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Energy.
SD–138

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities
To hold hearings to examine the Department of Defense security cooperation and assistance programs and authorities.
SR–232A

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces
To hold closed hearings to examine military space threats and programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SVC–217

MARCH 10

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Housing and Urban Development.
SD–192

MARCH 15

10 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support
To hold hearings to examine the current state of readiness of United States forces in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–222

MARCH 16

10 a.m.
Committee on Veterans' Affairs
To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple Veterans Service Organizations.
SD–G50

2:15 p.m.
Committee on Indian Affairs
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Government Accountability Office report on telecommunications, focusing on the need for additional coordination and performance measurement for high-speed Internet access programs on tribal lands.
SD–628

MARCH 17

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the Department of Defense budget posture in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SD–G50

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S1169–S1241

Measures Introduced: Six bills and one resolution were introduced, as follows: S. 2616–2621, and S. Res. 384. **Page S1222**

Measures Reported:

S. 817, to provide for the addition of certain real property to the reservation of the Siletz Tribe in the State of Oregon. (S. Rept. No. 114–219) **Page S1222**

Measures Passed:

Read Across America Day: Senate agreed to S. Res. 384, designating March 2, 2016, as ''Read Across America Day''. **Page S1238**

Measures Considered:

Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act—Agreement: Senate began consideration of S. 524, to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use, after agreeing to the motion to proceed, withdrawing the committee-reported substitute amendment, and taking action on the following amendments proposed thereto:

Pages S1171–S1217

Adopted:

By a unanimous vote of 94 yeas, 1 responding present (Vote No. 28), Grassley (for Feinstein/Grassley) Amendment No. 3362 (to Amendment No. 3378), to provide the Department of Justice with additional tools to target extraterritorial drug trafficking activity. (A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the amendment, having achieved 60 affirmatives votes, be agreed to.)

Pages S1180, S1203

Grassley (for Toomey) Amendment No. 3367 (to Amendment No. 3378), to establish a life-saving program to prevent drug and opioid abuse in Medicare. (A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the requirement of a 60 affirmative vote threshold, be vitiated.) **Pages S1192, S1204**

Pending:

Grassley Amendment No. 3378, in the nature of a substitute. **Page S1180**

Grassley (for Donnelly/Capito) Modified Amendment No. 3374 (to Amendment No. 3378), to provide follow-up services to individuals who have received opioid overdose reversal drugs. **Page S1206**

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

By 46 yeas to 50 nays (Vote No. 29), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, Senate rejected the motion to waive all applicable sections of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, with respect to Wyden/Schumer Amendment No. 3395 (to Amendment No. 3378), to provide for comprehensive provisions for the prevention and enforcement of opioid abuse and treatment of opioid addiction. Subsequently, a point of order that pursuant to Section 302(f) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 the amendment would cause the underlying legislation to exceed the authorizing committee's section 302(a) allocation of new budget authority or outlays was sustained, and the amendment fell. **Pages S1192–94, S1204**

By 48 yeas to 47 nays (Vote No. 30), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, Senate rejected the motion to waive all applicable sections of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and applicable budget resolutions with respect to Shaheen/Whitehouse Amendment No. 3345 (to Amendment No. 3378), to make appropriations to address the heroin and opioid drug abuse epidemic for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016. Subsequently, a point of order that pursuant to Section 311(a)(2)(A) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 the amendment would cause the aggregate level of budget authority and outlays for fiscal year 2016 as established in the most recently agreed to concurrent resolution on the budget, S. Con. Res. 11, to be exceeded was sustained, and the amendment fell. **Pages S1181–83, S1202–03, S1205–06**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the bill at approximately 9:30 a.m., on Thursday, March 3, 2016. **Page S1239**

Messages from the President: Senate received the following messages from the President of the United States:

Transmitting, pursuant to law, the continuation of the national emergency originally declared in Executive Order 13660 on March 6, 2014, with respect to Ukraine; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. (PM–43)

Page S1219

Transmitting, pursuant to law, the continuation of the national emergency originally declared in executive order 13288 on March 6, 2003, with respect to the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. (PM–44)

Page S1219

Messages from the House: **Pages S1219–20**

Measures Referred: **Page S1220**

Executive Communications: **Pages S1220–22**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S1222–23**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S1223–27**

Additional Statements: **Page S1219**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S1227–38**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S1238**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S1238**

Record Votes: Three record votes were taken today. (Total—30) **Pages S1203–04, S1206**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 9:30 a.m. and adjourned at 6:44 p.m., until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, March 3, 2016. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S1241.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

APPROPRIATIONS: DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of the Interior, after receiving testimony from Sally Jewell, Secretary of the Interior.

APPROPRIATIONS: NAVY AND MARINE CORPS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Department of Defense concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Navy and Marine Corps, after receiving testimony from Ray Mabus, Secretary of the Navy, Admiral John M. Richardson, USN, Chief of Naval Operations, and General Robert Neller, USMC, Commandant of the Marine Corps, all of the Department of Defense.

APPROPRIATIONS: FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Food and Drug Administration, after receiving testimony from Robert Califf, Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services.

APPROPRIATIONS: ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS AND BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development concluded a hearing 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, after receiving testimony from Jo-Ellen Darcy, Assistant Secretary (Civil Works), and Lieutenant General Thomas P. Bostick, USA, Chief of Engineers, Army Corps of Engineers, both of the Department of the Army, Department of Defense; and Thomas Iseman, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Water and Science, and Estevan Lopez, Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation, both of the Department of the Interior.

FCC OVERSIGHT

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee concluded an oversight hearing to examine the Federal Communications Commission, after receiving testimony from Tom Wheeler, Chairman, and Ajit Pai, Mignon L. Clyburn, Michael O'Rielly, and Jessica Rosenworcel, each a Commissioner, all of the Federal Communications Commission.

LAND CLEANUP PROGRAMS LEGISLATION

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Committee concluded a hearing to examine economic opportunities from land cleanup programs, including 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", after receiving testimony from Patrick Kirby, West Virginia University Brownfields Assistance Center, Morgantown; Chip Merriam, Orlando Utilities Commission, Orlando, Florida, on behalf of the American Public Power Association; Steve Moyer, Trout Unlimited, Arlington, Virginia; Frank Holleman, Southern Environmental Law Center, Chapel Hill, North Carolina; and Jennifer Krill, Earthworks, Washington, D.C.

LOW OIL AND GAS PRICES ECONOMIC AND GEOPOLITICAL IMPLICATIONS

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the economic and geopolitical implications of low oil and gas prices, after receiving testimony from Timothy D. Adams, Institute of International Finance, and Robert Kahn, Council on Foreign Relations, both of Washington, D.C.

NOMINATIONS

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing 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, after the nominees testified and answered questions in their own behalf.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 17 public bills, H.R. 4660–4676; and 4 resolutions, H.J. Res. 831–84; H. Con. Res. 122; and H. Res. 634 were introduced. **Pages H1115–17**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H1117–18**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 4119, to authorize the exchange of certain land located in Gulf Islands National Seashore, Jackson County, Mississippi, between the National Park Service and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 114–441);

H.R. 482, to redesignate Ocmulgee National Monument in the State of Georgia and revise its boundary, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 114–442); and

H. Res. 635, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4557) to allow for judicial review of any final rule addressing national emission standards for hazardous air pollutants for brick and structural clay products or for clay ceramics manufacturing before requiring compliance with such rule, and providing for proceedings during the period from March 4, 2016, through March 11, 2016 (H. Rept. 114–443). **Page H1115**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Jody B. Hice (GA) to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H1087**

Recess: The House recessed at 10:41 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H1092**

Recess: The House recessed at 12:51 p.m. and reconvened at 1:01 p.m. **Page H1097**

Ensuring Removal of Terminated Providers from Medicaid and CHIP Act: The House passed 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, by a yea-and-nay vote of 406 yeas with none voting "nay", Roll No. 105. **Pages H1095–H1103, H1104**

Pursuant to the Rule, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114–45 shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule, in lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Energy and Commerce now printed in the bill. **Page H1101**

Agreed to:

Buschon amendment (No. 1 printed in H. Rept. 114–440), as modified, that makes technical changes to the bill; changes the short title to better capture both sections of the bill and changes the effective dates throughout the bill to ensure that states and the Secretary of Health and Human Services have the time necessary to correctly implement the provisions; adds a requirement for the Inspector General of the Department of Health and Human Services to report on implementation of the requirements regarding

providers disenrolled for reasons related to fraud, integrity and quality; clarifies that the fee-for-service provider directory is to include physicians and, at state option, other providers; and provides other information that could be included in the directory. **Pages H1102–03**

H. Res. 632, the rule providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3716) was agreed to by voice vote, after the previous question was ordered by voice vote. **Page H1103**

Recess: The House recessed at 1:38 p.m. and reconvened at 5:15 p.m. **Page H1103**

Meeting Hour: Agreed by unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow, March 3. **Page H1105**

Presidential Messages: Read a message from the President wherein he notified Congress that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660 with respect to Ukraine is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2016—referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed (H. Doc. 114–112). **Pages H1104–05**

Read a message from the President wherein he notified Congress that the national emergency declared with respect to the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2016—referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed (H. Doc. 114–113). **Page H1105**

Quorum Calls—Votes: One yea-and-nay vote developed during the proceedings of today and appears on page H1104. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

Committee Meetings

PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE OF SNAP: EXAMINING STATE OPTIONS

Committee on Agriculture: Full Committee held a hearing entitled "Past, Present, and Future of SNAP: Examining State Options". Testimony was heard from Stephanie Muth, Deputy Executive Commissioner for the Office of Social Services, Texas Health and Human Services Commission; and public witnesses.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies held a budget hearing on Department of Veterans Affairs. Testimony was heard from Robert A. McDonald, Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs; David J. Shulkin, M.D., Under Secretary for Health, Veterans Health Administration; Danny G.I. Pummill, Acting Under Secretary for Benefits, Veterans Benefits Administration; Ronald E. Walters, Interim Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, National Cemetery Administration; Edward Joseph Murray, Interim Assistant Secretary for Management, Interim Chief Information Officer, Office of Management; and LaVerne H. Council, Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology, Chief Information Officer, Office of Information and Technology.

APPROPRIATIONS—AIR FORCE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Defense held a budget hearing on the Air Force. Testimony was heard from Deborah Lee James, Secretary, U.S. Air Force; and General Mark A. Welsh III, Chief of Staff, U.S. Air Force.

APPROPRIATIONS—SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education held a budget hearing on Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Testimony was heard from Kana Enomoto, Acting Administrator, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, APPLIED ENERGY

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development held a budget hearing on Department of Energy, Applied Energy. Testimony was heard from the following Department of Energy officials: Franklin Orr, Under Secretary for Science and Energy; John Kotek, Acting Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy; Christopher Smith, Assistant Secretary for Fossil Energy; and Patricia Hoffman, Assistant Secretary for Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies held a budget hearing on the Department of the Interior. Testimony was heard from Sally Jewell, Secretary, Department of the Interior.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, SCIENCE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development held a budget hearing on Department of Energy, Science. Testimony was heard from Franklin Orr, Under Secretary for Science and

Energy, Department of Energy; and Cherry Murray, Director of the Office of Science, Department of Energy.

APPROPRIATIONS—HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Legislative Branch held a budget hearing on House of Representatives. Testimony was heard from Will Plaster, Chief Administrative Officer; Karen L. Haas, Clerk; and Paul D. Irving, Sergeant at Arms.

APPROPRIATIONS—TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Homeland Security held a budget hearing on Transportation Security Administration. Testimony was heard from Peter Neffenger, Administrator, Transportation Security Administration.

APPROPRIATIONS—FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies held a budget hearing on Federal Aviation Administration. Testimony was heard from Michael Huerta, Administrator, Federal Aviation Administration.

APPROPRIATIONS—LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Legislative Branch held a budget hearing on the Library of Congress. Testimony was heard from David S. Mao, Acting Librarian; Robert R. Newlen, Chief of Staff; and Maria A. Pallante, Register and Director.

WORLD WIDE THREATS

Committee on Armed Services: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''World Wide Threats''. Testimony was heard from Lieutenant General Vincent R. Stewart, USMC, Director, Defense Intelligence Agency; and Major General James Marrs, USAF, Director for Intelligence, J–2, Joint Staff.

GROUND FORCE MODERNIZATION BUDGET REQUEST

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces held a hearing entitled ''Ground Force Modernization Budget Request''. Testimony was heard from Lieutenant General Michael E. Williamson, USA, Principal Military Deputy to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology; Lieutenant General John M. Murray, USA, Deputy Chief of Staff, G–8; Lieutenant General Robert S. Walsh, USMC, Commanding General, Marine Corps Combat Development Command; Brigadier General Joe Shrader, USMC, Commander, Marine Corps Systems Command; and Bill Taylor, Program Executive Officer Land Systems, U.S. Marine Corps.

FISCAL YEAR 2017 BUDGET REQUEST FOR DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE NUCLEAR FORCES

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Strategic Forces held a hearing entitled ''Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Request for Department of Defense Nuclear Forces''. Testimony was heard from Robert Scher, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities, Department of Defense; Arthur Hopkins, performing the duties of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical, and Biological Defense Programs, Department of Defense; General Robin Rand, USAF, Commander, Air Force Global Strike Command; and Vice Admiral Terry Benedict, USN, Director, Navy Strategic Systems Programs.

THE FISCAL YEAR 2017 DOE BUDGET

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Energy and Power held a hearing entitled ''The Fiscal Year 2017 DOE Budget''. Testimony was heard from Ernest J. Moniz, Secretary, Department of Energy.

EXAMINING THE U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE TO THE ZIKA VIRUS

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled ''Examining the U.S. Public Health Response to the Zika Virus''. Testimony was heard from Luciana Borio, Assistant Commissioner for Counterterrorism Policy, Food and Drug Administration; Anthony Fauci, Director, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, National Institutes of Health; Thomas R. Frieden, Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Nicole Lurie, Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, Department of Health and Human Services; and Timothy M. Persons, Chief Scientist, Government Accountability Office; and public witnesses.

BIOETHICS AND FETAL TISSUE

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Select Investigative Panel of the Committee on Energy and Commerce held a hearing entitled ''Bioethics and Fetal Tissue''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Financial Services: Full Committee held a 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''. The following bills were ordered reported, as amended: H.R. 2901, H.R. 2121, H.R. 4166, and H.R. 4638. The following bills were ordered reported, without amendment: H.R. 4096, H.R. 2896, H.R. 4139, H.R. 4498, H.R. 4620, and H.R. 3798.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Full Committee held a markup on 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''; and 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. H. Con. Res. 75 was ordered reported, as amended. H. Con. Res. 121 was ordered reported, without amendment.

THE GROWING THREAT OF CHOLERA AND OTHER DISEASES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations held a hearing entitled ''The Growing Threat of Cholera and Other Diseases in the Middle East''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

THE TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION'S FY2017 BUDGET REQUEST

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Transportation Security held a hearing entitled ''The Transportation Security Administration's FY2017 Budget Request''. Testimony was heard from Peter V. Neffenger, Administrator, Transportation Security Administration, Department of Homeland Security.

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, THE BUREAU OF SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT, AND THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held a 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)''. Testimony was heard from the following Department of the Interior officials: Abigail Hopper, Director, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management; Neil Kornze, Director, Bureau of Land Management; and Brian Salerno, Director, Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement.

GEOLOCATION TECHNOLOGY AND PRIVACY

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Geolocation Technology and Privacy''. Testimony was heard from Richard Downing, Acting Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Division, Department of Justice; and public witnesses.

FIREARMS LOST: GSA'S ADMINISTRATION OF THE SURPLUS FIREARM DONATION PROGRAM

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on Government Operations held a hearing entitled ''Firearms Lost: GSA's Administration of the Surplus Firearm Donation Program''. Testimony was heard from Carol Ochoa, Inspector General, General Services Administration; William Sisk, Acting Assistant Commissioner, Office of General Supplies and Services, General Services Administration; and a public witness.

BLOCKING REGULATORY INTERFERENCE FROM CLOSING KILNS ACT OF 2016

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H.R. 4557, the ''Blocking Regulatory Interference from Closing Kilns Act of 2016''. The committee granted, by record vote of 5–3, a closed rule for H.R. 4557. The rule provides one hour of 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 provides that the bill shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in

the bill. The rule provides one motion to recommit. In section 2, the rule provides that on any legislative day during the period from March 4, 2016, through March 11, 2016: the Journal of the proceedings of the previous day shall be considered as approved; and the Chair may at any time declare the House adjourned to meet at a date and time to be announced by the Chair in declaring the adjournment. Finally in section 3, the rule provides that the Speaker may appoint Members to perform the duties of the Chair for the duration of the period addressed by section 2. Testimony was heard from Representatives Whitfield and Rush.

SMART HEALTH: EMPOWERING THE FUTURE OF MOBILE APPS

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Subcommittee on Research and Technology held a hearing entitled ''Smart Health: Empowering the Future of Mobile Apps''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

COMMERCIALIZING ON INNOVATION: REAUTHORIZING THE SMALL BUSINESS INNOVATION RESEARCH AND SMALL BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER PROGRAMS

Committee on Small Business: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Commercializing on Innovation: Reauthorizing the Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer Programs''. Testimony was heard from John Williams, Director, Innovation and Technology, Office of Investment and Innovation, Small Business Administration; Barry Johnson, Division Director, Industrial Innovation and Partnerships, National Science Foundation; Matthew Portnoy, Overall HHS SBIR/STTR, Program Manager/NIH Program Manager, National Institutes of Health; and Robert Smith, Director, SBIR/STTR Programs, Office of Naval Research.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Full Committee held a 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''; and H.R. 3030, the ''Baudette Coast Guard Housing Conveyance Act''. The following legislation was ordered reported, without amendment: H.R. 4465, H.R. 4618, H. Con. Res. 119, H. Con. Res. 117, and H. Con. Res. 120. The following legislation was ordered reported, as amended: H.R. 4487, H.R. 3937, H.R. 223, H.R. 1684, and H.R. 3030. The General Services Administration Capital Investment and Leasing Program resolutions were approved.

PROTECTING THE FREE EXCHANGE OF IDEAS ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Oversight held a hearing entitled ''Protecting the Free Exchange of Ideas on College Campuses''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

ECONOMIC REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Joint Economic Committee: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the Economic Report of the President, after receiving testimony from Jason Furman, Chairman, Council of Economic Advisers.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS LEGISLATIVE PRESENTATION

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Senate Committee concluded a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, after receiving testimony from John A. Biedrzycki, Jr., Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, Robinson Township, Pennsylvania.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 2016

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Health and Human Services, 10 a.m., SD–138.

Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Commerce, 10:30 a.m., SD–192.

Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 and fiscal year 2018 for the Veterans Health Administration and Veterans Benefits Administration, 11 a.m., SD–124.

Committee on Armed Services: to hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Air Force in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program, 9:30 a.m., SD–G50.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment, to hold hearings to examine regulatory reforms to improve equity market structure, 10 a.m., SD–538.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: business meeting to consider S. 2555, to provide opportunities for broadband investment, the nomination of Thomas F. Scott Darling III, of Massachusetts, to be Administrator of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, and routine lists in the Coast Guard, 10 a.m., SR–253.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: to hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Energy, 9:45 a.m., SD–366.

Committee on Finance: to hold hearings to examine free trade agreement implementation, focusing on lessons from the past, 10 a.m., SD–215.

Committee on Foreign Relations: to hold hearings to examine the path forward in Libya, 10 a.m., SD–419.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: to hold hearings to examine the dogs of the Department of Homeland Security, focusing on how canine programs contribute to homeland security, 10 a.m., SD–342.

Committee on the Judiciary: business meeting to consider S. 247, to amend section 349 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to deem specified activities in support of terrorism as renunciation of United States nationality, S. 2390, to provide adequate protections for whistleblowers at the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the nominations of Elizabeth J. Drake, of Maryland, Jennifer Choe Groves, of Virginia, and Gary Stephen Katzmann, of Massachusetts, each to be a Judge of the United States Court of International Trade, and Clare E. Connors, to be United States District Judge for the District of Hawaii, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship: to hold hearings to examine the impacts of Federal fisheries management on small businesses, 10 a.m., SR–428A.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: to hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple Veterans Service Organizations, 10 a.m., 345, Cannon Building.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters, 2 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, 9 a.m., B–308 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on Installations, Environment, Energy and BRAC, 9:30 a.m., HVC–210.

Subcommittee on Defense, budget hearing on the Army, 10 a.m., H–140 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Homeland Security, budget hearing on the Coast Guard, 10 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on Bureau of Land Management, 10 a.m., B–308 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on Department of Agriculture, Marketing and Regulatory Programs, 10:15 a.m., 2362–A Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, budget hearing on National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Ocean Worlds, 10:30 a.m., H–309 Capitol.

Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Readiness, hearing entitled ''The Marine Corps 2017 Operation and Maintenance Budget Request and Readiness Posture'', 10:30 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade, hearing entitled ''Disrupter Series: Wearable Devices'', 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Subcommittee on Energy; and Subcommittee on Oversight, joint hearing entitled ''Department of Energy Oversight: The DOE Loan Guarantee Program'', 9:30 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Full Committee, hearing on Fiscal Year 2017 ODNI Budget, 9 a.m., HVC–304. This hearing will be closed.

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 multiple Veterans Service Organizations, 10 a.m., 345, Cannon Building.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

9:30 a.m., Thursday, March 3

Senate Chamber

Program for Thursday: Senate will continue consideration of S. 524, Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

9 a.m., Thursday, March 3

House Chamber

Program for Thursday: Consideration of H.R. 4557—Blocking Regulatory Interference from Closing Kilns Act of 2016 (Subject to a Rule).

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