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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 19, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN 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.

HOMELAND SECURITY

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. Madam Speaker, in today's world, the threats we face are constantly changing. Our ability to keep America safe relies on our capacity to adapt quickly to these new and evolving threats.

In the years following 9/11, the U.S. made significant changes to our intelligence and law enforcement capabilities that have stopped over 60 terror plots against the U.S. and saved countless American lives.

But 9/11 was 15 years ago. The threats we face today are vastly different than the threats we faced then. It is time we reprioritize resources to confront this new reality.

The recent terror attacks in Brussels and Paris confirm that one of our largest security vulnerabilities is soft targets, relatively unprotected venues where large groups of people gather. Soft targets include places we all frequent, like airports, transit systems, stadiums, restaurants, and shopping malls. They are easy to attack and difficult to protect.

The recent attacks also showed that threats are becoming harder to detect. The ability to collect intelligence on terrorist intentions and terror plots is more challenging because of new encryption technology and the reliance on lone-wolf attacks.

Because specific and credible threats are increasingly more difficult to uncover, we need to redouble our efforts and reprioritize our funding to reduce our vulnerabilities. Yet, alarmingly, current funding for the Federal programs designed to keep America safe fails to meet the new and growing threats we face.

The primary responsibility of the Federal Government under the Constitution is to ''provide for the common defense,'' but, in recent years, Congress has made significant cuts to the Homeland Security programs that were designed to protect things like soft targets. Since the majority took over the House in 2010, Homeland Security grants to help States and localities protect against and respond to terror attacks have been cut in half.

Urban Areas Security Initiative grants, which large cities like my hometown of Chicago use to invest in the training and equipment necessary to respond to their unique security threats, have been cut by over $200 million. Transit security funding, used by the Chicago Transit Authority to invest in camera systems that protect against terror attacks and have lowered crime by 50 percent, has been reduced by over 60 percent. And Buffer Zone Protection grants, which once helped cities defend critical infrastructure like stadiums, are no longer funded.

To the detriment of our security, many of my House colleagues have championed the harmful, across-the-board spending cuts of sequestration that restrict our intelligence and law enforcement capabilities and, in 2014, forced a hiring freeze at the FBI. They champion these cuts even as the Secretary of Defense calls sequestration the ''biggest strategic danger'' to our national security, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs argues it poses a greater threat to national security than Russia, China, North Korea, Iran, and ISIS.

Last year, the House majority took the budget irresponsibility even further by threatening to shut down the Department of Homeland Security over a partisan fight over immigration. All the while, Congress continues to prioritize billions in funding to respond to threats posed by a cold war that ended decades ago.

For example, we are spending $350 billion over the next decade on our outdated nuclear weapons policy. By simply eliminating our strategically obsolete stockpile of ICBMs, we could free up $2.6 billion a year, money that could be spent on intelligence, cybersecurity, and homeland security.

While the goal of our intelligence and law enforcement communities to deter, detect, and prevent terror attacks remains the same, how we accomplish and fund that goal must continue to evolve to meet the new challenges we face.

Protecting against new and evolving threats will not necessarily require additional spending, but it will require smarter spending. When it comes to national security, we must continue to

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ask ourselves what really keeps America safe in today's world.

REINING IN GOVERNMENT: A NEW ATTITUDE AND A NEW DAY

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

Mr. YOHO. Madam Speaker, it is a great day here in America.

Four years ago I came to Congress with a desire to change the business-as-usual politics in Washington, D.C. That road has been tough, but change has been achieved. My efforts, along with the efforts of like-minded colleagues, changed the leadership of this House for the better. There has been a renewed work ethic and excitement to set forth an agenda for the American people that puts them first, not Big Government, not Big Business. There is truth in the saying: Do not grow weary in well doing.

Madam Speaker, with positive incremental changes taking hold, the keystone to our success will be a change in leadership at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. Our current administration has done everything it can to avoid working with Congress. Time and again, Republicans have sent legislation to the President's desk on behalf of the American people, only to have each one of them vetoed. With every veto, the President casts aside the will of the very people who elected us to serve, telling them, essentially: I know what is best for you. Or he rules with a pen and a phone.

Every Member of Congress takes their work and the work of the American people seriously as Representatives and as a legislative body. If this administration, in their remaining time in office, doesn't want to work with Congress on anything, then the Republicans in the House and the Senate must take action to address the issues facing the American people.

Due to the President's policy of stonewalling Congress, the legislation that we have passed has no chance of gaining his signature. Compromise, once accepted as a means to accomplish the greater good, now seems to be a thing of the past. The executive branch, whether held by Democrats or Republicans, has grown accustomed to exercising unilateral power to reinterpret existing law and twist it to fit its own ideology.

Again, I want to repeat. The executive branch, whether held by Republicans or Democrats, has used that power and twisted it to fit its own ideology.

Congress has no answer to the authoritative rulemaking process used by government agencies today. Madam Speaker, we need to reestablish a check on those agencies that are willingly disrupting business across America.

I am not talking about rules that were crafted with an understanding of the industry and a truly thoughtful process which included all stakeholders. I am talking about the rules, like the Clean Power Plan, endorsed by radical environmental groups with no reasonable knowledge of what affordable energy means to people who live paycheck to paycheck and follow an ideology of their own.

To blunt these rules, Congress must have a tool that truly is a check on the executive, one that forces the executive and legislative branch to work things out together.

One tool that scholars repeatedly pay lip service to is the power of the purse. We talk about it all the time, but we don't see it in action. While historically being an important tool to enforce the will of Congress, nowadays, a fight over spending devolves into a blame game over shutting down the government. It is a black eye to our system of government; it is a black eye to the notion of stability; and it is an insult to the American people and furthers the dysfunction of this great institution.

The balance of power in our government is out of alignment, and it is up to us in Congress to reclaim what used to be ours—the legislative veto. The legislative veto used to be a potent check on the executive branch for the better part of the 20th century. However, a broad ruling by the United States Supreme Court in 1983, INS v. Chadha, nullified the legislative veto in over 280 statutes. This was a sweeping decision, one that both handed more authority to the executive branch while limiting Congress' ability to stand up to Federal bureaucracies.

In his dissent, Justice Byron White, who was nominated to the Court by President Kennedy, correctly identified the fallout from the decision, and I quote: ''Without the legislative veto, Congress is faced with a Hobson's choice: either to refrain from delegating the necessary authority, leaving itself with a hopeless task of writing laws with the requisite specificity to cover endless special circumstances across the entire policy landscape or, in the alternative, to abdicate its lawmaking function to the executive branch and independent agencies. To choose the former leaves major national problems unresolved; to opt for the latter risks unaccountable policymaking by those not elected to fill that role.''

As members of the legislative branch, we all must take this seriously. We may be in the middle an election year, but if we play party politics when it comes to the struggle between the executive and the legislative power, neither party wins, and the American people lose. What is at stake, and more important than party politics, is the survival of our very form of government, a constitutional Republic.

This is the time to come together, not as Republicans or Democrats, but as Americans, to bring this power back.

FAILURE TO PASS A BUDGET

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

Ms. ESTY. Madam Speaker, last Friday, this House blew right through the statutory deadline to enact a budget resolution.

Let's set aside, for a moment, the fact that passing a budget last Friday was required by law. The real injustice to the American people is that Congress has once again failed to fulfill the most basic responsibilities that the American people sent us here to carry out.

A budget is supposed to reflect the values of the American people. It should be a roadmap of Congress' plan for supporting working families, creating middle class jobs, and strengthening our education system. It should be a roadmap for lifting barriers to opportunity, supporting our Nation's innovators, and helping startups and small businesses to get off the ground. It should be a roadmap for keeping Americans safe at home and abroad.

Now, let's be clear. The proposal that came out of the Budget Committee did none of these things. Dismantling Medicare won't improve our economic security. Abandoning public schools won't lift barriers to opportunity.

But the way forward is not to simply throw up our hands and abandon the budget process entirely. A budget is not a political exercise. We don't pass budgets when doing so is easy and walk away from our jobs when it gets hard.

Republicans and Democrats need to come together to craft a budget that reflects the priorities of the American people, a bipartisan budget that envisions a smarter, leaner government, one that creates predictability and support for good-paying jobs and increases opportunity for all.

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We need a budget to rebuild America by investing in our transportation and infrastructure. I worked very hard to successfully pass the 5-year highway bill that was signed into law late last year.

But according to the American Society of Civil Engineers, the United States needs to invest more than $3.6 trillion by 2020 to bring our infrastructure up to basic standards.

Nowhere is this truer than in my home State of Connecticut where we have some of the oldest infrastructure in the country and where we rely on Federal funding to fix crumbling roads, bridges, and transit systems.

Our budget should encourage innovation and entrepreneurship. Connecticut has a long, proud manufacturing tradition. We are home to 5,000 manufacturers, many of them small and family owned, and I know they can compete with anyone if they have a level playing field. We need a budget that helps us create one.

Supporting innovators means investing not just in infrastructure, but in

infostructure, our electrical grid and the physical building blocks of the Internet, which are vital to the success of startups and small businesses throughout the country.

Madam Speaker, in Connecticut and around the Nation, we need a budget that invests in STEM education and 21st century jobs, commits to growing our manufacturing sector, and provides the resources we need to fight the opioid epidemic that is tearing apart so many families.

The American public wants to see Congress take bold action. Our budget should set us on a path to leadership in today's and tomorrow's global economy.

A budget is much more than a statement of principles. It is a roadmap to lifting barriers to opportunity. It is an investment in our infrastructure and in the research and development we need to power 21st century careers. It is an investment in the American people.

It is time that we in this House put our responsibility to the American people before partisanship and political games. When the people we represent at home stop doing their jobs, they don't get paid.

In Congress, we should work the same way. We should pass the No Budget, No Pay Act because Members of Congress should only get paid when they do their jobs. If we worked under No Budget, No Pay, I guarantee you the House would have passed a budget last Friday.

So I call on my colleagues. Let's do the job the American people sent us here to do. Let's do the job we are paid to do. Let's go to the table—Democrats and Republicans—and hammer out a budget that supports good-paying jobs, grows our economy, keeps us safe, and truly reflects the priorities of the American people.

WASTING TAXPAYER MONEY IN AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Madam Speaker, I have brought to the floor today a prophetic political cartoon. Let me describe it very quickly.

There is Uncle Sam sitting in a wheelchair, and he shouts out with great excitement: I can see Greece from here. Behind the wheelchair pushing is President Obama. Behind President Obama is a donkey representing the Democratic Party, and behind the donkey is an elephant representing the Republican Party, the point being that all of us are guilty of heading this country towards Greece, and that means an economic collapse is forthcoming.

Madam Speaker, we are $19 trillion in debt.

Another reason I am on the floor today is that the continued waste of the taxpayer money in Afghanistan is becoming astounding.

Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD an article titled, ''Report cites wasted Pentagon money in Afghanistan.''

[From USATODAY.com, Jan. 20, 2016]

REPORT CITES WASTED PENTAGON MONEY IN AFGHANISTAN

(By Tom Vanden Brook)

WASHINGTON.—The embattled Pentagon agency blamed for building a budget-busting gas station in Afghanistan and renting luxury housing for its employees also imported Italian goats to boost the cashmere industry in the impoverished, war-wracked country, according to a government investigator.

Meanwhile, the former head of the Task Force for Business Stability Operations, Paul Brinkley, blasted back Wednesday at the government inspector general, accusing him of inaccuracy and hype.

At a Senate hearing, John Sopko, the Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR), said in prepared testimony that the task force lacked ''strategic direction'' and suffered from a ''scattershot approach to economic development.''

Among the more egregious examples of boondoggles he cited: ''importing rare blond Italian goats to boost the cashmere industry.'' The $6 million program included shipping nine male goats to western Afghanistan from Italy, setting up a farm, lab and staff to certify their wool.

A chart summarizing task force initiatives shows the inspector general did not conduct an audit of the program. The program, according to a contractor's analysis, may have created as many as 350 jobs. Sopko ripped the Pentagon and the task force for failing to track its spending. It's not unclear, for instance, if the goats were eaten.

''We don't know,'' Sopko said. ''This was so poorly managed.''

Sopko testified Wednesday on his report, ''Preliminary Results Show Serious Management and Oversight Problems.'' The task force was charged with jump starting the economy of Afghanistan with nearly $800 million in U.S. taxpayer funds.

Sen. Kelly Ayotte, R–N.H., who chaired the hearing, called the allegations about the filling station troubling and called for a full accounting of task force spending.

''What happened to the money?'' Ayotte asked. ''All of it?''

Sen. Claire McCaskill, D–Mo., was livid about task force spending and called the natural gas-station program ''dumb on its face,'' given the cost of converting cars to natural gas exceeds the average income of Afghans.

''This is a terrible waste of taxpayer money when we have so many other uses for it,'' McCaskill said.

In a letter and other documents, Brinkley, who led the task force in Iraq and later Afghanistan from 2006 to 2011, defended his oversight of the agency and lashed out at the government's watchdog.

''A meaningful and balanced review cannot be accomplished through a sustained media campaign or a practice of repeating uncorroborated allegations,'' Brinkley wrote to the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Sopko has released several provocative reports charging the task force with waste and shoddy accounting practices. Among the most eye-catching: a $43 million natural-gas filling station that should have cost $500,000 and proved of no use to average Afghans; and $150 million spent on renting luxury villas for task force staff and visitors. Those alleged boondoggles have drawn ire from Capitol Hill and cast Brinkley as a profligate spender.

Brinkley, through his lawyer, bristled at the charge from the inspector general that he had approved of programs without knowing their cost. Brinkley told investigators on Dec. 17 that his task force had no contracting authority, relying instead on career military officials to make deals within government regulations, according to his lawyer.

''This was done, in fact, in fact to ensure proper oversight—not to avoid it,'' Brinkley's lawyer, Charles Duross, wrote Wednesday to the inspector general's office.

The Pentagon on Wednesday also took issue with Sopko's price tag for the gas station, saying it was closer to $5 million, not $43 million. Brian McKeon, a top Pentagon policy official, said in a statement to USA TODAY that the methods used Sopko were ''flawed, and the costs of the station are far lower.''

The refueling station itself cost $2.9 million, and the balance of the $5 million paid for associated buildings and equipment, McKeon said.

Brinkley, in his letter, challenged the assertion that he and his staff lived in luxury, eschewing the basic, free accommodations offered by the military in Afghanistan.

In a previous report, Sopko criticized the task force for spending $150 million on ''western-style hotel accommodations'' that included flat-screen TVs, private bodyguards and ''three-star'' menus for staff and guests. Bunking with the Army, Sopko suggested, could have saved taxpayers tens of millions of dollars.

Living conditions during his tenure, Brinkley wrote, were far from luxurious—''basic and minimal, with multiple bunks in shared living quarters'' or on military bases.

''When this was not possible or practical, the challenge was to find facilities that did not continually smell of raw sewage, and food that did not frequently sicken our personnel or visiting government and business leaders—a challenge we never fully overcame,'' Brinkley wrote.

The task force's final grade is not yet in, McKeon said.

''Ultimately, time will tell whether the task force succeeded in its overall objectives,'' McKeon said. ''Reports that the (Pentagon) commissioned to assess the Task Force's work—as well as SIGAR's work—tell us that the Task Force had a mixed record of success, with some successes and some failures.''

Mr. JONES. In this story, John Sopko, the Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, tells that the worst boondoggle he has ever seen is the fact that the Department of Defense spent $6 million to buy nine goats—nine goats—for $6 million.

The sad thing about that is he testified before the Senate: We can't find the goats. What does that mean to the taxpayers? I don't know anymore. That is why they are so outraged, quite frankly,

Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD a second article titled, ''12 Ways Your Tax Dollars Were Squandered in Afghanistan.''

[From NBC NEWS.com, March 5, 2016]

12 WAYS YOUR TAX DOLLARS WERE SQUANDERED IN AFGHANISTAN

(By Alexander Smith)

The United States has now spent more money reconstructing Afghanistan than it did rebuilding Europe at the end of World War II, according to a government watchdog.

The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) said in a statement to Congress last week that when adjusted for inflation the $113.1 billion plowed

into the chaos-riven country outstripped the post-WWII spend by at least $10 billion.

Billions have been squandered on projects that were either useless or sub-standard, or lost to waste, corruption, and systemic abuse, according to SIGAR's reports.

NBC News spoke to SIGAR's Special Inspector General John F. Sopko about 12 of the most bizarre and baffling cases highlighted by his team's investigations.

Paraphrasing Albert Einstein, Sopko said the U.S.'s profligate spending in Afghanistan is ''the definition of insanity—doing the same things over and over vain, expecting a different result.''

The Pentagon spent close to half a billion dollars on 20 Italian-made cargo planes that it eventually scrapped and sold for just $32,000, according to SIGAR.

''These planes were the wrong planes for Afghanistan,'' Sopko told NBC News. ''The U.S. had difficulty getting the Afghans to fly them, and our pilots called them deathtraps. One pilot said parts started falling off while he was coming into land.''

After being taken out of use in March 2013, the G222 aircraft, which are also referred to as the C–27A Spartan, were towed to a corner of Kabul International Airport where they were visible from the civilian terminal. They had ''trees and bushes growing around them,'' the inspector general said.

Sixteen of the planes were scrapped and sold to a local construction company for 6 cents a pound, SIGAR said. The other four remained unused at a U.S. base in Germany.

Sopko called the planes ''one of the biggest single programs in Afghanistan that was a total failure.''

The Tarakhil Power Plant was fired up in 2009 to ''provide more reliable power'' to blackout-plagued Kabul, according to the United States Agency for International Development, which built the facility.

However, the ''modern'' diesel plant exported just 8,846 megawatt hours of power between February 2014 and April 2015, SIGAR said in a letter to USAID last August. This output was less than 1 percent of the plant's capacity and provided just 0.35 percent of power to Kabul, a city of 4.6 million people.

Related: U.S. Spent $43M on Gas Station But Can't Explain Why

Furthermore, the plant's ''frequent starts and stops . . . place greater wear and tear on the engines and electrical components,'' which could result in its ''catastrophic failure,'' the watchdog said.

USAID responded to SIGAR's report in June 2015, saying: ''We have no indication that [Afghan state-run utility company] Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS), failed to operate Tarakhil as was alleged in your letter.''

U.S. officials directed and oversaw the construction of an Afghan police training facility in 2012 that was so poorly built that its walls actually fell apart in the rain. The $456,669 dry-fire range in Wardak province was ''not only an embarrassment, but, more significantly, a waste of U.S. taxpayers' money,'' SIGAR's report said in January 2015.

It was overseen by the U.S. Central Command's Joint Theater Support Contracting Command and contracted out to an Afghan firm, the Qesmatullah Nasrat Construction Company.

SIGAR said this ''melting'' started just four months after the building was finished in October 2012. It blamed U.S. officials' bad planning and failure to hold to account the Afghan construction firm, which used poor-quality materials. The U.S. subsequently contracted another firm to rebuild the facility.

Sopko called the incident ''baffling.'' ''Afghans apparently have never grown or eaten soybeans before,'' SIGAR said in its June 2014 report. This did not stop the U.S. Department of Agriculture funding a $34.4 million program by the American Soybean Association to try to introduce the foodstuff into the country in 2010.

The project ''did not meet expectations,'' the USDA confirmed to SIGAR, largely owing to inappropriate farming conditions in Afghanistan and the fact no one wanted to buy a product they had never eaten.

''They didn't grow them, they didn't eat them, there was no market for them, and yet we thought it was a good idea,'' Sopko told NBC News.

''What is troubling about this particular project is that it appears that many of these problems could reasonably have been foreseen and, therefore, possibly avoided,'' the inspector general wrote in a letter to Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack in June 2014.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers built some 2,000 buildings to be used as barracks, medical clinics and fire stations by the Afghan National Army as part of a $1.57-billion program. When two fires in October and December 2012 revealed that around 80 percent of these structures did not meet international building regulations for fire safety, Sopko said he was ''troubled'' by the ''arrogant'' response from a senior USACE chief.

Major General Michael R. Eyre, commanding general of USACE's Transatlantic Division, said the risk of fire was acceptable because ''the typical occupant populations for these facilities are young, fit Afghan soldiers.'' Writing in a January 2014 memo published by SIGAR, Eyre said these recruits ''have the physical ability to make a hasty retreat during a developing situation.''

Sopko told NBC News that Eyre's comments ''showed a really poor attitude toward our allies.'' He added: ''It was an unbelievable arrogance, and I'm sorry to say that about a senior officer.''

Despite the Department of Defense spending $597,929 on Salang Hospital in Afghanistan's Parwan province, the 20-bed facility has been forced to resort to startling medical practices.

''Because there was no clean water, staff at the hospital were washing newborns with untreated river water,'' SIGAR's report said in January 2014. It added that the ''poorly constructed'' building was also at increased ''risk of structural collapse during an earthquake.''

NBC News visited the hospital in January 2014 and witnessed some disturbing practices: a doctor poking around a dental patient's mouth with a pair of unsterilized scissors before yanking out another's tooth with a pair of pliers.

Related: $600K in U.S. Taxpayer Cash Buys Medieval Hospital in Afghanistan

The United States Forces-Afghanistan responded to SIGAR's report in January 2014 saying it would investigate why the building was not constructed to standard.

In a separate report, SIGAR said that USAID reimbursed the International Organization for Migration for spiraling costs while building Gardez Hospital, in Paktia province.

The IOM's ''weak internal controls'' meant it paid $300,000 for just 600 gallons of diesel fuel—a price of $500 per gallon when market prices should not have exceeded $5, SIGAR said.

The so-called ''64K'' command-and-control facility at Afghanistan's Camp Leatherneck cost $36 million and was ''a total waste of U.S. taxpayer funds,'' SIGAR's report said in May 2015.

The facility in Helmand province—named because it measured 64,000 square feet—was intended to support the U.S. troop surge of 2010.

However, a year before its construction, the very general in charge of the surge asked that it not be built because the existing facilities were ''more than sufficient,'' the watchdog said. But another general denied this cancellation request, according to SIGAR, because he said it would not be ''prudent'' to quit a project for which funds had already been appropriated by Congress.

Ultimately, construction did not begin until May 2011, two months before the drawdown of the troops involved in surge. Sopko found the ''well-built and newly furnished'' building totally untouched in June 2013, with plastic sheets still covering the furniture.

''Again, nobody was held to account,'' Sopko told NBC News, adding it was a ''gross . . . really wasteful, extremely wasteful amount of money.''

He added: ''We have thrown too much money at the country. We pour in money not really thinking about it.''

A now-defunct Pentagon task force spent almost $40 million on Afghanistan's oil, mining and gas industry—but no one remembered to tell America's diplomats in Kabul, according to SIGAR, citing a senior official at the U.S. embassy in the city.

In fact, the first the U.S. ambassador knew about the multi-billion-dollar spend was when Afghan government officials thanked him for his country's support, SIGAR said.

The project, administered by the Task Force for Business and Stability Operations (TFBSO), was part of a wider $488 million investment that also included the State Department and USAID. These organizations ''failed to coordinate and prioritize'' their work, which created ''poor working relationships, and . . . potential sustainability problems,'' according to SIGAR.

It was, according to Sopko, ''a real disaster.''

One USAID official told the watchdog it would take the U.S. ''100 years'' to complete the necessary infrastructure and training Afghanistan needs to completely develop these industries.

SIGAR said the U.S. military has been unable to provide records answering ''the most basic questions'' surrounding the mystery purchase and cancellation of eight patrol boats for landlocked Afghanistan.

The scant facts SIGAR were able to find indicated the boats were bought in 2010 to be Used by the Afghan National Police, and that they were intended to be deployed along the country's northern river border with Uzbekistan.

''The order was cancelled—without explanation—nine months later,'' SIGAR said. The boats were still sitting unused at a Navy warehouse in Yorktown, Virginia, as of 2014.

''We bought in a navy for a landlocked country,'' Sopko said.

Despite the U.S. plowing some $7.8 billion into stopping Afghanistan's drug trade,'' Afghan farmers are growing more opium than ever before,'' SIGAR reported in December 2014.

''Poppy-growing provinces that were once declared 'poppy free' have seen a resurgence in cultivation,'' it said, noting that internationally funded irrigation projects may have actually increased poppy growth in recent years.

The ''fragile gains'' the U.S. has made on Afghan health, education and rule of law were being put in ''jeopardy or wiped out by the narcotics trade, which not only supports the insurgency, but also feeds organized crime and corruption,'' Sopko told U.S. lawmakers in January 2014.

Afghanistan is the world's leader in the production of opium. In 2013, the value of Afghan opium was $3 billion—equivalent to 15 percent of the country's GDP—according to the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime.

Sopko told NBC News the picture is no more optimistic today. ''No matter which

metric you use, this effort has been a real failure,'' he said.

The USAID-funded Shorandam Industrial Park in Kandahar province was transferred to the Afghan government in September 2010 with the intention of accommodating 48 business and hundreds of local employees. Four years later, SIGAR inspectors found just one active company operating there.

This was due to the U.S. military building a power plant on one-third of the industrial park to provide electricity to nearby Kandahar City, causing ''entrepreneurs to shy away from setting up businesses'' at the site, SIGAR said in its report of April 2015.

After the military withdrew in mid-2014, the investigators were told that at least four Afghan businesses had moved into the industrial park. However, SIGAR said that it could not complete a thorough inspection because USAID's contract files were ''missing important documentation.''

The DOD spent nearly $82 million on nine incineration facilities in Afghanistan—yet four of them never fired their furnaces, SIGAR said in February 2015. These four dormant facilities had eight incinerators between them and the wastage cost $20.1 million.

In addition, SIGAR inspectors said it was ''disturbing'' that ''prohibited items,'' such as tires and batteries, continued to be burned in Afghanistan's 251 burn pits. U.S. military personnel were also exposed to emissions from these pits ''that could have lasting negative health consequences,'' the watchdog said.

The Department of Defense said it was ''vitally interested in exploring all possible ways to save taxpayer dollars and ensure we are good stewards of government resources.''

A spokesman added: ''We'll continue to work with SIGAR, and other agencies, to help get to the bottom of any reported issues or concerns.''

A spokesman for Afghanistan's President Ashraf Ghani declined to comment on this story.

Mr. JONES. Madam Speaker, we have already spent more in Afghanistan than it cost to rebuild Europe after World War II. In fact, last week I asked my staff to draft a letter to Speaker PAUL RYAN.

In the letter, I asked the Speaker of the House, PAUL RYAN, to meet with John Sopko, who is the Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, and listen to this absolute waste that is going on in Afghanistan.

Yet, sometime soon we will mark up the NDAA, National Defense Authorization Act, and I will guarantee you there will be billions of dollars in OCO funds going to Afghanistan.

There will be those of us on both sides of the aisle that would like to take that money out or significantly reduce the money. Last year it was over $43 billion in OCO funds, which is nothing but a slush fund.

Madam Speaker, there is a famous line about Afghanistan. It says that Afghanistan is the graveyard of empires.

I predict today—but I hope I am wrong—if we continue to spend and waste billions of dollars in Afghanistan, there will be a headstone in that graveyard that says: USA.

I hope that does not happen. But we had better wake up, as Members of Congress, and stop supporting programs like money for Afghanistan that are a total waste of the taxpayers' money.

Madam Speaker, I will ask God to continue to bless our men and women in uniform and ask God to continue to bless America.

TRIBUTE TO PAUL BARKLA

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

Mr. KIND. Madam Speaker, today I rise to celebrate the life and legacy of my good friend, Paul Barkla. I met Paul when I first ran for Congress. He was one of my earliest supporters.

I still vividly recall meeting him at the end of a Democratic primary debate when he introduced himself as a former Bill Proxmire staffer, as I was, and then promised to do everything he could to help me get elected. It was the beginning of a 25-year friendship, during which time he became a member of our family.

Paul is a native of the Pacific Northwest and was raised in Eugene, Oregon. Paul was a firm believer in good, old-fashioned, shoe-leather politics, and he pounded the pavement for Democratic candidates across the country, where he met many friends along the way.

In 2004, he traveled to New Hampshire to volunteer for the Presidential campaign of General Wesley Clark. In 2008, he again loaded up his dog and traveled around the country, showing up in battleground States and volunteering for President Obama. He believed we all had an obligation to participate in our democracy.

After college, Paul moved to Washington, where he received a master's degree from George Washington University and worked as a Capitol policeman.

He also went to work for numerous Congressmen and then worked for Senator Proxmire of Wisconsin, where he became engaged with Wisconsin politics.

It was during his time in Washington that he became active in the civil rights movement, participating in the March on Washington in August 1963. He enjoyed telling stories of his life during those times.

Paul met his wife, Nancy, who also worked for Senator Proxmire in Washington, in 1958. And then, in 1968, they moved their family to Wisconsin, where he continued to work on progressive causes and campaigns. There he worked as a caregiver and manager of group homes.

Paul and Nancy raised three children: Ann Fedders of New Richmond, Sidney Scott of Fall City, and Paul Barkla, Jr., of Ellsworth. He was very proud of his 12 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Paul believed in our democratic process and public service. That is why he ran for and was elected to the Pierce County Board in 2004 and later became the board chair.

Pierce County residents knew Paul as a community leader and advocate for the needs of his neighbors. He wasn't afraid to tackle tough issues.

He told me he enjoyed serving on the county board because it was less partisan, driven more by the local needs of the Pierce County residents rather than strict adherence to party ideology.

Although Paul was gruff on the outside, he was fiercely loyal to his family and friends. We had many discussions over the years. I knew I could always count on Paul to provide an honest opinion, and he was never afraid to speak his mind.

He made many friends over the years through politics and public service. He befriended many of my staff whom he talked to frequently and stayed in touch with even when they moved on to other opportunities.

For those who are lucky enough to cross paths with Paul, from folks in Washington to Oregon to Washington, D.C., he will not be forgotten.

Paul exemplified what was great about America: deep love for his country, the importance of public service, and the need to fight for the most vulnerable and less fortunate in our society.

In short, Paul was a great patriot and a great American. For those whose lives he touched, Paul will be greatly missed.

HOLDING INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE ACCOUNTABLE

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

Mr. PERRY. Madam Speaker, yesterday was tax day—or at least the deadline for filing and paying your taxes. I can't imagine very many citizens look forward to that.

We all know that we have to do our part, but we are often frustrated by the unacceptable waste of government spending. We all work hard; yet, they take our money and oftentimes spend it on things that we find objectionable or, worse, they simply waste it.

To add insult to injury, government doesn't have to follow the same standards that every citizen has to. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the IRS and its Commissioner, who scoffs at the very same rules that every other citizen has to abide by.

Now, I would just ask you: If you got subpoenaed to produce documents and to protect documents and just ignored it, how do you think that would go for you? If you lied to government officials—let's say government officials in the IRS—about your tax records, knowing that they are requirements, and you just refused to provide them, how do you think that that would be for you?

This is just another example of two sets of standards, one for the ruling class and another for the rest of the citizens. It was never intended to be this way, essentially where we are forced to serve our government.

In this particular case, these folks just had the wrong opinions about their government and they were sure that they would be protected under the First Amendment, protected from reprisal and punishment, but that is simply not the case.

Exactly what happened is that the IRS sought to cover up and blame others that had nothing to do with what happened.

Remember, the feared and omnipowerful IRS targeted and punished certain Americans solely because of what they thought of their government, violating their First Amendment right provided by God and enumerated in our Constitution.

Think about that. The full power and authority of the massive Federal Government and its endless resources focused on a few citizens because they dared to disagree. Is this a Communist country? Is this something worse?

Let's remember how this started. The inspector general did an investigation and said they were going to file a report.

Hearing that, Lois Lerner takes a planted question and lies about who did it. She blames it on the good workers in Cincinnati. The President calls for a criminal investigation, and the Commissioner is fired.

However, when it really came to conducting that investigation, the Department of Justice really just couldn't be bothered. Then the person at the center of the issue comes to Congress and pleads the Fifth.

Congress has to now look elsewhere for the truth. They are not going to get it from Ms. Lerner. So they look to her email communication.

Subpoenas are issued, two of them, and three protective orders, one by the IRS itself. The IRS violates literally all of it while saying they went to great lengths in search of the truth.

Come on. Great lengths? They didn't even check Ms. Lerner's BlackBerry.

The new Commissioner, Mr. Koskinen, hired to clean things up, knows that 422 backup tapes were destroyed, including 24,000 of Ms. Lerner's emails; yet, he waits 4 months to tell Congress while coming multiple times to testify to Congress during that period. You lie about your lost documents for 4 months and see what happens.

Mr. Koskinen violated his duty to preserve and provide the information. He violated his duty to disclose, he violated his duty to be truthful, and he violated his duty to correct the record about what he knew. Mr. Koskinen violated the public trust on multiple accounts.

The issue at hand is that the agency Mr. Koskinen represents violated the constitutionally guaranteed rights of American citizens and nothing has been done about it.

This simply cannot stand. We cannot have two separate standards of justice, one for the ruling class, one for the government, and one for the governed.

Congress has a duty to get to the truth. As Representatives of the citizens, we don't have a police force. We are Representatives. We can't fire the Commissioner. We are Members of Congress. The only remedy that Congress has is the constitutional check of impeachment.

Impeachment proceedings are the only way we can hope to get some relief from this agency which has been wantonly unaccountable in the most egregious fashion.

It is the only way we will be able to determine whether the Commissioner violated the standards of trust set down for government officials.

It is the only way we can start to move to a circumstance where our government serves the people as opposed to citizens being forced to serve their government.

So, Madam Speaker, as we reflect on tax day, I respectfully request the resolution regarding the impeachment of Commissioner Koskinen be forwarded to the Judiciary Committee and to this floor for consideration.

GUN VIOLENCE

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

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, since 1970, more Americans have died from domestic gun violence than in every war dating back to the American Revolution.

If all the victims of gun violence since 1970 were put on a wall like the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, it would contain 1.5 million names and stretch 2½ miles. That is 25 times as long as the actual Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

□ 1030

We are quick to hold moments of silence on this floor, but we are not quick to act. I have had enough of Congress' failure to lead. So to draw attention to the slaughter going on in this country each and every month, I will recite the names each month of every person killed in a mass shooting during the previous month. I have also created my own memorial wall in the hallway outside of my office.

Here are the stories of some of the victims of the 31 mass shootings in March of this year. There have been so many people this month affected by mass shootings, that I don't have time to list the injured, but I recognize the trauma they have endured as well.

Deonte Fisher, age 7, was killed sitting in a parked car outside a convenience store on March 4 in Columbus, Ohio.

Anthony Renee Beamon, Jr., age 36, was killed while leaving a party on March 6 in Compton, California.

Pablo Villeda Estrada, age 19, was killed at a birthday party on March 6 in Chelsea, Massachusetts. He loved music and was a family jokester.

Austin Harter, age 29; Clint Harter, age 27; Jake Waters, age 36; and Michael Capps, age 41, were killed by their neighbor on March 7 in Kansas City, Kansas. The shooter also killed Randy J. Nordman, age 49, the next day while fleeing police.

Ishmael Haywood, age 20, and Demontray Keshawn Mackay, age 17, were killed in a car on March 8 in San Antonio, Texas.

Jerry Shelton, age 35; Tina Shelton, age 37; Brittany Powell, age 27; Chanetta Powell, age 25; and Shada Mahone, age 26, were killed at a family cookout on March 9 in Wilkinsburg, Pennsylvania. Chanetta was 8 months pregnant.

John Smith, age 65, and Jamil Goodwin, age 43, were killed while sitting on their porch on March 11 in Detroit, Michigan.

Douglas Hearne, age 48, was killed at a bar on March 12 in Wichita Falls, Texas.

Alyric Fouch, age 17, was killed by her mother's boyfriend on March 12 in Elberton, Georgia. She was trying to protect her mother from gunfire.

Deosha Jackson, age 19, and Daryl Hunt, age unknown, were killed on March 19 in Wetumpka, Alabama.

Serge Pierre Dumas, age 28, was killed at a house party on March 20 in Plantation, Florida. He is survived by his 15-month-old son pictured here on this poster next to me.

Billie Jo Hettinger, age 32, and her children Collin Hettinger, age 5, and Courtney Hettinger, age 4, were killed by their husband and father on March 20 in Louisville, Kentucky.

Kelly Russler, age 39, and her sons Jayden Evans, age 10, and Laing Russler, age 7, were killed by Kelly's husband and Laing's father on March 21 in Sherman, Texas.

Elizabeth Janie Woods, age unknown, was killed by her husband on March 25 in Lauderdale County, Alabama. He also shot their two sons, who were in critical condition but have survived.

Virginia State Trooper Chad P. Dermyer was killed by a gunman at a bus station on March 31 in Richmond, Virginia. He was a Marine Corps veteran and had two young children.

May the dead rest in peace, the wounded recover quickly and completely, and the bereaved find comfort.

Members, colleagues, mothers and fathers, when will we do more than call for moments of silence?

AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

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

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize April as Autism Awareness Month, an opportunity for our communities to come together and become more educated and understanding of autism and its impacts on our students and society.

Reports from 2014 state that autism affects 1 in 68 children in the United States, a 119 percent increase from the year 2000. Despite the great scientific

strides that have been made to understand autism, not much is known about how the disorder actually develops in the brain.

The BRAIN Initiative is an ambitious program which aims to advance our understanding of how the brain functions. It is my firm belief that the BRAIN Initiative is an instrumental step toward revolutionary breakthroughs in neuroscience. For these reasons, I introduced the Mental Health Awareness Semipostal Stamp Act to help raise additional funding for the BRAIN Initiative, at no expense to taxpayers. I am confident that together we can make great strides for autism awareness, and I hope that you join me in lighting it up blue for the rest of April.

TEAM VISION

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize M-Vision Miami, a group comprised of young professionals in the Youth Leadership Miami program, sponsored by the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce.

M-Vision, in partnership with PACE Center for Girls, has worked to create a career development and college preparatory lab for PACE students. The M-Vision program focuses on financial literacy training, interview etiquette, college preparation, career awareness, exploration, and community service. This group, which is completely volunteer based, has dedicated countless hours to building relationships throughout Miami-Dade County in order to support their mission.

I thank M-Vision and centers like PACE Miami for their efforts to ensure that all children, regardless of their socioeconomic class, have an opportunity to achieve college and career success. They have done a remarkable job, and I am certain that they will continue doing great work for years to come.

CONGRATULATING DEBBIE BRADY

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Debbie Brady, the executive director of the Dade County Farm Bureau, who will be retiring this year after a life dedicated to educating others on the importance of agriculture in our daily lives. Debbie is also the president of the Florida Agri-Women, a member of the American Agri-Women, and a longtime resident of South Dade. She has worked in agribusiness for over 30 years and has a true passion for farming. Her knowledge and experience are unparalleled, and she will be greatly missed.

I have had the privilege of meeting with Debbie on many occasions and know how much of a resource she has been to both me and my staff. We have strongly advocated together on behalf of the South Dade farmers, especially during the recent oriental fruit fly quarantine and devastating floods that crippled the region's ag community. Her immense knowledge of the issues has helped us make very positive gains on behalf of the farmers in South Dade.

Debbie, thank you for dedicating your life to helping our community. We wish you the best in your retirement. You have certainly earned it.

END CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT FATALITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Speaker, I would like to spend a few minutes this morning discussing the recent report of the Commission to End Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities. Chartered by Congress under the Protect our Kids Act of 2013, the Commission's goal is to provide a framework for ending child maltreatment fatalities in the United States. For 2 years they have studied and examined this problem, and now we have the results.

The death of any child is a tragedy. While the data on child deaths related to abuse and neglect is incomplete, the Commission estimates that there were over 1,500 such cases in 2014. The majority of the children in these heartbreaking cases were younger than a year old, and many of them only days and weeks into their young lives. Three-quarters of the deaths occurred in children under age 3.

Madam Speaker, these are shocking figures, but we are talking about much more than just numbers. These stories of lives cut short, of senseless deaths, are a rallying cry for action, and no community or State is immune. In my home State of Rhode Island, at least four children have died in State care since October, two of them infants.

In neighboring Massachusetts, Bella Bond's story is a heartbreaking reminder of our moral obligation to act in defense of all children. Bella only ever knew abuse and neglect. She died before her third birthday, allegedly beaten to death by her drug-addicted parents. Despite two neglect complaints against Bella's mother, there was never any recognition that this toddler's life was in danger. The State never sent anybody to check on her safety, and her death remained hidden until her body was discovered.

The problems in the Bella Bond murder, though, sadly, are not unique. The Commission's report highlights a lack of communication between State child welfare agencies and law enforcement in every State. Noting the high correlation between domestic violence and child deaths, the Commission recommends that States treat this as a broad public health issue and call for better coordination between child welfare agencies and law enforcement.

Cross-agency collaboration will allow social workers to use law enforcement data to find the most at-risk children and intervene when necessary to protect the child. Just as we would take action to stop disease before it kills the patient, we can and we must intervene when a child's life is at risk.

However, the Commission also notes that the most successful interventions are the ones that prevent a crisis from happening in the first place. Not all of these interventions involve foster care or removing a child. Early intervention of the most at-risk families will allow social workers to tailor and deliver the most effective interventions for each family, and even sometimes small interventions early on can make the biggest difference. The report makes clear that crisis breeds crisis. It is the self-perpetuating, repetitive cycle.

Parents suffering from mental health issues or drug addiction are much more likely to harm or kill their child. The stresses of unemployment and poverty are also linked with child abuse, neglect, and death.

Madam Speaker, States need to engage in an all-of-the-above approach to child safety. We must also ensure that funding is in place to allow for meaningful interventions. Child welfare agencies need to be held accountable for results, and empowered to deliver services and interventions to at-risk children and families when they are required.

Despite these challenges, I would like to close on a hopeful note, embodied in the title of the report itself: Within Our Reach.

Madam Speaker, we can put a stop to these tragic deaths. Law enforcement, child welfare, and community groups have to work together to provide a network of support and intervention for families and children at risk of abuse. We in Congress have to fully fund these agencies and empower them to deliver meaningful change.

Madam Speaker, the time to act is now.

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

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

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

PRAYER

Pastor Kevin Hintze, Zion Lutheran Church, Georgetown, Texas, offered the following prayer:

Gracious Lord of our Nation, we thank You for the continued preservation of our blessed country and all who uphold civil duties of leadership within our borders.

We pray today for all the Members of Congress and their staff that they may be endowed with wisdom from Your spirit as they serve with the authority of government in our land.

Bless their daily work and encourage our leaders of this Nation to fulfill

their elected duties with mercy and justice in a sacrificial spirit for the common welfare.

Bless us all with sincere and joyful hearts of service as we serve this country in each of our vocations. We pray justice and concord may abide, peace and prosperity be kept secure, for You, God, are everlasting.

We seek You with all our hearts knowing full well that You hear our prayers. Praying as I have been taught, I close now in the name of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from New York (Mr. HIGGINS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. HIGGINS 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.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

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

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

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

TAXPAYER IDENTITY THEFT PROTECTION ACT

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

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, the Federal Trade Commission recently ranked the St. Louis metropolitan area, my district and hometown, as having the highest rate of identity theft regarding Federal income tax returns. This is absolutely unacceptable and why I introduced the Taxpayer Identity Theft Protection Act.

My legislation would require the IRS to issue an identity protection personal identification number, or IP PIN, to any individual who requests one to better protect their Social Security numbers from criminals who are looking to steal their identity and file fraudulent tax returns.

Missourians and all Americans deserve peace of mind when filing their taxes with the IRS, but, instead, we are seeing an unconscionable increase in data breaches and identity theft.

A new GAO report found many deficiencies in the IRS' security program that blatantly expose taxpayers' personal and financial data. My legislation will help stop this reckless exposure.

This essential bill holds the IRS accountable and forces the agency to do the most important job: assist and protect taxpayers.

At a time when trust in government is so low, I am committed to fixing this growing problem and providing another level of security to protect Americans from fraudulent activity.

REMEMBERING TOM HENNESSY

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

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, Tom Hennessy was a beloved columnist at the Long Beach Press-Telegram for nearly 30 years. Tom passed away recently with his Duchess Debbie by his side.

For his readers, Tom was Mr. Long Beach. He was a humorist, he was an advocate, he was our favorite uncle, and our closest neighbor.

He was a friend who lived in the same world, but somehow saw it so much more clearly and never shied away from using his Irish wit to say so.

Every morning for three decades Tom was the champion of what was right, good, and decent in Long Beach. I was fortunate to have read him, I was lucky to have known him, and now I will join his readers, his family, and his friends in missing him.

ONLY CONGRESS CAN WRITE LAWS

(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 the U.S. House of Representatives was represented at the Supreme Court during oral arguments for United States v. Texas, the challenge by 25 States to the President's illegal executive action on illegal aliens.

Article I of the Constitution is clear: only Congress can write laws. Sadly, the President has overstepped his authority by acting alone after repeatedly saying that he did not have the authority he claimed.

I was grateful to vote in favor of the resolution, which authorized Speaker PAUL RYAN to file a brief in the Supreme Court, the first by the House as a whole. Speaker RYAN deserves recognition for his remarkable leadership in standing up for the Constitution and rule of law.

United States v. Texas filings reveal the President's failed immigration policy, which should be to enforce existing laws. As an attorney who has practiced immigration law, I know firsthand the benefits of a lawful system welcoming new citizens following the law.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FARENTHOLD). Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

NATIONAL AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, 1 in 68 children are diagnosed with autism, and 3.45 million Americans are living with it.

April is National Autism Awareness Month, a time to direct attention to and appreciate the special gifts of these Americans.

In Congress, it is a time to redouble our commitment to them by supporting the Autism CARES Act, which authorizes research in early intervention programs; the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, which includes early intervention and education services for people with autism; and the BRAIN Initiative at the National Institutes of Health.

In western New York, I have been proud to support $5.7 million in Federal grants for promising work at the Institute for Autism Research at Canisius College.

There is a great deal to be done to piece together the mysteries of autism and support the individuals and families living with it every day.

RECOGNIZING HANESBRANDS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACHIEVEMENTS

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize HanesBrands, a company headquartered in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, with a long history of innovation, product excellence, and brand recognition.

Hanes recently earned its seventh consecutive partner-of-the-year award from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star program.

The company was recognized for its continued excellence in energy conservation, carbon emissions avoidance, and environmental sustainability.

Since 2007, Hanes, the world's largest marketer of basic apparel, has reduced its energy use by 25 percent, water use by 31 percent, and carbon emissions by 21 percent.

Last year Hanes derived 25 percent of its worldwide energy needs from renewable sources, including biomass, hydroelectric, geothermal, and wind.

With its continued commitment to excellence, Hanes is a valued corporate

partner in the local community. It is a pleasure to have this outstanding company in North Carolina's Fifth District.

U.S. INCREASES TROOPS IN IRAQ AND SYRIA: WHEN WILL CONGRESS ACT?

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

Mr. McGOVERN. Drip, drip, drip, Mr. Speaker. That is the sound of U.S. escalation in Syria and Iraq. Yesterday, the Pentagon announced that the U.S. will send 217 additional troops to Iraq, pushing the official number of U.S. troops there to more than 4,000.

Mainly Army Special Forces, they will be embedded with Iraqi brigades and battalions. They will be stationed close to the front lines. They will include trainers and maintenance crews for the new deployment of Apache helicopters.

More U.S. commandos could also head to Syria, bolstering the roughly 50 Special Operations Forces advising and training rebel forces on the ground.

Just when is the House going to debate and vote on an authorization for deploying U.S. troops in Iraq and Syria?

When is the House going to debate these escalations that add more firepower and put more U.S. troops close to the front lines?

Our troops carry out their constitutional duties. When will Congress act and carry out its constitutional responsibility?

The American people are tired of endless wars. Putting these wars on remote control, with no debate and no votes, is shameful.

ENSURING INTEGRITY IN THE IRS WORKFORCE ACT

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

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, with tax day yesterday and millions of Americans feeling the sting of a burdensome government agency, the House will focus its efforts on giving taxpayers relief from the bureaucratic mess known as the IRS.

When the scandal broke that the IRS improperly targeted conservative 501(c)(4) groups, the Nation was shocked, but not surprised. After thorough investigations by Congress and unrelenting criticism by liberals and conservatives, several high-level officials resigned.

While the IRS can and has fired many low-level employees for other abuses and poor performance, a report by the IRS Inspector General found that many of the IRS employees were rehired.

That is why this week we are passing the Ensuring Integrity in the IRS Workforce Act, which will prevent the agency from rehiring anyone who was previously terminated for misconduct.

Government employees, especially those in the IRS, who work with private and sensitive data of American citizens should not be given the chance to do it again.

This week the House will show the American people that we take our responsibility to stop corruption, misconduct, and abuse of power in the Internal Revenue Service seriously.

BUDGET RESOLUTION DEADLINE

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, last week the House Republican leadership blew past the deadline to adopt the budget.

Instead of coming together to enact a budget that invests in American jobs, grows our economy, and builds the paychecks of American workers, Republicans actually decided intentionally not to pass a budget at all.

Even worse, in my hometown of Flint, Michigan, 100,000 people can't drink their water because it has been poisoned by lead through decisions made by its own State government. It is in crisis.

There is a bill in the Senate and there is a bill in this House to provide relief to this great city during a disaster, and this Congress won't bring up that bill, nor will it bring up legislation to deal with the opioid epidemic or the Zika virus epidemic.

This is shameful. This is the Congress of the United States. We are supposed to do the work of the American people. We have people in crisis in my own hometown, and we can't get Congress to act, not on a budget, not on health for Flint, and not on Zika.

We need to do our job in the body of this United States Congress.

SUPPORTING THE TEXAS-LED CHALLENGE TO THE PRESIDENT'S UNILATERAL AMNESTY

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

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, this week the Supreme Court heard oral arguments in the United States v. Texas case. This is the Texas-led challenge to the President's executive orders on immigration, a challenge that I strongly support.

By granting unilateral amnesty to 5 million illegal immigrants, the President has blatantly disregarded his duty to enforce our laws. Instead, he is trying to rewrite them altogether. It doesn't work this way.

Article I of the Constitution is clear. All legislative powers shall be vested in Congress. Erosion of this principle is a threat to the rule of law. That is why this challenge by Texas and other States is so important.

This fight is about asserting the will of Americans and defending the authority of Congress. I am pleased that the House has voted to put its full support behind Texas and our Speaker. Lower courts have already ruled to halt the President's illegal amnesty.

On behalf of my constituents, I strongly urge the Supreme Court to do the same.

□ 1215

CONGRATULATING J.W. OAKLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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

Mr. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize J.W. Oakley Elementary School for their academic and civic accomplishments.

Over the past 18 years, Oakley's commitment to academic excellence has enhanced the lives of their students and earned them statewide recognition. Oakley has been recognized as a California Title I Achieving School and California Distinguished School. In doing so, Oakley has consistently placed among the top performing schools in our district, with a California Academic Performance Index score of 804.

Furthermore, their extraordinary participation in the Jump Rope for Heart program has helped raise over $200,000 for research initiatives.

I would like to commend the hardworking administrators and teachers for their work—teachers like Maryann Vasquez-Moreno, an educator of 15 years, who in addition to preparing her students to succeed, also organizes yearly food drives during the holidays for her community.

I am delighted to recognize Oakley Elementary School for their commitment to our children.

COMMENDING U.S. GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL FOR ENCOURAGING WOOD USE IN BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District, which I am proud to represent, has a deep heritage with wood products and timber industries. Wood is the ultimate green building material and should be encouraged for its environmental benefits.

Unfortunately, USDA's Bio-Preferred Program did not recognize wood products, despite the obvious benefits of using such material in buildings. Because of this, I authored the Forest Products Fairness Act of 2013. This legislation, which was ultimately included in the 2014 farm bill, modified USDA's definition of bio-based products to specifically include forest products.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the U.S. Green Building Council

in taking the next step with the recent changes to their Leadership in Energy Environmental Design, or LEED, green building rating system.

This change will encourage more use of domestic wood in building construction. The change includes lumber companies certified by the American Tree Farm System and landowners certified by the Sustainable Forestry Initiative or the Forest Stewardship Council.

This decision by the U.S. Green Building Council is another step in the right direction and will provide a boost to many across Pennsylvania involved in the industries that rely on our significant timber resources.

RECOGNIZING THE PAMELA SILVA CONDE SCHOLARSHIP FUND

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding south Floridian and her initiative, the Pamela Silva Conde Scholarship.

Having graduated from my alma mater, Florida International University, with a degree in broadcast journalism and a master's degree in business, Pamela understands the importance of higher education.

While Pamela calls Miami home, her work as a six-time Emmy Award-winning journalist has taken her all over the world. With her success, Pamela has made it a point to be civic-minded and engaged in our community, primarily on children and college education issues.

Always wanting to do more, Pamela founded the Pamela Silva Conde Scholarship, which focuses on assisting first-generation, low-income business or journalism majors and help them attend college.

Today I ask my Congressional colleagues to join me in honoring Pamela Silva Conde, and thank her for all that she has done and will continue to do for students in our south Florida community.

RECOGNIZING NORTH CAROLINA'S TEACHER OF THE YEAR

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

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 2016 North Carolina Teacher of the Year, Bobbie Cavnar, from my district in Gaston County.

Mr. Cavnar has spent the last 13 years teaching British literature at Belmont's South Point High School. He spent the last year receiving awards, tremendous awards, in fact. In May, he was named Gaston County's Teacher of the Year. Then, in December, he was named the best teacher for North Carolina's southwest region.

Mr. Cavnar's students describe him as an engaging teacher who asks your opinion and values what you say and believe—maybe something we in the House could learn from—and the type of teacher who makes you want to come to school, perhaps the highest compliment you could pay to a high school teacher these days.

Please join me in congratulating Bobbie Cavnar, and thank him for his dedication to the students of Gaston County.

OBAMA CAN'T MAKE IMMIGRATION LAWS

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the State of Texas argued before the Supreme Court that the President's executive amnesty violates Federal immigration laws and the separation of powers enshrined in the Constitution.

The Constitution is clear: Congress has the sole power to write laws, including immigration laws; and the President must faithfully execute the laws, whether he agrees with them or not.

In fact, President Obama has said dozens of times that he doesn't have the power to unilaterally rewrite immigration laws. However, when the House of Representatives refused to approve the President's mass amnesty policies, he violated his own words and acted alone.

The Supreme Court should uphold the rule of law and stop the President's unprecedented executive amnesty policies.

HEALTHIER ACT OF 2016

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

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, Remote Area Medical is a nonprofit organization that sends teams of doctors and nurses to give free medical care to our Nation's poorest people. I am proud that it is headquartered in my district and founded by my constituent, Stan Brock.

RAM, as we call it, is world-renowned for its great work. For over 30 years, many thousands of people in the U.S. and worldwide have benefited from the free medical services provided by RAM's volunteers. RAM has been featured on 60 Minutes and recognized for its excellence by media outlets such as Time Magazine, BBC, and countless others.

I have introduced the HEALTHIER Act of 2016, which would give a financial incentive to any State that does pass, or already has passed, laws that enable groups like RAM to volunteer more easily across State borders to provide free medical services to our Nation's neediest. Unlike many recent healthcare initiatives, this is not a Federal mandate. It uses funds already available and does not require new funding. It protects State's rights.

My bill makes those who can't afford good health care a priority. It unites them with people who are always searching for ways to help others. That is what health care is all about—helping others.

I ask my colleagues to cosponsor my legislation so that our doctors and nurses can volunteer their skills and expertise to help their fellow citizens who desperately need help and health.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 19, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on April 19, 2016 at 10:56 a.m.:

Appointment:

Evidence-Based Policymaking Commission.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1206, NO HIRES FOR THE DELINQUENT IRS ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4885, IRS OVERSIGHT WHILE ELIMINATING SPENDING (OWES) ACT OF 2016

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 687 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 687

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 1206) to prohibit the hiring of additional Internal Revenue Service employees until the Secretary of the Treasury certifies that no employee of the Internal Revenue Service has a seriously delinquent tax debt. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means now printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114-47 shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means; (2) the further amendment printed in the report of the

Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, if offered by the Member designated in the report, which shall be in order without intervention of any point of order, shall be considered as read, shall be separately debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, and shall not be subject to a demand for a division of the question; and (3) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 4885) to require that user fees collected by the Internal Revenue Service be deposited into the general fund of the Treasury. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means now printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114-50 shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

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

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, the Rules Committee met and reported a rule for H.R. 1206, the No Hires for the Delinquent IRS Act, and H.R. 4885, the IRS Oversight While Eliminating Spending (OWES) Act of 2016.

House Resolution 687 provides a structured rule for H.R. 1206 and a closed rule for H.R. 4885.

The resolution makes all germane amendments offered by Members in order.

Additionally, the resolution provides each bill 1 hour of debate equally divided between the chair and the ranking member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. Speaker, each April, Americans send a large portion of their hard-earned income to the Internal Revenue Service. Often, they don't get a good return on their investment from the agency tasked with collecting their tax dollars.

Since I joined Congress in 2011, I have heard from countless constituents struggling to understand how to comply with the complex Tax Code or with other directives from the Internal Revenue Service. Often, they turn to my office because they have no help within the agency and nobody willing to give them help.

I know that these problems aren't new and they aren't issues just contained in my district. They impact all Americans who have representatives here in Congress, from both the Republican and the Democrat side.

We owe our constituents improvements in customer service from all Federal agencies. In the end, everybody who works for our government is in the job of customer service to provide a service for our citizens.

And, of course, this week is tax week, so it is a natural week to advance some bills aimed at restoring our American people's confidence in their public institution and improving the taxpayer experience with the Internal Revenue Service.

This rule makes two bills in consideration: No Hires for the Delinquent IRS Act, sponsored by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ROUZER), and IRS Oversight While Eliminating Spending (OWES) Act, sponsored by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH).

□ 1230

Under current law, the IRS is required to terminate any employee who willfully fails to file his Federal tax return or intentionally understates his tax liability. A report from last year by the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration found that the IRS consistently reduces penalties for current employees who violate tax laws. The Treasury Inspector General reported that, of the 1,580 employees who were found to have willfully violated tax laws between 2004 and 2013, only 39 percent were terminated, resigned, or retired.

The No Hires for the Delinquent IRS Act would prohibit the hiring of additional IRS employees until the Secretary of the Treasury can certify that current IRS employees do not have serious delinquent tax debt. The vast majority of Federal employees pay their taxes in full and on time, but this bill would give the American people and American taxpayers the confidence in knowing that Internal Revenue Service employees are following the same laws that the American people follow and that the agency is tasked with enforcing.

The other bill under consideration under this rule is the IRS Oversight While Eliminating Spending Act, which would repeal a provision of the current law that enables the Internal Revenue Service to spend user fees that are collected by the agency without any congressional approval or without an appropriation. Under this bill, these fees would be directed to the Treasury's general fund, helping to ensure the agency operates in a transparent and accountable manner. It would also help us as we are trying to close in on our deficit spending and are trying to balance our budget.

The funds from these fees have historically supported taxpayer services, but in fiscal year 2015, the IRS spent only 10 percent of this money for that purpose. It diverted the other 90 percent for other purposes. In fact, the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Oversight found that the IRS is purposely diverting these funds away from taxpayer services and towards other functions, like the implementation of ObamaCare and other items.

Together, these bills would take important steps toward improving the IRS' customer service to taxpayers, and it would give Americans the peace of mind that the Internal Revenue Service and its employees are following the same laws that the American people and taxpayers are required to follow.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I thank the gentleman from Ohio for yielding me the customary 30 minutes for debate.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to oppose the closed rule providing for the consideration of both H.R. 1206, the No Hires for the Delinquent IRS Act, and H.R. 4885, the IRS Oversight While Eliminating Spending Act of 2016.

Mr. Speaker, when we began this Congress, we were told that it would be the most open Congress that we have had in our great Nation. The general public does not quite grasp, at least I believe, the significance of rules being closed or rules being open.

When there is an open rule for whatever the subject matter is, then every Member of the House of Representatives has an opportunity, if he or she chooses, to make potential amendments to the subject matter that is before the House. My colleagues on the other side have chosen a different tack. I might add, at other times—in my opinion, wrongly—Democrats have done the same thing, and that is to have closed rules and shut out the rest of the people who may have interesting and necessary proposals with reference to whatever the subject matter is.

In this particular instance, we are now numbering, with these two bills, 55 times that we have come here to the floor with closed rules. I bring that to the attention of the general public with an eye toward hoping that there will be some pressure, as there was when I came here, on the majority body to begin to open up this process so that all Members can participate. These bills are nothing more than partisan messaging bills that the majority hopes to use to score cheap political points during the tax season deadline, which was yesterday.

H.R. 1206 would freeze hiring at the IRS until the Treasury Secretary certifies that there are no IRS employees with seriously delinquent tax debt. I agree—and I believe Democrats agree—

that IRS employees should pay their taxes. In my view, that is common sense. The good news is that the IRS' department, the Treasury, has the lowest tax delinquency rate—at 1.19 percent—throughout the entire executive branch. So, instead of solving the actual important problems that are facing our Nation, my Republican friends—and the presenter of this measure is my friend—have, apparently, decided it is more important to try and invent problems to solve.

There is then H.R. 4885, yet another one of these grab bag proposals that we bring here with more than one rule at a time. This bill would prohibit the IRS from supplementing its annual appropriations funding through user fees, but what it really amounts to is an end-around attempt to cut an additional 4 percent from the IRS' budget. We already cut that budget, rather substantially, previously. Now we seek, under this measure, to cut even more.

In other words, the majority often complains that the IRS is not good at its job, and in their wisdom, the answer to this concern is to cut the agency's budget even more and make it harder to hire the people it needs. The IRS is already drastically underfunded and understaffed, so, naturally, my friends on the other side think the solution is to cut more and hire less. This counter-intuitive logic is not making the IRS a more successful agency. No. Instead, these proposals will simply make the IRS' already difficult task of enforcing the tax law and serving the American people even more difficult.

Mr. Speaker, more importantly, last week, I asked my colleagues on the other side of the aisle: Where is the budget? I had the pleasure of working with my friend from Ohio in presenting yet another rule that was going nowhere like this one is. I asked him to have a colloquy with me regarding the budget. I won't bother him with that this week. I am sure that, doubtless, he and I will be back here next week and will be talking about the ongoing negotiations, as he told me last week, on the side of the majority.

This week, now that we have blown past the statutorily mandated deadline to pass a budget resolution, through my colleague on the other side and you, Mr. Speaker, I will just ask my colleagues on the other side of the aisle: Where is the budget? Perhaps the American people would like to ask them the same thing: Where is the budget?

Mr. Speaker, it is not just the fact that we have no budget; it is the fact that we are not addressing, for example, Puerto Rico's debt crisis, that we are not funding a response to combat the risk posed by the Zika virus. Let me footnote that particular situation.

My understanding is that, yesterday, in the Rules Committee, the chairman of the Rules Committee indicated that he thought that there were 20 States that had this problem but that he felt that Texas didn't have the problem. He did assert, with all of the horrible rain and flooding that occurred in certain areas of Texas yesterday, that the residual from that likely will allow, as summer proceeds, for added mosquitos.

What has transpired that is little understood by the public is that this matter is now affecting as many as 20 States, according to the chairman. My recollection, from just the news alone, indicates that there may be as many as 33 States in which this pronounced virus has shown up. There are now 80 examples of its having occurred in the State of Florida—7 of them in the congressional district that I am privileged to serve. This particular virus that affects pregnant women and their children is likely to mutate, and scientists signified—the NIH department testified here earlier this week—that this may now be something that we are going to have to look at with adults, who may very well wind up with this problem.

If this thing blows up, then we are going to have a crisis in this Nation, and that needs to be addressed right now, not at such time as many people are affected. We can reasonably expect that, with what has occurred, the President has requested nearly $2 billion to address this problem. The Republican majority sent back to the President: take it out of Ebola, and take it out of other areas. The NIH indicates that they would then have to go into other funds, which they are going into, including the fund for tuberculosis.

Here again, we have a similar example as to what we have going on here. Rather than addressing a real crisis, we are addressing matters that are going nowhere fast. We are not taking steps to ensure that men and women are paid the same for the same work. We are not working to reform our criminal justice system or our broken immigration system. In fact, under the leadership of this Republican majority, we are not doing much of anything here to solve any of the problems that are facing our country—a broken infrastructure that we have been begging about right here in the Nation's Capital. Aside from all of the potholes, the Memorial Bridge may very well be shut down as well as thousands of bridges in this country; yet we cannot do the things that are vitally necessary that we should be doing in a bipartisan fashion.

Mr. Speaker, the Republican Conference's inability to govern means, instead of addressing the many important problems that are facing this great Nation of ours, we are here today, attacking an already underfunded and understaffed agency so that the majority can score political points. Sadly, this has become the status quo with my friends on the other side of the aisle.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I want to address a few issues with regard to the rule on the two bills.

The Rules Committee did approve every amendment that was found germane. There were many amendments that were found not germane to these bills. For example, there was an amendment filed that would have declared that water district rebates are not taxable, but because neither of these bills actually amends the Tax Code and defines what is taxable and what is not, that was not germane. Of every amendment the Rules Committee actually found germane, we included it to be voted on. One of these bills has an amendment, and the other one had no germane amendments filed. The rule did include some opportunities for that.

I appreciate the gentleman from Florida's impassioned plea on things like infrastructure and Zika, on which we do have bipartisan agreement—the gentleman is correct—and we need to work to solve those problems.

□ 1245

In this rule, we have two bills from the Ways and Means Committee. It is tax week. Frankly, it is a week for us to increase the transparency and accountability of the Internal Revenue Service, and that is what these two bills do.

Frankly, the IRS has 100,000 employees. So by the gentleman's own math, Mr. Speaker, of 1.5 percent, that is 1,500 employees with serious delinquencies in the IRS, working to process other people's taxes.

There is some work we need to do to, again, to give some belief to the American people that the employees of the Internal Revenue Service play by the same rules that the American people do and that the American taxpayers do. I think that is the purpose of the bill.

As soon as the Treasury Secretary can verify that we have weeded out those with serious delinquencies from the IRS, then they could continue to hire. So there is nothing that gets in the way there.

The other bill from the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) makes sure that, when there are user fees that aren't appropriated, they can't be used. They have to go back to the Treasury.

Frankly, Article I of our Constitution says that Congress will appropriate money for government services and government agencies. When we have unaccountable fees that are not used through the appropriations process, it creates a problem. It is a constitutional problem. It is time we stand up for the Constitution, and that is what we are doing today with Mr. SMITH's bill.

I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS), the distinguished chair of the Rules Committee.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STIVERS), who is a member of the Rules Committee, for not only yielding me the time, but also for the service that he gives to the Rules Committee, the

hours of deliberate work, reading, and thought process.

I also want to address, if I can, as the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STIVERS) did, with great admiration not only to Judge HASTINGS for always constantly staying with issues and ideas that not only affect his district in Florida, but that really address the entire country.

I was delighted yesterday when the gentleman brought up in a most thoughtful, genuine way: Where is the answer to these important questions?

What we are here today, Mr. Speaker, to do is—as the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STIVERS) talked about, we are here to have, I think, once again a thoughtful debate about some problems that we think we see.

The role of the United States Congress, on behalf of the American people, is to make sure that we provide proper oversight, that we fund well and faithfully the running of the government.

As we see things that happen from time to time, it is our role to make sure that we are providing the debate, the argument, the facts of the case, and that is what we are doing today about the IRS.

The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STIVERS) did talk about H.R. 4885, IRS Oversight While Eliminating Spending Act. There is more to the story about fees that are being collected by the IRS.

I am going to read here directly about what they have done. Mr. Speaker, traditionally, the IRS has used this money that they collect in fees, that they collect for work that they do that goes directly back into customer service, sustaining themselves in the eyes of the public, taking calls, answering questions, trying to be of a service nature.

We understand the IRS is an organization that is there to collect taxes and very few people want to pay certainly more than what they have to. But in doing that, in complying with the law, it is not unusual that a taxpayer would want to contact the Service to learn more about paying their taxes, properly reporting their taxes, and properly doing things.

So, historically, the user fee account has primarily supported taxpayer services in the past. However, the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Oversight found that, in fiscal year 2015, the IRS deliberately diverted resources away from taxpayer services toward other agency functions, including implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

So they took their eye off the ball that they had previously done to change that. In fiscal year 2014, the IRS spent $183 million in these user fees on taxpayer services, which was 44 percent of the user account fees. That is what they used it for: 44 percent.

In fiscal year 2015, however, the agency spent only $49 million—from $183 million to $49 million on taxpayer services and only 10 percent of user fees from those accounts that came in. That decision amounted to a 73 percent reduction in user fee allocation.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what we are trying to say today to the IRS—because this is how we give them oversight. We hold a hearing. We do a markup. We bring the ideas to the Rules Committee.

The Rules Committee notifies all the Members that, if you have an idea about how you would like to talk about this bill, there is an amendment process. For both the rules that we are doing today, we made all of the amendments in order that were germane.

What we are saying here, Mr. Speaker, is that we disagree with the IRS. We are going to force the IRS to begin using these user fees in the way that they have historically done so that the public, which are taxpayers, have a chance to comply with the law, to get their questions answered, and to do business as is necessary.

The IRS has intentionally changed the way they do business to the detriment of the customer. Republicans all the time argue we ought to be more like customer services or a business-type organization.

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

Mr. STIVERS. I yield an additional 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, so what we are trying to say today, which we would like to do on a bipartisan basis, which we would like to do straight up and look right at the IRS, is say: We would like to meet you in a way to where you know what we think. We would like to be very specific. We would like to show you exactly what we are talking about. We would love to have you comply.

In this case, it is taking a piece of legislation that we think is in the best interest of the IRS—because we are helping them protect themselves—and Congress that has oversight and an administration that we would welcome this opportunity. This is not some sneaky attempt to do something wrong. This is the right attempt.

The second part of the rule is H.R. 1206, No Hires for the Delinquent IRS Act. That simply says that we want to make sure that the Commissioner of the IRS understands that they should not hire any new employee if they have a tax problem.

I would think that would be part of the agreement. I would think that an employee of the IRS would understand that, to be faithful to their job, they should not be given an extra status better than any taxpayer who pays their taxes, has done what they are supposed to do, and follows the law.

Mr. Speaker, that is why Republicans are on the floor of the House of Representatives today. I am proud of what Congressman STIVERS is doing. I support this rule that is a fair and logical rule for the best interest of us working with the IRS, with our colleagues that are Democrats and Republicans, and with the administration.

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

I ask the chairman if he would remain just a moment to engage in a colloquy with me.

Mr. Chairman, with great respect, do you agree with me that, between the years 2010 and 2015, Congress cut the IRS budget by 17 percent?

Mr. SESSIONS. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HASTINGS. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman engaging me in a colloquy.

In fact, on a bipartisan basis, that was achieved, and the President of the United States signed the legislation. That was because of the gross examples of the IRS' conduct as it was related to politicalization. That would be correct.

Mr. HASTINGS. So, then, having cut their budget by 17 percent and then not allowing them to undertake the user fees under the measure that is before us in a manner as you assert to undertake a mandate that they had, do you agree with me that the IRS, under the Affordable Care Act, is mandated to implement that act?

Mr. SESSIONS. Yes, sir. In fact, I do. But I also recognize—and the gentleman knows this. You are making a very, very good point. They did not use it for something they were not authorized to do.

My point is that I think what we are trying to say is we would like to get the IRS to answer more questions. Some of the people who might be asking questions, it might be related to the Affordable Care Act because, in fact, it is a new portion of the law. And the IRS, I believe, has a duty to at least balance what they do, sir.

Mr. HASTINGS. I appreciate that very much, Mr. Chairman.

Then, for all of our edification, not needing a response unless you care to give one, I said earlier in my remarks that it was less than 2 percent of the delinquencies that occurred in the executive branch, inclusive of the IRS.

I don't mean to beat up on staff and Congress people, but congressional employees have less than 6 percent, about 5.8 percent, delinquencies.

Now, I am not arguing for delinquencies. But if we are going to go after the IRS, then we might want to take care of our own.

I yield to the gentleman from Texas, if he cares to respond.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman makes a very important point. I would respond back by saying it is probably my fault and Members' fault. We do not ask that question.

I do not have a determination. I generally do not do a full background check. I do not have access to their records. I would not know if they were telling me the truth or not.

If you were a law enforcement organization or if you were a hospital looking for certification, if you were the IRS, you would have pretty much data available to you so that you didn't ask a question that you couldn't verify. So I think the gentleman makes a point.

I will tell you that this Member of Congress is now and has always been faithful and has not done anything with his taxes. I pay mine every year.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I am not just talking about Congresspersons, I am talking about throughout the bureaucracy.

Mr. SESSIONS. Well, I agree with that. Once again, I don't ask the question, but the IRS should.

Mr. HASTINGS. Yes, I follow you. I don't have a problem with that. I thank the chairman for his forthright commentary.

Mr. Speaker, I would advise my colleague from Ohio that I have no further speakers. I think we have made our time deadline of 1:50. So I am ready to close.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I also have no further speakers and am prepared to close.

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

If we defeat the previous question, I am going to offer an amendment to the rule to bring up a bill that would ensure that American corporations that enjoy the benefits of operating in our country continue to pay their fair share of taxes by closing the tax inversion loophole.

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'' on the previous question.

These partisan messaging bills are not what the American people want or deserve. These bills are what the extremists in the Republican Party that didn't come here to govern want.

□ 1300

Instead of debating and passing a budget, we are here today ignoring the important work of governing so the majority can try and score political points and appease the insatiable extreme wing of their party that turned down their party's own budget proposal.

By the way, the Republican budget proposal, the one they couldn't get enough votes in their own conference to pass, would have ended the Medicare guarantee for seniors. It would have made $6.5 trillion in cuts, the sharpest ever proposed by the House Committee on the Budget. It would have repealed the Affordable Care Act and dismantled the affordable health care of 20 million Americans.

And yet, that Republican proposal, as extreme as I view it to be, was still not enough to get the extremist wing to agree to it. When I say ''the extremist wing,'' we are talking about roughly 40 Members of the House of Representatives. Maybe it flows as high up as 47 or as low as 35. They seem to be the tail that is wagging this elephant.

So here we are. No budget, and we aren't addressing any of the real pressing issues facing our country. Rather, we are debating partisan messaging bills with no hope of becoming law. I don't think that there are companion measures in the United States Senate, and I can pretty much assure everybody that when we finish the discussion here today and the Republicans pass this measure—and a handful of Democrats may vote for it; I doubt that—but when we pass it, that will be the end of it and tax season will go on. We will have made the measure look like it is something that the American people are going to have as law.

The House of Representatives is not just some messaging platform that the majority can use to try and score transparently cheap political points. It is a place where the issues facing our Nation should be addressed and solved in a bipartisan manner.

I want to lift from Roll Call—and for purposes of those in the general public of our great country that do not know, we have two or three little papers here inside the beltway, inside the capital, and Roll Call is one of them. They, today, say the following:

''Governing by crisis has become the norm in Congress in recent years, but so far this year even that hasn't happened.

''Puerto Rico is on the verge of economic collapse, an average of 78 people are dying every day from opioid overdoses,'' and 90-plus people from gun violence, accidental or otherwise, ''and mosquitoes carrying the Zika virus have been found in 30 States. But Congress has shown no urgency about addressing those issues.

''Maybe that's not surprising from a Republican majority that can't even adopt a nonbinding budget resolution after months of 'family' discussions.''

Mr. Speaker, the Republican Conference has cowered to the extremists in their party, which is truly shameful and not doing one thing to help the people of this great Nation that we have been elected to serve.

Let me make a prediction. This measure will pass. Both these bills will pass the House of Representatives, and tomorrow we will be back here talking about some more measures that are not going to pass as law. Several reasons why. The Senate, first, is not likely to take it up, and even if they did, the administration policy is widely known that the measures would be vetoed.

So why are we doing this instead of Zika? Why are we doing this instead of equal pay for women? Why are we doing these things instead of dealing with our infrastructure? Why are we doing these things instead of giving us a budget so that the appropriations process can do more than end with a measure that will throw everything together at the end of this session? Why are we doing these things and where is the budget? That is what I ask my colleagues.

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

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's points on things we should be doing, and I agree and hope we can get a budget agreement in the next coming days or weeks, hopefully as soon as we can get it done. There are other pressing issues that face this country: issues of infrastructure, the Zika virus and how we are ready for it.

But today we are here on two bills that can increase the transparency and accountability of the Internal Revenue Service. I believe both of those bills are well intentioned. I think they would both bring more accountability and more taxpayer confidence to that agency, and I would urge my colleagues to support both the rule and the underlying legislation.

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

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 687 OFFERED BY MR. HASTINGS

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

SEC. 3. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 415) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the rules relating to inverted corporations. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 4. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 415.

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

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

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

Mr. HASTINGS. 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.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4890, BAN ON IRS BONUSES UNTIL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY DEVELOPS COMPREHENSIVE CUSTOMER SERVICE STRATEGY, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3724, ENSURING INTEGRITY IN THE IRS WORKFORCE ACT OF 2015

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 688 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 688

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. 4890) to impose a ban on the payment of bonuses to employees of the Internal Revenue Service until the Secretary of the Treasury develops and implements a comprehensive customer service strategy. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means 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 114-49. 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.

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 3724) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prohibit the Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service from rehiring any employee of the Internal Revenue Service who was involuntarily separated from service for misconduct. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means now printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114-48 shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

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

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on House Resolution 688, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to bring forward this rule on behalf of the Committee on Rules. The rule provides for consideration of H.R. 4890, Ban on IRS Bonuses Until Secretary of the Treasury Develops Comprehensive Customer Service Strategy, and H.R. 3724, Ensuring Integrity in the IRS Workforce Act of 2015.

For each of these two bills, the rule provides for 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means and also provides a motion to recommit. H.R. 4890 will be considered under a structured rule, while H.R. 3724 will be considered under a closed rule, as none of the amendments submitted were germane.

Yesterday the Committee on Rules received testimony from members of the Committee on Ways and Means. Both pieces of legislation covered by this rule were considered and marked up by the Committee on Ways and Means and enjoyed discussion before that committee. H.R. 3724 passed the committee by a voice vote, and H.R. 4890 was also passed and reported by the Committee on Ways and Means.

It is fitting that the House consider these bills to rein in and reform the IRS this week, as Americans across the country have had to face tax day yesterday.

Our Tax Code is overly burdensome and complex and penalizes hardworking Americans. Tax dollars belong in the hands of Americans who have earned them, not in the hands of Washington bureaucrats.

The bills before us today help to rein in the IRS, protect taxpayer money, and hold the IRS accountable.

H.R. 4890, introduced by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEEHAN), prohibits the IRS from paying bonuses to employees until it creates and submits to Congress a comprehensive strategy to improve customer service.

The IRS' mission is to ''provide America's taxpayers top quality service by helping them understand and meet their tax responsibilities. . .''

Unfortunately, the IRS has fallen woefully short of this stated goal. The IRS does not have a comprehensive customer service strategy to ensure that it is providing effective and efficient service. In fact, in fiscal year 2015, only 38 percent of the callers wanting to speak to an IRS representative were able to reach one. This is unacceptable.

No one likes to pay their taxes, but the IRS has a responsibility to provide service and assistance to those who are trying to meet the burdensome obligation.

H.R. 4890 makes clear that until the IRS meets its obligation to the taxpayers who fund the agency, IRS employees will not get bonuses. To me, this is common sense. We should not be rewarding agency employees when they are not meeting their mission. H.R. 4890 helps hardworking Americans by ensuring that the IRS implements a comprehensive customer service strategy.

H.R. 3724, introduced by the gentlewoman from South Dakota (Mrs. NOEM), prohibits the IRS Commissioner from rehiring any employee who was let go from the agency for misconduct.

Now, just think about that one for a second. We are in a place with the IRS where we have to prohibit by law that agency from rehiring people who they have fired for misconduct. No wonder people shake their heads.

I can tell you this—a businessman or woman in Georgia would think twice about hiring someone they had to fire, but the IRS, which has access to sensitive taxpayer data, is repeatedly doing just that, according to the agency's own inspector general.

In fact, according to Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration, the IRS rehired 141 former employees who had been removed from service for issues ranging from falsification of official forms to abuse of IRS leave and property policies.

□ 1315

Americans deserve better. They deserve to know their tax and personal information is protected and that those handling it are held accountable. It is past time we hold the IRS to a higher standard.

I would like to thank Ways and Means Committee Chairman BRADY, Congresswoman NOEM, Congressman MEEHAN, and their staffs for their work in bringing together these important reforms.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I want to thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in very strong opposition to this rule, which provides for consideration of H.R. 4890, under a structured process, and H.R. 3724, under a completely closed process. These two pieces of legislation are part of the House majority's effort this week to micromanage the IRS and undermine its ability to enforce our tax laws.

This is not a serious attempt at legislating. These bills are press releases. Let's be honest. They are press releases for my friends in the majority to use on the campaign trail, and they are serving as a distraction from the business the Republican leadership has failed to act upon.

Last Friday, House Republicans missed the legally mandated deadline for Congress to enact a budget, and it appears as though we are not going to see a budget resolution on the floor this week—or anytime soon. It is pretty sad that Speaker RYAN, a former Budget Committee chairman himself, can't get the House to pass a budget.

In 2011, Speaker RYAN said that failing to enact a budget is a ''historic failure to fulfill one of the most basic responsibilities of governing.'' In 2012, the Speaker went on to say that not passing a budget ''has serious consequences for American families.''

But the extreme budget proposed by the Republican leadership—a budget that would end the Medicare guarantee, gut antipoverty programs, and demand $6.5 trillion in cuts—was not extreme enough for House Republicans, so they can't get a majority within their ranks. This is a failure of the majority to do its job, plain and simple.

Demands by a vocal group of conservative Members to abandon a bipartisan agreement reached last year on spending caps has put a budget in jeopardy and the promise of regular order for the appropriations process out of reach. Don't be surprised if all these spending bills get crammed in during a lame duck session after voters have cast their ballots and we have this big monstrosity that comes before the Congress—nobody knows what is in it—and it gets passed. That is the way the business of this House will proceed. I don't think that is what the American people want; and if you want to talk about what makes the American people shake their heads, it is that.

Forgive me if I find it ironic that we are here today telling the IRS how to do its job while this Republican majority can't even do its job of passing a budget and fulfilling its most basic responsibility of governing.

So if my Republican friends don't want to pass a budget, there are other important things we can do besides these message bills that are going nowhere:

Negotiations have stalled on legislation to help Puerto Rico avoid a default. We could do that.

A bill to provide aid to families in Flint, Michigan, has not reached the floor for a vote. Clearly, I think everybody in this country was horrified when they learned of the fact that the residents of Flint, Michigan, were being poisoned by the water that was coming out of their faucets. We could do something about that, but we are not.

A bipartisan, comprehensive immigration reform bill that passed the U.S. Senate has been blocked by the leadership in this House for the past 3 years. We could actually fix our immigration laws rather than just complain about them, but we are not going to do that, I guess, either.

I might also suggest to my friends that, if they need bills to consider on the floor, we could respond to the thousands and thousands of constituents from all over the country that have been rallying at the Capitol during the past week as part of the Democracy Spring and Democracy Awakening movements and take up legislation to reform our campaign finance system. Let's do something about getting the money out of politics. Let's remove the influence that special interests have on congressional elections—and all elections—because of our broken campaign finance laws. We could do that, but we are not. We are doing messaging bills that are going nowhere.

We could join millions of our constituents and people across the globe in celebrating Earth Day by considering climate change legislation. I know that may be a heavy lift on my Republican friends, because a big chunk of the Republican Conference doesn't even believe that climate change is an issue.

We could do tax reform. Let's simplify the Tax Code. Let's remove all these loopholes that allow big corporations to escape paying taxes while regular, hardworking people have to pay taxes. Let's do tax reform. That would be a good thing to do during this week, but we are not going to do that.

And perhaps we can maybe debate an AUMF, an Authorization for Use of Military Force, something that I have been urging this place to do for a long, long time now. Yesterday, the Pentagon announced hundreds more U.S. forces will be deployed in Iraq. We are getting sucked into this war even more deeply. I think people are tired of endless wars. Our troops are expected to perform their responsibilities when we send them to places like Iraq and Syria, but why aren't we expected to do our job and actually debate these

issues and vote on them? Instead, we are silent; we are indifferent.

So we have a lot that we can do. Unfortunately, we are not doing any of those things. This place is becoming a Chamber where trivial issues are debated passionately and important ones not at all. We need to do better, and we need to start coming together and figuring out how to solve some of these problems.

H.R. 3724, which is unnecessary at best, prohibits the IRS Commissioner from rehiring any former employee that was terminated for misconduct, even though there are already processes in place to ensure employees with significant performance or conduct problems are not rehired. This legislation is not even necessary.

H.R. 4890 prevents the Treasury Department from paying bonuses to IRS employees until the Secretary submits to Congress a customer service strategy that has been approved by the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration. Again, an added layer of bureaucracy.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter sent to all Members of Congress from The National Treasury Employees Union, which is opposed to H.R. 4890 and a number of the other bills that we are debating here today.

THE NATIONAL
TREASURY EMPLOYEES UNION,
April 12, 2016.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: As President of the National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU), representing over 150,000 federal employees in 31 agencies, including the men and women at the IRS, I am writing to express opposition to several bills scheduled to be considered by the House Committee on Ways and Means on April 13. NTEU believes all of these bills would weaken IRS' ability to carry out their taxpayer service and enforcement missions, and undermine efforts to retain dedicated and experienced employees.

H.R. 4885, the ''IRS Oversight While Eliminating Spending (OWES) Act of 2016,'' would require IRS collected user fees to be deposited in the general fund of the U.S. Treasury and would prevent the IRS from spending the user fees ''unless provided by an appropriations act.'' NTEU strongly opposes eliminating IRS' ability to use the user fees that it collects, as provided by law. The IRS charges user fees for various services: to assist taxpayers in complying with their tax liabilities; to clarify the application of the tax code to particular circumstances; and to ensure the quality of paid preparers of tax returns, among others. While user fees have historically been used, in large part, to fund traditional taxpayer service activities, recent budget cuts in excess of $900 million since Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 have forced the IRS to reallocate a greater portion of these user fees to implement a number of significant legislative mandates, nearly all of which came with no additional funding. These include the Affordable Care Act (ACA), the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FACTA), and the Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act.

While proponents of this legislation claim the bill is simply an attempt to ensure proper congressional oversight of the IRS, in reality these measures are designed to undermine and weaken the IRS's ability to enforce enacted laws. While NTEU takes no position as to whether any particular tax statutory provisions remain or are repealed, NTEU believes it is important to remember that the IRS, and its personnel, are charged with implementing each and every tax law passed by Congress, including the ACA. Therefore, it is imperative that the IRS be provided with the resources necessary to carry out its responsibilities under the law, and to retain the flexibility to allocate user fee revenues as necessary to do so.

Prohibiting the IRS from accessing the roughly $400 million in user fees it collects each year is effectively an immediate cut of $400 million to its budget, and will simply force the IRS to divert resources from other critical taxpayer service and enforcement programs to carry out its statutory mandates.

NTEU also urges you to oppose H.R. 1206, the ''No Hires for the Delinquent IRS Act'' which would prohibit the hiring of additional IRS employees until the Secretary of the Treasury certifies that no employee of the IRS has a seriously delinquent tax debt.

While NTEU believes that each and every IRS employee should pay their taxes in full and on time, we have serious concerns about how the bill defines a seriously delinquent tax debt, and believe basing IRS' ability to hire additional personnel on such an uncertain standard is unjustified, and will only further undermine its ability to meet its taxpayer service and enforcement missions.

Under H.R. 1206, a tax debt is considered ''seriously delinquent'' by the filing of a notice of a federal tax lien (NFTL). Unfortunately, using notice of a lien as an indication a debt is seriously delinquent is inappropriate since it is not a final determination of tax liability. Section 6321 of the Internal Revenue Code establishes that a lien can be filed immediately upon the assessment of tax. In many instances, the IRS may file an NFTL to simply secure the government's future potential interest and establish its priority as a possible creditor in competition with other creditors. Therefore, the filing of the NFTL is not a true indication that a tax debt is ''seriously delinquent.''

In addition, it is unclear why this legislation is even necessary. The bill specifically singles out the tax status of employees at the IRS who have an overall tax compliance rate of over 99%, the highest in the federal government, and a much higher compliance rate than the general public. Furthermore, for those employees at the IRS that do have tax debts, the existing Federal Payment Levy Program already allows the IRS to levy federal salaries to recover federal tax debts.

We also believe restricting the IRS' ability to hire qualified applicants based upon an uncertain tax status standard of its employees is misguided, and will simply further impede its ability to provide quality services to American taxpayers. The IRS workforce has been reduced by more than 15,000 employees over the past five years, including many front-line customer service and enforcement personnel. Therefore, it is critical that the IRS have the ability to hire additional personnel to provide the services taxpayers expect and to implement the laws passed by Congress.

Finally, NTEU urges you to oppose H.R. 4890 which would prohibit the IRS from paying performance awards to its employees until the Secretary of the Treasury develops and implements a comprehensive customer service strategy. NTEU believes this legislation is unnecessary, and will only serve to undermine IRS efforts to retain experienced employees that provide many of the critical taxpayer services. In fact, the IRS has already recently provided a detailed and comprehensive strategy to improve taxpayer services, and in particular, the phone level of service, as part of its FY 2017 budget request. However, implementation of this strategy will require a commitment by Congress to provide the IRS with the necessary resources and staffing. If members are serious about helping the IRS meet its mission of providing taxpayers with top quality service in a timely manner, Congress will fund the Administration's FY 2017 IRS budget request.

Furthermore, this measure is unfairly punitive to hard-working front-line employees who are not responsible for developing or implementing agency-wide policies and strategies, and who have already experienced significant pay hardships in recent years—stemming from the three-year pay freeze and furlough days, followed by three years of minuscule pay increases, and performance awards below one percent of their salaries. Like all federal agencies and effective employers, the IRS must be able to properly compensate its workforce, particularly at a time of a healthy job market, and to distinguish and reward higher performing employees.

For these reasons, we strongly urge you to oppose these bills during committee consideration on Wednesday, April 13. Please contact Matt Socicnat of my staff if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

ANTHONY M. REARDON,
National President.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, if the majority is concerned with customer service at the IRS, we should be considering appropriations legislation to fully fund the administration's budget request for the agency. IRS funding has been slashed by nearly $1 billion since 2010, and as a result, the IRS had to cut 12,000 jobs, reduce employee training, and delay technology updates. So while I understand that my friends on the other side of the aisle don't like the IRS, it is their demands for steep funding cuts that have led directly to a degradation of customer service during the past several years.

Furthermore, the IRS has already developed and has begun to implement a strategy to improve taxpayer services, and here is the deal, Mr. Speaker. If this were really an issue, we could have brought this up at any time. We could come together and try to see whether we can work on bipartisan legislation, but instead, we bring up legislation attacking the IRS during the week that people have to pay their taxes. You don't have to be a rocket scientist to figure out that this is all about messaging and not about substance.

I think that people in this country are really sick and tired of the performance of this Congress—or the lack of performance of this Congress. We have a lot of challenges that we need to confront; we have a lot of problems that we need to solve; and rather than doing this, we ought to be doing the people's business. We ought to be legislating in a serious way and leave these press releases and these messaging bills for the Republican congressional campaign committee. It is beneath, I think, the standards that this Congress should uphold.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. I reserve the balance of my time to close.

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

have no speakers because everybody is so interested in this legislation that I think they would prefer to stay in their offices.

Let me just say, Mr. Speaker, I am going to urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question. If we do, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up Mr. VAN HOLLEN's bill that would restrict American companies' use of so-called tax inversions to shrink their tax obligations by hiding money in foreign countries. The bill would direct the money toward repairing our crumbling infrastructure.

That is exactly the type of legislation we ought to be debating here: something that is meaningful to the American people and to get American corporations that are trying to not pay their fair share to pay their fair share and to invest in repairing our crumbling infrastructure, whether it be water infrastructure that we see in such disrepair in places like Flint, Michigan, or our roads and bridges. Where I come from in Massachusetts, we have bridges that are older than most of your States, and they need repair.

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 Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' and defeat the previous question and to vote ''no'' on the rule.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I believe there is probably going to be debate on these bills this week on the House floor. But also, there are certain times when you just understand the bills are, as I say from my part of the world, just common sense, and we just need to get to them.

It is amazing that we actually have to tell the IRS to not rehire people that they fired for misconduct. That is just an amazing idea. There are a lot of things that need to go on over there, the least of which is to give them more money which they have shown, repeatedly over the past few years, that they use to target groups that they don't like.

So that is not the reason that they are problematic. There are other issues there that need to be dealt with.

As I said before, our tax system is out of control. Americans deserve to keep their hard-earned dollars. While I would like to dismantle the IRS—I am more of a fair tax proponent—while it exists, we must rein it in and hold it accountable.

This rule provides for consideration of legislation that will protect taxpayers. It takes important steps toward ensuring that the IRS is not abusing taxpayer dollars. For that reason I urge my colleagues to support this rule and H.R. 4890 and H.R. 3724.

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

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 688 OFFERED BY MR. MCGOVERN

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

SEC. 3. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3064) to authorize highway infrastructure and safety, transit, motor carrier, rail, and other surface transportation programs, 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 Transportation and Infrastructure. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 4. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 3064.

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

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

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on ordering the previous question on H.R. 688 will be followed by 5-minute votes on adoption of H.R. 688, if ordered; ordering the previous question on H.R. 687; and adoption of H.R. 687, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 240, nays 172, not voting 21, as follows:

[Roll No. 155]

YEAS—240

Abraham	Blum	Carter (TX)
Aderholt	Bost	Chabot
Allen	Boustany	Chaffetz
Amash	Brady (TX)	Clawson (FL)
Amodei	Brat	Coffman
Babin	Bridenstine	Cole
Barletta	Brooks (AL)	Collins (GA)
Barr	Brooks (IN)	Comstock
Barton	Buchanan	Conaway
Benishek	Buck	Cook
Bilirakis	Bucshon	Costello (PA)
Bishop (MI)	Burgess	Cramer
Bishop (UT)	Byrne	Crawford
Black	Calvert	Crenshaw
Blackburn	Carter (GA)	Culberson

Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—172

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

NOT VOTING—21

Bass
Becerra
Beyer
Blumenauer
Collins (NY)
DeSaulnier
Dold
Edwards
Fattah
Fincher
Garrett
Hinojosa
Jackson Lee
Johnson, E. B.
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Maloney, Carolyn
Meng
Rush
Stutzman
Van Hollen
Waters, Maxine

□ 1352

Mr. THOMPSON of California changed his vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

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

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

RECORDED VOTE

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

A recorded vote was ordered.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 242, noes 172, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 156]

AYES—242

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

NOES—172

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Bishop (GA)
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)

Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—19

Beyer
Blumenauer
Collins (NY)
Dold
Edwards
Fattah
Fincher
Garrett
Hinojosa
Jackson Lee
Johnson, E. B.
Loudermilk
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Maloney, Carolyn
Meng
Rush
Stutzman
Van Hollen
Waters, Maxine

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1359

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1206, NO HIRES FOR THE DELINQUENT IRS ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4885, IRS OVERSIGHT WHILE ELIMINATING SPENDING (OWES) ACT OF 2016

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 687) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1206) to prohibit the hiring of additional Internal Revenue Service employees until the Secretary of the Treasury certifies that no employee of the Internal Revenue Service has a seriously delinquent tax debt, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4885) to require that user fees collected by the Internal Revenue Service be deposited into the general fund of the Treasury, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

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

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 239, nays 173, not voting 21, as follows:

[Roll No. 157]

YEAS—239

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

NAYS—173

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

NOT VOTING—21

Bass
Beyer
Blumenauer
Carney
Collins (NY)
Dold
Edwards
Ellmers (NC)
Fattah
Fincher
Garrett
Hinojosa
Jackson Lee
Johnson, E. B.
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Maloney, Carolyn
Meng
Rush
Stutzman
Van Hollen
Waters, Maxine

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1405

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

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

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

RECORDED VOTE

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

A recorded vote was ordered.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 239, noes 173, not voting 21, as follows:

[Roll No. 158]

AYES—239

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper

Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOES—173

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

NOT VOTING—21

Bass
Beyer
Blumenauer
Carney
Collins (NY)
Dold
Edwards
Ellmers (NC)
Fattah
Fincher
Garrett
Hinojosa
Israel
Jackson Lee
Johnson, E. B.
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Maloney, Carolyn
Meng
Stutzman
Van Hollen
Waters, Maxine

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1411

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on rollcalls 153 through 158 due to a family emergency. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows:

On rollcall No. 153 on H.R. 4570, I am not recorded due to a family emergency, I would have voted "aye."

On rollcall No. 154 on S. 719, I would have voted "aye."

On rollcall No. 155 on the Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on H. Res. 688, I would have voted "nay."

On rollcall No. 156 on H. Res. 688, I would have voted "nay."

On rollcall No. 157 on the Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on H. Res. 687, I would have voted "nay."

On rollcall No. 158 on H. Res. 687, I would have voted "nay."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to be present in the House chamber for certain rollcall votes this week. Had I been present on April 18th and 19th 2016, I would have voted "yea" for rollcalls 153 and 154 and "nay" on rollcalls 155, 156, 157, and 158.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall Nos. 155, 156, 157, and 158, I was detained at a meeting at the White House. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

□ 1415

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

PROVIDING INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE PUBLICATION 17 FREE TO TAXPAYERS

Mrs. NOEM. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 673) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Internal Revenue Service should provide printed copies of Internal Revenue Service Publication 17 to taxpayers in the United States free of charge.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 673

Whereas each year, Internal Revenue Service Publication 17, entitled ''Your Federal Income Tax'', provides individuals with general instructions on how to file their tax returns for the previous taxable year;

Whereas in each year prior to 2015, free printed versions of Internal Revenue Service Publication 17 were made widely available to taxpayers at libraries, post offices, and taxpayer service offices, and even by mail at the request of a taxpayer;

Whereas the Internal Revenue Service no longer disseminates a free printed version of Internal Revenue Service Publication 17 as it transitions to a fully electronic tax filing system, including an electronic system for providing instructions on filing tax returns;

Whereas the Internal Revenue Service directs taxpayers to the Internet to download an electronic version of Internal Revenue Service Publication 17, even though the limited availability of a printed version of this publication burdens individuals who do not have access to a computer or printer and individuals who struggle to navigate a computer;

Whereas the dissemination of printed copies of Internal Revenue Service Publication 17 is a basic taxpayer service that the Internal Revenue Service is ignoring;

Whereas the Internal Revenue Service should prioritize its resources on areas that are critical to the ability of taxpayers to file their tax returns in a timely and proper manner;

Whereas the decision of the Internal Revenue Service to stop disseminating printed copies of Internal Revenue Service Publication 17 adversely impacts populations that do not have access to, or understand how to use, a computer, and the decision unnecessarily burdens and restricts the ability of taxpayers to comply with the convoluted and complicated provisions of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; and

Whereas Internal Revenue Service Publication 17 is clear evidence of the need for comprehensive tax reform that simplifies the Internal Revenue Code so that individuals can complete their tax returns and pay their taxes without needing the nearly 300 pages of instructions that currently make up Publication 17: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives urges the Internal Revenue Service to—

(1) resume printing copies of Internal Revenue Service Publication 17; and

(2) provide free copies of such publication to the taxpayers of the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from South Dakota (Mrs. NOEM) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from South Dakota.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. NOEM. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H. Res. 673, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise in support of H. Res. 673, and I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN) for introducing it.

The resolution is simple. It expresses a sense of the House that the IRS should make the individual income tax instructions widely available to Americans, free of charge.

Mr. Speaker, the Tax Code is broken. It is too long, too complicated, too confusing, and too old. Taxpayers spend somewhere around 6 billion hours in complying with our Nation's confusing tax laws, and they spend over $30 billion on computer programs and professional tax preparation just to figure these documents out. It is absurd, and the solution is fundamental tax reform.

My colleagues and I have been working hard to simplify the Tax Code and make it fairer for American workers and families, but it is a long and a difficult process. As we work toward this comprehensive solution that we need, the best thing that we can do is to make sure Americans have the information they need to comply with the law.

The Taxpayer Bill of Rights reads that taxpayers have the right to be informed about how to comply with Federal tax law. This is something the IRS' Publication 17 document—or the individual income tax form instructions—says taxpayers have a right to as well. As we move more and more to electronic tax filing, this is a promise the IRS is abandoning in some cases. While e-filing may be an attainable goal for some, there are millions of Americans who are without the access or the ability to find the information online or to make sense of it. Recently, the IRS stopped making the income tax services available to libraries, post offices, and taxpayer service offices. Instead, it requires a taxpayer to order a copy and then to pay for it. This is unacceptable.

The IRS, like many agencies, has faced reductions in budgetary allocations due to sequestration, but it is important to remember that budget reductions require prioritizations within an agency. Providing Americans with free access to the instructions that are necessary to file taxes should be a priority for the IRS.

Until we have a fairer, a simpler, and a flatter Tax Code, we need to make sure the people have the information they need to file their taxes correctly. H. Res. 673 expresses the sense of the House of Representatives that the Internal Revenue Service should provide U.S. taxpayers with free printed copies of IRS Publication 17, which is entitled, ''Your Federal Income Tax'' and provides individuals with general instructions for filing tax returns.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

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

This is ''bashing the IRS and its 80,000 employees'' week, but the two bills here today are very minor additions. Tomorrow and Thursday are the real problem proposals and the real culprits. They are the ones that really curtail the ability of the IRS to provide adequate service. Let me say just a few words about this bill.

It urges the IRS to make available printed copies of IRS Publication 17, as has been said—the tax guide for individuals—free of charge to taxpayers. According to the IRS, printing and shipping copies of this publication cost them more than $500,000 last year.

Will the Republicans fund this important service for taxpayers? No. Better yet, will they increase funding for customer services broadly, like answering taxpayer phone calls or investing in cybersecurity to prevent fraud? No.

Instead, Republicans have cut the IRS' budget by close to $1 billion since 2010. As a consequence of those cuts, the state of the IRS' customer service today is inexcusable. If Republicans want the IRS to improve the services they provide to taxpayers, they need to provide adequate funding for the IRS. They need to increase it instead of cutting it as they have in previous years.

This bill is also a distraction from the Republicans' inability to act on what really matters: the budget bill, the Flint bill—in terms of responding to the crisis there—and the Puerto Rico legislation.

In part because this is, simply, a sense of Congress, it is, more or less, innocuous except in its saying to the IRS: Pay yourselves—the IRS—for the printing and the shipping—$500,000 it cost last year—while, at the same time, the Republicans say: We are not going to provide the funding necessary for customer services. There is that total inconsistency.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. NOEM. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN).

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, one of the frustrating things about the Federal Government is that it acts without realizing the hardship it is causing other people.

The reason for this bill is that, recently, the IRS decided not to publish in paper form Publication 17, which is a necessary publication for anybody who has a moderately difficult income tax return to prepare. There are two classes of people who are affected by this—first of all, the people who do their own returns.

Like many other agencies, the IRS only looks at the costs that it is directly imposing on the citizenry. It doesn't look at the costs it is indirectly imposing on the citizenry. In this country, the average cost of a professionally prepared tax return is easily over $200. If we turned around and billed everybody $200 from the government, obviously, we couldn't pass that bill around here; but because of the complexity of our Internal Revenue Code and of people having to go out and pay that $200, we don't associate it with a tax, but it makes people poorer just as if we had directly increased their taxes. When you don't provide copies of instructions for a tax return, you are punishing people who are trying to save that $200, $250, $300 by doing their own returns.

Secondly, you are disproportionately affecting people who cannot navigate the Internet as well—in other words, our older population. It just seems offensive—as you have older people out there, some who are not familiar with the Internet—saying: No. No. We won't go with paper for now. That, again, is kind of—I guess I will call it—elitism on the part of the IRS because it doesn't need the paper form. It is saying the 75- or 80-year-old who is still doing his return doesn't need the form.

We are, therefore, asking for this bill to be passed and are asking the IRS to, one more time, have sympathy for the people who may not have the additional $200, $250, $300 to pay a professional preparer and for the older citizens who may not be comfortable preparing their return online.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

I have listened. Here is the problem.

Under your rule, the IRS has been receiving less money than it needs—$900 million less than in 2011. You come here, and you complain—when you are really the source of the complaints, in large measure—of the people who can't access the booklet or who can't get through on the telephone. You are the cause of so much of this difficulty, and you come here and complain. You need to put the money behind your complaints. Do that.

I reserve the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

Mrs. NOEM. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BENISHEK).

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 673, a commonsense bill that expresses the support of Congress for having the IRS continue to provide taxpayers with a paper copy of instructions on how to file their taxes.

I thank Representative GROTHMAN for introducing this resolution and for giving us the opportunity to discuss this important issue during tax week.

I hear from constituents all the time about how difficult it is to access paper tax forms, let alone how hard it is to file their taxes. Every year, millions of people continue to file their taxes on paper, but, every year, the IRS continues to make this process even more difficult.

As the IRS has transitioned to preferring an electronic filing system, many of my constituents are getting left behind. Not everyone is easily able to get access to paper forms on their own. The response that my constituents receive when they ask for help from the IRS is that all of the forms are easily available online. Unfortunately, more than 25 percent of all Americans lack regular or easy access to the Internet, and over 50 percent of seniors do not own a computer. Other people just want to file by paper. We need to preserve this option.

Beyond the accessibility concerns, we hear more and more about the dangers of electronic data security and tax fraud—dangers which are exacerbated by e-filing. Many of my constituents want to avoid these threats to their personal information, and the IRS is actively hindering them from taking sensible precautions.

I actually introduced legislation—the PAPER Act—in this Congress, which would require the IRS to send filing instructions and tax forms in paper format if someone traditionally files his taxes by paper. This seems pretty easy to me. While many of my constituents have concerns about how complicated their taxes are or about how high their rates are, they want to pay their taxes. We should not be keeping them from doing so.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this simple resolution. I think, if the IRS would stop going after individuals about their politics, they would have plenty of money with which to send out the forms.

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

I respect the gentleman from Michigan, my colleague, who talks about it becoming more difficult. The reason it is more difficult to reach the IRS on the phone or to, perhaps, get the forms is due to the failure of the Congress, under the Republican majority, to provide adequate resources for customer service. That is the long and short of this.

When we had a chance, we did add several hundred million dollars to the IRS that one year, and service improved; but now it is relapsing again because the Republican majority here simply will not provide adequate resources to the government agency that is supposed to work with our taxpayers. Also, the IRS is supposed to do some work in auditing tax returns. Because of the lack of resources, now fewer than 1 percent of taxpayers have any auditing of what they present to the IRS.

I understand the concerns. What I do not understand is the realization that you are the source, in large measure, of these concerns. Tomorrow, we will be debating bills that have a much greater impact in terms of the IRS and its employees. This is relatively innocuous, in part, because it is only a sense of Congress and because it is unlikely to pass the Senate. Even if it did, it would be nothing more than an expression of the sense.

□ 1430

What we really need are dollars and cents given to the IRS employees so that they can do the work they want to do so that the 50, 60, or whatever percent of the calls that come in never get through to those people who would like to respond to the people who are calling them.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. NOEM. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I have heard the gentleman's points on reducing the IRS' budget over the last several years, and we have done that. In fact, we have done that in the environment of where we have seen the abuse that the IRS has wrought on this country.

We have seen the lavish parties, and the American people said it was unacceptable. We have seen the extreme bonuses that were paid to employees. We have seen the targeting of individual groups based on what they work on.

We had hoped that the reduction in spending would be a reminder to the IRS of who they are to be accountable to, which is to the hardworking taxpayers, and that it would be the perfect opportunity for them to identify their priorities of what they should be doing, which is helping and servicing taxpayers who are trying to comply with the law instead of targeting individuals and instead of stopping to answer phone calls.

He talked about only 50 to 60 percent of the phone calls being answered. I think only 38 percent of those phone calls are being answered. And then, even if they are answered at times, they are dropped out of courtesy because the IRS simply isn't there to answer the questions the taxpayers have.

Taxpayers are spending somewhere around 6 billion hours preparing their taxes, $30 billion on computer programs and/or professional help to try to pay their taxes accurately so they can comply with the laws this country has in place.

The problem is that, by stopping this distribution of IRS publication 17, who we are harming the most are those who are disadvantaged, the elderly who don't have access to computers, the poor who don't have access to getting the kind of help that they need or have the funds to find and be able to pay professional tax preparers. That is who we hurt if we don't pass this bill today.

Let's help those who are disadvantaged. Let's make sure that they have the instructions necessary to pay their taxes accurately and on time. Let's reprioritize what the IRS should have done to begin with when they were reminded what their job was. Let's support this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from South Dakota (Mrs. NOEM) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 673.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROHIBITING THE USE OF FUNDS BY INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE TO TARGET CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES

Mrs. NOEM. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4903) to prohibit the use of funds by Internal Revenue Service to target citizens of the United States for exercising any right guaranteed under the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4903

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

SECTION 1. PROHIBITION ON TARGETING BY THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE BASED ON THE EXERCISE OF FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS.

None of the funds made available under any Act may be used by the Internal Revenue Service to target citizens of the United States for exercising any right guaranteed under the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from South Dakota (Mrs. NOEM) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from South Dakota.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. NOEM. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material on H.R. 4903 currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise today, Mr. Speaker, in strong support of H.R. 4903, and I thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ALLEN) for introducing the bill.

We live in a Nation that is founded on the idea of free speech. The government does not control our media. It does not control who we decide to associate with. We don't live in a place where we should have to think twice before supporting a group that aligns with their views or making their political beliefs known to others.

The heavy hand of the Federal Government should not control how an American shares their views. Yet, that is just what happened to nearly 300 groups that applied for tax-exempt status between 2010 and 2012.

These organizations were small gatherings of like-minded people who wanted to discuss their views and educate the public about those views. They filled out the necessary IRS paperwork to become tax exempt, as it is required by the law.

But months and even years after they applied, after answering intrusive questions, after providing mountains of documents, after having their activities monitored by IRS agents, after all of this, many of them still sat in IRS limbo.

During the investigation, the Ways and Means Committee staff reviewed upwards of 1 million documents and interviewed dozens of IRS and Treasury officials. This exhaustive, years-long investigation yielded the information that we now know, that 298 applications for tax-exempt status were put on hold. Over 80 percent of them were right-leaning and only 10 percent were left-leaning.

Thanks to the committee's investigation, we know that the former head of the IRS division that governs tax-exempt groups, Lois Lerner, was told that frontline agents noticed an uptick in groups referring to themselves with phrases like Tea Party. She said the Tea Party matter was very dangerous and suggested how to deny those applications.

We know she inserted herself into the supposedly nonbiased procedures that she had created. She then bypassed even those procedures and singled out certain taxpayers for additional scrutiny and audit.

We also know that the IRS bureaucracy in Washington went as far as setting up a surveillance program called a review of operations. In other words, an IRS unit in Dallas would monitor a group's activity, including their Internet postings, trying to build a case for an audit.

Over 80 percent of the groups that were flagged for this surveillance were right-leaning and, of the groups actually selected for the audit, Mr. Speaker, 100 percent of them were right-leaning.

When concerns about this activity reached Congress, my colleagues at Ways and Means asked multiple members of the IRS leadership about it. They assured the committee that all was well. We now know what was really going on.

When Lois Lerner finally admitted in 2013 that the IRS had targeted taxpayers based on their political beliefs, the President went on national television and promised to help Congress get to the bottom of the situation. He later changed his tune and blamed the targeting on a few rogue IRS agents.

If the Ways and Means investigation showed us anything, it is that the wrongdoing happened nowhere else but in Washington, D.C., and that the IRS employees on the front lines were not to blame.

We must make sure that political targeting like this never happens again. By passing this bill to reaffirm American taxpayers' First Amendment rights, we take a step toward that goal.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, what is being prohibited here is already prohibited. It is prohibited in the law. It is prohibited by law that we passed in 1998.

It says that there shall not be action as to any taxpayer, taxpayer representative, or other employee of the IRS in violation of any right under the Constitution of the United States.

So maybe this bill is an effort to bring back the long discussion we had about the IRS procedures. I don't think this is the time to relitigate it.

I was there and you weren't, if I might say so. I thought maybe you would bring it up; so, I did go back to what happened.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would like to remind the gentleman to direct his remarks to the Chair.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I will do that.

I decided to go back to 2013 to the hearing of Ways and Means. After the inspector general gave his report—this is May 17, 2013—this is what I asked the inspector general: Did you find any evidence of political motivation in the selection of the tax-exemption applications?

And the inspector said: We did not, sir.

Look, we could spend hours talking about what has happened to the rules regarding 501(c)(4)'s in this country. We could go back and discuss the abuse of the 501(c)(4) provisions. We could go back and look at how much political money is being poured into this process by 501(c)(4)'s.

We could go back and discuss what was the original language in the 501(c)(4) legislation that no political money could be used. Instead, it was interpreted decades ago that it relates to the majority must not be.

So what has happened is that 501(c)(4)'s—by the way, most of them are rightwing organizations, most of them.

Most of the money has come from rightwing organizations using the mask of 501(c)(4)'s to essentially, I think, pollute the democratic processes in this country. We shouldn't really be doing that. You raised it; so, I am responding.

What this bill does is simply say that the constitutional rights should essentially prevail, and I fully agree. It is already in the 1998 legislation. So let's move on. Let's not use vehicles for political purposes.

Look, we have so much more we could be doing today in terms of tax legislation. We have legislation relating to inversions. A number of us have introduced it.

We complain that the executive uses too much power. They have used their power relating to inversions up to, I think, a legitimate point and have said to us in the Congress that we need to go further—the Congress does—to address the problem of inversions in this country. Essentially, we do nothing. We do nothing about this.

There was talk earlier today about tax reform. We have heard this talking endlessly, and there is no product. There is no product whatsoever.

So this bill simply restates what is already in the 1998 law which we completely, completely embrace. So I suggest we just get on with our business and try to do real business.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. NOEM. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ALLEN).

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from South Dakota.

Yesterday marked the deadline for all Americans to file their 2015 taxes, and Americans from all walks of life disclosed some of their most private information and handed over their hard-earned dollars to the government.

With this in mind, last week I was proud to introduce legislation prohibiting the use of funds by the IRS to target citizens for exercising their First Amendment rights. Americans have seen Federal agencies abuse their power, and the IRS is one of the worst offenders.

The IRS has specifically targeted conservative groups simply for being conservative. This is a direct violation of the First Amendment.

My bill preserves the integrity of the First Amendment by ensuring its protections are never compromised by unelected Federal bureaucrats.

Specifically, H.R. 4903 protects Americans by prohibiting use of funds by the IRS and its rogue bureaucrats to carry out government abuse on citizens for exercising their constitutional rights. I can think of nothing more despicable than persecution for beliefs.

Tax day is stressful enough with the Tax Code we have in place. The IRS has no business in striking fear into the hearts of Americans for expressing their strongly held beliefs and convictions.

The Constitution is the law of the land, whether the IRS likes it or not. We must hold the IRS and its unelected bureaucrats accountable, especially because they have overstepped their constitutional bounds before, as my colleague pointed out. My colleague on the other side may dispute our legislation, but they can't dispute the facts, Mr. Speaker.

My colleagues serving on the Oversight and Government Reform committee and the Ways and Means Committee have been investigating the

IRS' unlawful targeting of conservative groups since 2012. They were dogged in their pursuit of justice for every American's fundamental right, the freedom of speech.

The investigation revealed that, as a result of the Supreme Court's decision in Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission, democratic leadership pressured IRS bureaucrats to fix the problem by taking an aggressive stance against political speech by tax-exempt entities.

□ 1445

My colleagues also found clear evidence and testimony that the Tea Party and other conservative organizations were targeted for enhanced scrutiny because their organizations' names reflected their conservative beliefs.

For 27 months, from February 2010 until May 2012, the IRS systematically targeted conservative tax-exempt applicants for additional scrutiny and delay. This is an egregious violation of the First Amendment rights of all Americans.

The leader of this scheme was Lois Lerner, an IRS official at the time, as was mentioned.

In April 2010, a sensitive case report on the targeted Tea Party groups is shared with Lerner, when she first learned of a spike in Tea Party applications.

In June and July of 2011, Lerner is briefed that employees are using such terms as ''Tea Party,'' ''patriots,'' ''9/12 Project,'' ''government spending,'' ''government debt,'' ''taxes,'' and ''make America a better place to live'' to flag applications.

Lerner, after learning about such terms, tells the Cincinnati office to revise its guidelines for flagging applications. The guidance is expanded to include ''organizations involved with political lobbying or advocacy for exemption under 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4).''

Also, Lois Lerner's hard drive supposedly crashed that June, erasing 2 years worth of emails. How convenient was that?

In March 2012, DARRELL ISSA, then-chairman of the Committee on House Oversight and Government Reform, expressed concern to the IRS inspector general that Tea Party groups were being targeted by the IRS. Doug Shulman, IRS Commissioner at the time, vehemently denied on the record to Congress that the agency was targeting conservative groups.

In May 2013, Lois Lerner testified before the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. She proclaimed her innocence before invoking her Fifth Amendment right and refusing to answer questions from lawmakers. For 2 more years, the IRS circumvented Congress' investigations.

Lois Lerner, time and time again, refused to cooperate with Congress in its investigation of targeting conservative groups and, instead, hid behind the Fifth Amendment.

Before I was elected to Congress, my colleagues in the House of Representatives rightly voted to hold Lois Lerner in contempt of Congress for her refusal to cooperate with ongoing investigations into the agency's special targeting of groups with ''Tea Party'' or ''patriot'' in their names that were seeking tax-exempt status.

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

Mrs. NOEM. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, a decision to hold Lois Lerner in contempt of Congress was not taken lightly. Not surprisingly, the Obama administration's Department of Justice unilaterally decided not to prosecute Lois Lerner for her unlawful actions.

However, Congress vowed to continue to find answers and hold the IRS accountable for its actions. This is why I stand before you today. I refuse to allow another American to be persecuted and targeted by IRS bureaucrats for expressing their First Amendment rights, no matter their beliefs.

The House holds the power of the purse. As such, it is within our authority to gut the IRS where it hurts the most: their use of hard-earned tax dollars.

H.R. 4903 prohibits the IRS from using funds made available by any law to target citizens for exercising their First Amendment rights.

Today I urge my colleagues to stand with me to ensure that the IRS no longer oversteps its authority and supports the God-given constitutional rights of every American. No American should fear persecution from the government for expressing his or her strongly held beliefs and conviction.

Please join me in supporting H.R. 4903.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

I thought maybe this bill was an excuse to try to relitigate this issue. I was among the first who suggested that Lois Lerner be relieved of her duties. I did so because of, I thought, the incompetent way it was handled, but not because there was any evidence of political motivation.

Again, I want to go back to the question I asked the inspector general in 2013: ''Did you find any evidence of political motivation in the selection of the tax-exemption applications?''

Mr. George said: ''We did not, sir.''

So what has happened here is essentially getting up and reading a one-sided, often erroneous text, often conclusions that are not at all based on fact.

We really should not be relitigating this today. We should be acting on tax legislation, on the budget, and other necessary issues that face the people of this country.

I hope no one thinks that the passage of this bill will in any way imply on the part of any of us who have been involved with this on the Democratic side that there is any substance to the attack that has been launched here on the IRS and conclusions that have been reached that are not founded on fact.

It is kind of sad. The 1998 law says no IRS employee may violate the constitutional rights of a taxpayer. That is absolutely clear. It is absolutely clear.

So with this, I want to express my regret that this bill is being used as a vehicle for strictly political purposes. Let's abide by the Constitution and the 1998 law. Let's also abide by the responsibilities of this Congress, and that is to act on critical legislation and not use a bill as a vehicle to try to go over once and once again a case where there is deep difference of opinion and often deep misstatement of facts.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, let's not forget that what we are doing here today is ensuring that the IRS will never target Americans based on their political beliefs, on their First Amendment rights. This bill will just make sure that doesn't happen. Regardless of what the past was—and what is wonderful about the past and being at congressional hearings and taking part in them and serving on a committee or not serving on a committee is that they are public and that they are open, and that you can ask questions, and the general public at home can hear the answers that are given there.

Let me remind you that in 2013, Lois Lerner admitted that the IRS had targeted taxpayers based on their political beliefs. She said that the Tea Party matter was very dangerous. She suggested how to deny the applications. We know for a fact that she inserted herself into the supposedly unbiased processes that she had created and then bypassed even these procedures and singled out certain taxpayers for additional scrutiny and audit.

Do we think, really, that it was just a fluke that 100 percent of the audits and the groups that were selected for audit were right-leaning? I don't believe so, sir.

While that investigation may be over, it is still important to have discussions like this to reassure the taxpayers back home that this type of targeting will never happen, that we have legislation before us today that will stop some of the abuses that may have happened in the past and ensure that they won't happen in the future. That is why I am going to urge my colleagues to support the bill.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from South Dakota (Mrs. NOEM) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4903.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SERVICE PROVIDER OPPORTUNITY CLARIFICATION ACT OF 2015

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4284) to require the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to issue regulations providing examples of a failure to comply in good faith with the requirements of prime contractors with respect to subcontracting plans.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4284

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 ''Service Provider Opportunity Clarification Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. GOOD FAITH COMPLIANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF PRIME CONTRACTORS WITH RESPECT TO SUBCONTRACTING PLANS.

Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration shall issue regulations providing examples of activities that would be considered a failure to make a good faith effort to comply with the requirements imposed on an entity (other than a small business concern as defined under section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632)) that is awarded a prime contract containing the clauses required under paragraphs (4) or (5) of section 8(d) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 637(d)).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) and the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, the Small Business Act requires that when large businesses receive Federal prime contracts, they must negotiate a subcontracting plan outlining who they intend to use as small business subcontractors. That plan becomes part of the contract, and the results are supposed to be part of the past performance evaluation for the prime contractor.

Indeed, failure to make a good faith effort to comply with the agreed-upon plan can trigger liquidated damages. Even though this has been the law for 38 years, the Small Business Administration has never explained what it means to fail to make a good faith effort to comply with a subcontracting plan.

This failure is a double-edged sword. For bad actors, it lets them off the hook. For good actors, it leaves ambiguity about what they are expected to do. It also forces companies that take their compliance obligations seriously to compete against bad actors who never even report the results of their plans.

Failure to report is a real problem. As many as 40 percent of the companies with subcontracting plans don't report any results. As a result, subcontracting dollars with small businesses are at the lowest point in over 40 years.

My colleague, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CURBELO), who chairs the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Energy and Trade of the Committee on Small Business has a commonsense solution for this problem. H.R. 4284 requires the Small Business Administration to explain what it means to fail to make a good faith effort to comply with the plan. It further explains that failing to meet the most basic obligation of the contract term—reporting back on results—cannot be good faith.

The beauty of Mr. CURBELO's legislation is that it solves a problem without placing any new burdens on compliant contractors while still ensuring that the American taxpayer gets the benefits anticipated in the contract.

This legislation was included as part of a larger bill that passed the Committee on Small Business in January, and it received bipartisan support.

I urge my colleagues to support and pass H.R. 4284.

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

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

I rise in support of H.R. 4284, the Service Provider Opportunity Clarification Act of 2015. It has long been the policy of Congress to ensure that a fair proportion of Federal contracts, prime contracts or subcontracts, be awarded to small businesses. In some areas there has been success in advancing this goal. In fiscal year 2015, small prime contractors received over $90 billion, amounting to over 25 percent of contracting dollars. As a result, the government, again, met its prime small business contracting goal.

However, prime contracting is only one part of the equation. For many small businesses, subcontracts are just as vital. These opportunities serve as an entry point for firms to the Federal marketplace.

Subcontracts are a way for firms to increase their capacity and prepare to eventually become prime contractors. Subcontracts also help entrepreneurs gain valuable insight into what is required when the Federal Government is your client.

Recognizing the importance of subcontracts, the Small Business Act requires that prime contractors submit subcontracting plans for contracts valued at certain levels and SBA to set goals for subcontracting dollars awarded to small businesses.

□ 1500

Yet, throughout the course of this Congress, our committee has heard testimony of countless witnesses indicating that not only are prime contractors not reporting their subcontracting dollars, but also that contracting officers are not holding these firms accountable for their subcontracting goals.

Even more egregious is the fact that some primes have been awarded contracts without a subcontracting plan at all. This is simply unacceptable.

The Service Provider Opportunity Clarification Act of 2015, introduced by Mr. CURBELO and Ms. CLARKE, seeks to rectify this problem by making the failure to submit the required subcontracting report a material breach, thus providing remedial options to agencies.

Procurement center representatives will also be allowed to review subcontracting plans and place a 30-day hold on the plan if they found that it did not adequately provide small businesses subcontracting opportunities.

Additionally, the bill requires that SBA update its regulations to give contracting personnel better examples of when prime contractors have acted in good faith compliance with the subcontracting plans.

These provisions will provide necessary oversight to ensure that prime contractors are adhering to subcontracting regulations and that small businesses are afforded maximum opportunity to participate in the Federal marketplace as a subcontractor.

I, therefore, ask my fellow Members to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CURBELO), who is the chairman of the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Energy, and Trade.

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, last year I was proud to introduce the Small Entrepreneur Subcontracting Opportunities Act, or the SESO Act.

The bill would hold agency officials accountable for small-business subcontracting during their annual performance evaluations.

Subcontracting is an important entry point for new Federal contractors. If we have fewer subcontractors today, we will have fewer prime contractors tomorrow.

In turn, this would mean fewer small suppliers, manufacturers, and innovators and higher costs to the Federal Government or the taxpayers. We must ensure a healthy industrial base at all levels in our country.

I would like to thank Small Business Committee Chairman CHABOT and Armed Services Committee Chairman THORNBERRY for supporting that important language to hold agency managers

accountable for meeting subcontracting goals included in the Defense Authorization Act that was signed into law.

However, large contractors must also be held accountable for meeting subcontracting goals. While the vast majority of contractors honor these goals, some do not.

Currently, the Small Business Act holds bad actors accountable by imposing liquidated damages if prime contractors fail to make a good faith effort to meet the goals.

However, SBA regulations only offer examples of what they are supposed to do, not what would constitute a violation.

Consequently, the last time the law was enforced was in 1982. Because of this ambiguity, bad actors are able to continue receiving Federal contracts.

My legislation, H.R. 4284, the Service Provider Opportunity Clarification Act, or the SPOC Act, simply requires the SBA to issue rules explaining what a failure to act in good faith means, ensuring transparency and accountability in the subcontracting process.

I want to thank Congresswoman YVETTE CLARKE for her leadership promoting small-business participation in the procurement process and for cosponsoring this bipartisan effort.

I also thank chairman STEVE CHABOT for his leadership and Ranking Member NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ.

I thank the chairman for being an original cosponsor of this bill and for being a strong advocate for our Nation's emerging entrepreneurs. We must ensure that our local businesses have access to Federal contracts and subcontracts.

It is not just about helping the entrepreneurs. It is also about helping the workers they employ and keeping our community strong and prosperous. We should never forget the vital role that our local businesses play in our neighborhoods.

The reason small business is important, Mr. Speaker, is because small businesses have access and know the people who are in most need of jobs and opportunities.

Think of the immigrant family that recently arrived in this country and is hungry for opportunities to work or the kid who had to drop out of college to help his family.

It is these small firms, these small entrepreneurs, that have access to these needy people and can really help them rise up and give them these opportunities to work and prosper.

So I thank my colleagues for their support.

I urge passage of H.R. 4284.

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

Mr. Speaker, small firms continue expressing concern that it is increasingly difficult to find subcontracting opportunities as primes take on more of the work themselves. Agencies and contracting officers must do better to ensure that small businesses have access to these opportunities.

The government-wide subcontracting goal has continually been lowered, from 36 percent in the 2012 and 2013 fiscal years, to just over 34 percent in fiscal year 2014. Despite this decrease, the goal is not being met, with only 33 percent of subcontracting dollars awarded to small firms.

But even these numbers are deceiving, as the percentage is based only on the subcontracting dollars reported. It is estimated that as many as 40 percent of prime contractors are not submitting subcontracting reports.

The changes in H.R. 4284 will ensure that this no longer occurs and that there are real consequences to those companies that try and evade their subcontracting obligations.

I once again urge my colleagues to support this measure.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, in closing, clarifying an ambiguous provision in law in a way that promotes small-business participation without creating any new burdens on contractors is a win-win.

This provision helps contracting officers and large businesses better understand the law, aids small businesses looking to be subcontractors, and improves the quality of the data we use to make policy decisions.

This bill deserves the support of the House. I urge my colleagues to vote to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 4284.

I thank the ranking member of the Small Business Committee, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, for working in a bipartisan manner on this bill, as we always try to do in the committee. I think we almost always achieve that goal. So I want to thank her for that.

I want to thank Mr. CURBELO again for his leadership. I thank Ms. CLARKE as well for working in bipartisan manner on this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4284.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SMALL AGRICULTURE PRODUCER SIZE STANDARDS IMPROVEMENTS ACT OF 2015

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3714) to amend the Small Business Act to allow the Small Business Administration to establish size standards for small agricultural enterprises using the same process for establishing size standards for small business concerns, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3714

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 ''Small Agriculture Producer Size Standards Improvements Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. AMENDMENT TO DEFINITION OF AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISES.

Paragraph (1) of section 18(b) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 647(b)(1)) is amended by striking ''businesses'' and inserting ''small business concerns''.

SEC. 3. EQUAL TREATMENT OF SMALL FARMS.

Paragraph (1) of section 3(a) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632(a)(1)) is amended by striking ''operation: *Provided,*'' and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting ''operation.''.

SEC. 4. UPDATED SIZE STANDARDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration shall, by rule, establish size standards in accordance with section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632) for agricultural enterprises (as such term is defined in section 18(b)(1) of such Act).

(b) REVIEW.—Size standards established under subsection (a) are subject to the rolling review procedures established under section 1344(a) of the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010 (15 U.S.C. 632 note).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) and the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the Small Business Act, the Small Business Administration sets size standards for approximately 1,100 industries every 5 years.

These standards determine what is a small business for purposes of regulatory analyses, procurement programs, capital access, and technical entrepreneurial development assistance.

The SBA sets these size standards in accordance with statutory guidelines and using notice and comment rulemaking. The Small Business Committee and, in particular, my colleague from Illinois (Mr. BOST), has spent a great deal of effort to make sure this is a transparent and accountable process.

However, agricultural enterprises have not been able to benefit from these advances due to a historic anomaly. Forty-six different industries, as diverse as cattle ranching and citrus

farming, are all subject to a single size standard that hasn't changed in nearly 20 years.

That means that, to qualify as small, a poultry farmer or a soybean producer can only have $750,000 in receipts each year. That is receipts, not revenues. For some agricultural producers, $750,000 does not cover the cost of a hobby farm.

H.R. 3714 levels the playing field for these small farmers. It does not set a size standard, but instead requires that the SBA examine the characteristics of these industries to develop size standards using the normal process. Recognizing that a small dairy doesn't look like a small corn farm is common sense.

My colleague, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, who chairs the Agriculture, Energy, and Trade Subcommittee of the Small Business Committee, held a hearing examining H.R. 3714, and the witnesses overwhelmingly supported this legislation.

H.R. 3714 was then included as part of a larger bill that passed the Small Business Committee in January, and it received bipartisan support.

I urge my colleagues to support and pass H.R. 3714.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 3714, the Small Agriculture Producer Size Standards Improvements Act of 2015.

Small businesses play a critical role in the American economy. They make up the vast majority of employer firms and create nearly two-thirds of new jobs.

Over the years, Congress has created numerous Federal program set-asides, tax preferences, and SBA loan programs to help small firms succeed.

Last year small businesses were able to access over $28 billion in capital and $90 billion in contracting opportunities because they met the definition of small. Many businesses used long-term loan proceeds to keep their doors open, retain employees, and create new jobs.

Since yesterday was tax day, I would also like to mention that small business-oriented tax provisions allow firms to write off expenses quickly, putting money back in their hands to create new avenues for growth.

However, the advantages conferred by this program can only occur if a business can show that they meet the industry-based definition of small business.

While, generally, SBA is tasked with defining size standards for over 1,100 industries that establish eligibility for its programs, agricultural standards have been exempted from this process.

Instead, Congress set a rigid gross revenue-base standard for all agriculture industries that has not been adjusted since 2000. However, since the time Congress first began setting the size standard, agricultural production has shifted dramatically.

The Small Agriculture Producer Size Standards Improvements Act, introduced by Mr. BOST and cosponsored by Ms. MENG, will eliminate the outdated size standard and gives SBA the authority to tailor standards that are reflective of the changes the industry has experienced as well as the variety of agricultural businesses across our country.

What is small for a cattleman is not the same for fresh produce producers or dairy farmers. The bill requires SBA to apply their current methodology, solicit feedback from industry stakeholders, and implement specific standards that can be tweaked periodically to respond to changes in the industry.

I, therefore, ask my fellow Members to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1515

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST), who put a lot of hard work and thought into this, and I thank him for his leadership on this matter.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his support of this legislation to update and modernize the agricultural producers' small business size standards.

President Eisenhower once said: Farming looks mighty easy if your plow is a pencil and the closest cornfield is a thousand miles away. Unfortunately, this quote is accurate when describing the statutorily established size standards for agriculture producers.

Agricultural production is an important contributor to the American economy. According to the USDA, the total value of farm production exceeds $390 billion, and the agricultural industry supports 16 million domestic jobs. Farmers and ranchers provide the food, fiber, and fuel that are critical to our daily lives.

Family-owned farms still account for the majority of farms and ranches in the United States. However, the advance of new technology has created increased productivity, leading to lower prices for many commodities. This downward pressure on prices is expected to increase, and newer technology will be adopted. As margins continue to thin, more and more single-owned family operations will consolidate into somewhat larger, multi-family-owned operations, but these are still small businesses.

Unfortunately, the current small business size standard for agriculture has been set in statute and is outdated. The standard is too low for a vast majority of farms and ranches to participate in potential government contracts and subcontracting opportunities.

Also, the SBA size standards are often used for Federal agencies to determine their obligations under the Regulatory Flexibility Act. This law helps ensure that the Federal agency establishes the potential impacts of proposed regulations on small businesses. It also informs the consideration of less burdensome regulatory alternatives.

Unfortunately, the statutory standard has no rational basis. It appears that the number was just grabbed out of the air by a previous Congress. As a result, small business agriculture producers do not enjoy the potential benefit of small business classifications.

In the 30 years since the enactment of the statutory size standard, the Small Business Administration has specifically improved its process for determining small business size standards. This should address whatever issue previous Congresses had when it established these size standards.

Now, I believe it is important that the Congress and the Federal agencies promote consistency in policymaking. My legislation will help ensure that consistency.

I do want to thank the ranking member and the chairman for their support of this bill, and I appreciate the help and support that they have given.

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

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CURBELO), who is chairman of the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Energy and Trade.

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. I thank the chairman for his steadfast leadership and advocacy on behalf of our Nation's small entrepreneurs.

Mr. Speaker, small business size standards are used by the Federal Government to determine eligibility to receive certain Federal contracts and SBA guarantee loans. They are also used by Federal agencies when they analyze the economic impact of new regulations on small businesses.

Size standards for most industries are developed through a congressionally mandated rulemaking process that is transparent and allows small businesses to provide input. The Small Business Administration analyzes a number of factors—average firm size, startup costs, entry barriers, industry competition, and the distribution of firms by size—and then proposes changes to small business size standards through the notice and comment rulemaking process. However, there is one glaring exception: the existing size standard for agricultural enterprises is established in statute and has not been updated in over 15 years.

The current standard for small farmers is $750,000 in annual receipts. It applies to 46 different agricultural subsectors, from citrus groves to beef cattle ranching.

Small farmers and ranchers have been neglected for too long. The size standard setting process for agricultural enterprises needs to be modernized. The existing statutory size standard does not account for changes in industry structure, cost of production, economic conditions, or other factors.

Florida is the country's largest producer of squash, fresh tomatoes, and

fresh snap beans, among a great deal of other fruits and vegetables. Obviously, this would not be possible without the hard work of our Nation's small farmers and ranchers.

I am proud to join Ranking Member MENG in cosponsoring the Small Agriculture Producer Size Standards Improvements Act, which was introduced by Representative BOST.

H.R. 3714 would strike the $750,000 statutory size standard and require the SBA to establish size standards for agricultural enterprises through the notice and comment rulemaking process.

It would also require those size standards to be periodically reviewed at least every 5 years. This will ensure that size standards for small farmers and ranchers are up to date so that they are able to compete for Federal contracts, have access to SBA guaranteed loans, and are considered when agencies draft new regulations.

Again, I want to thank Mr. BOST and Ranking Member MENG for their legislation. I also want to thank Chairman CHABOT and Ranking Member VELÁZQUEZ.

These are the types of bipartisan bills that will really improve the quality of life for our farmers and for all Americans. I urge passage.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, like all other industries, the agricultural industry has changed over the last 30 years.

With new technologies, many agricultural businesses have been able to increase their production rates. The last Census of Agriculture found U.S. farms sold nearly $395 billion in agricultural products, a 33 percent increase from the sales of 2007. Crop sales also increased by 48 percent.

The changes made in H.R. 3714 will give SBA the tools necessary to set size standards for those in agricultural production. The bill ensures these adjustments are done with careful consideration as to the effects on small farms. I once again would urge my colleagues to support this measure.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, in closing, allowing the SBA to develop rational size standards for small farmers, rather than perpetuating a one-size-fits-all approach, simply makes sense. It will allow these farmers to access the appropriate SBA programs and helps ensure that regulations are properly crafted.

The provision doesn't have any cost since SBA is already doing this for all other industries. This bill deserves the support of the House, and I would urge my colleagues to vote to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 3714.

Again, I want to thank the ranking member and the other Members that have been mentioned here today for their work on this important measure.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3714.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MAXIMIZING SMALL BUSINESS COMPETITION ACT OF 2016

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4332) to amend the Small Business Act to clarify the duties of procurement center representatives with respect to reviewing solicitations for a contract or task order contract.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4332

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 ''Maximizing Small Business Competition Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. DUTIES OF PROCUREMENT CENTER REPRESENTATIVES WITH RESPECT TO REVIEWING SOLICITATIONS FOR A CONTRACT OR TASK ORDER CONTRACT.

Section 15(l)(2) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 644(l)(2)(D)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (E) through (I) as subparagraphs (F) through (J), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subparagraph (D) the following new subparagraph:

''(E) review any solicitation for a contract or task order without regard to whether the contract or task order or part of the contract or task order is set aside for small business concerns, whether 1 or more contract or task order awards are reserved for small business concerns under a multiple award contract, or whether or not the solicitation would result in a bundled or consolidated contract (as defined in subsection (s)) or a bundled or consolidated task order;''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) and the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, the Committee on Small Business has spent this Congress taking a hard look at how the SBA administers its programs. Given that the single most common complaint I receive on Federal contracting is that contracts are unjustly bundled and consolidated so that small businesses are denied the opportunity to compete, the SBA's role in the process became a priority.

The committee learned that a few years ago, the SBA essentially gave contracting officers a get-out-of-jail-free card on bundling and consolidation when it issued new regulations governing which contracts it would review. The SBA said that it would not review multiple award contracts if a single seat on the contract was reserved for a small business—a single seat.

While at first this might seem like a good way to allocate resources, it ignores the fact that a contracting officer can now evade the SBA review by simply reserving one award for a small business, even if the small business never receives any work. It means the contracting agency doesn't need to do its homework on how the contract can be structured to maximize competition. It means small businesses are denied meaningful opportunities to compete for work.

The gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. KELLY) has found a solution for this problem. H.R. 4332 prohibits the SBA from limiting review based on a so-called reserve or similar procedural measure.

The committee has documented that over 25 percent of small businesses previously engaged in Federal contracting have exited the marketplace since 2012. Ensuring that contracts aren't rigged to prevent their participation is one of many steps the Small Business Committee is examining to rebuild our industrial base.

This legislation was included as part of a larger bill that passed the Small Business Committee in January and received bipartisan support. I would urge my colleagues to support and pass H.R. 4332.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 4332, the Maximizing Small Business Competition Act of 2016. Purchasing more than $400 billion in goods and services annually, the U.S. Government remains a consistent and reliable client for all businesses.

The Small Business Act requires that small businesses have a fair opportunity to compete for Federal contracts. To help facilitate awards to small firms, the act created a position of procurement center representatives, or PCRs. PCRs are placed throughout the country to monitor agencies' major buying activities, with the main goal of increasing the small business share of Federal procurement awards and ensuring that a fair portion of awards go to small businesses of all types.

These representatives are tasked with various duties, including initiating and recommending small businesses set-aside contracts. If the PCR feels that a contract or a portion of a contract can be set aside, he or she can file an appeal to an agency. However, due to decisions made internally at SBA, PCRs are no longer required to

review proposed solicitations that already include a small business set-aside. Thus, there would be no opportunity for them to file an appeal. As a result, an agency can get away with setting aside the bare minimum for small businesses without having a solicitation reviewed by the PCR, which deprives many small businesses of potential opportunities.

□ 1530

This has been particularly harmful with larger contracts that have been bundled or consolidated. For example, at the General Services Administration, we have seen large contracts worth billions of dollars not receive PCR review. A review could have opened up more of the contracts to small businesses.

The Maximizing Small Business Competition Act of 2016, introduced by Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, seeks to remedy the problem created by the SBA's decision to limit PCR reviews.

The bill would allow PCRs to review contracts regardless of whether the contract already includes a set-aside or partial set-asides for small businesses.

We cannot accept the bare minimum from agencies regarding contracting opportunities for small businesses. If PCRs see that an agency can include more small firms, they should be allowed to appeal the agency.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I ask my fellow Members to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. KELLY) who in a relatively short period of time in this Congress is already showing considerable initiative and has taken a leadership role in the committee.

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, small business are mom-and-pop stores. They are contractors. They are all kinds of people across my district located on Main Street. They are families, they are veterans, and they are individuals in the First District of Mississippi and all across this great Nation.

Small businesses are the heart and soul of local and rural economies, especially in places in rural districts like my district.

H.R. 4332, Maximizing Small Business Competition Act of 2016, is part of an ongoing effort of the Small Business Committee to provide opportunities for small businesses and to promote greater accountability from the Federal Government.

The purpose of the SBA procurement center representatives is to review contracts across the government and make sure they are structured in a way that maximizes opportunities for small businesses to compete.

Unfortunately, the SBA changed their rules to say that, if a contract was restricted to small businesses in whole or in part, procurement center representatives would no longer review the contract.

This rule change has given agencies a way to get around small business administrative review. This rule change has led to contracts being consolidated or bundled, thus limiting opportunity for hundreds of small businesses to compete for work with the Federal Government.

H.R. 4332, the Maximizing Small Business Competition Act of 2016, provides a solution. This legislation makes clear that Small Business Administration procurement center representatives have the ability to review contracts, regardless of whether they are designated for award to small businesses, if the procurement center representative believes the requirement can be structured to improve small-business competition.

This legislation helps to ensure that there are not missed opportunities for small businesses contracting with the Federal Government.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the assistance and leadership shown by my chairman, Chairman CHABOT, and the bipartisan working relationship with Ranking Member VELÁZQUEZ in bringing this bill to the floor. I appreciate my colleagues' consideration and support of H.R. 4332.

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

Mr. Speaker, PCRs are the first line of offense and defense when ensuring small businesses get their fair share of Federal contracts.

It is troubling that SBA has limited the ability of these professionals to oversee contracts. This decision could result in small firms not receiving the maximum contracting opportunities.

Currently, if a contracting officer sets aside 5 percent of the contract for service-disabled, veteran-owned small businesses, PCRs are not reviewing these applications. A review could find that more could be set aside for these small businesses or perhaps other small-business groups.

This bill ensures that PCRs are seeking out additional opportunities for small business and not relying on contracting officers to guarantee that these businesses are afforded their fair share of prime contracts.

Mr. Speaker, once again I urge my colleagues to support this measure.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, in closing, allowing small businesses the opportunity to compete for contracts is simply common sense. Competition encourages innovation, lower prices, and job creation.

This bill will alleviate an unnecessary barrier to small-business competition. H.R. 4332 removes a regulatory hurdle. I urge my colleagues to vote to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 4332.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4332.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

UNIFYING SMALL BUSINESS TERMINOLOGY ACT OF 2016

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4325) to amend the Small Business Act to modify the anticipated value of certain contracts reserved exclusively for small business concerns.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4325

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 ''Unifying Small Business Terminology Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. MODIFICATION OF THE ANTICIPATED VALUE OF CERTAIN CONTRACTS RESERVED EXCLUSIVELY FOR SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 15(j)(1) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 644(j)(1)) is amended by striking ''greater than $2,500 but not greater than $100,000'' and inserting ''greater than the micro-purchase threshold defined in section 1902(a) of title 41, United States Code, but not greater than the simplified acquisition threshold''.

(b) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Section 3(m) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632(m)) is amended to read as follows:

''(m) SIMPLIFIED ACQUISITION THRESHOLD.—In this Act, the term 'simplified acquisition threshold' has the meaning given such term in section 134 of title 41, United States Code.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) and the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, many of the contracting provisions in the Small Business Act were written in the 1960s and 1970s. As such, they predate the government's move to a set of standardized contracting terms in 1984.

In reality, this means that the Small Business Act uses outdated terms that make it hard to read in conjunction with other laws. Even the SBA has adopted the new terminology in their regulations, given that over 30 years have passed since it was first adopted.

My colleague and the ranking member of the Small Business Committee, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ of New York, introduced H.R. 4325 to update the Small Business Act. Thanks to her efforts, we will no longer use different terms for micropurchase or simplified acquisition than the rest of the government. This will make it easier for small businesses to understand the law and for contracting officers to implement the law.

This legislation was included as part of a larger bill that passed the Small Business Committee in January, and it received bipartisan support.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support and pass H.R. 4325.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4325, the Unifying Small Business Terminology Act of 2016. There are many places in which the statutes and regulations small businesses must understand are overly complex.

This problem is compounded by inconsistencies in the language. For example, there are entire sections of the Small Business Act that are one long sentence with multiple commas and clauses.

The act also predates many other statutes and regulations that we now use to govern how agencies purchase goods and services.

As such, the act uses outdated terminology when discussing Federal contracting. Additionally, there are places in which the definitions vary between the act and the corresponding regulations.

One such case is when a contract must be reserved for award to small businesses. While the act indicates that contracts valued over $2,000 and below $100,000 are to be reserved for small businesses, other statutes and even SBA's own regulations point to different values or use the terms the values are supposed to represent.

This causes confusion not only among small businesses, but also to contracting officers as they are left to determine which values to use.

That is why I introduced H.R. 4325, the Unifying Small Business Terminology Act of 2016. The bill amends the Small Business Act so that it has the same terms that are used in titles 10 and 41 of the United States Code and in SBA's own regulation when referring to procurement rules.

This will ensure that there is no confusion among contracting personnel as to which opportunities should be set aside for small businesses.

Mr. Speaker, our committee hears from small businesses almost daily about how difficult it is to navigate the Federal marketplace.

With businesses having to be familiar with small-business regulations, the Federal Acquisition Regulations, and each agency's own FAR supplement, as well as other statutes, the very least we can do is to make sure that all the terminology is consistent.

The changes made in H.R. 4325 will unify the terminology, providing much-needed certainty to both contracting officers and small businesses.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this measure.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, in closing, the gentlewoman's bill is simply good government. We shouldn't have different terms and different laws if we are talking about the same thing.

Federal contracting is confusing enough for small businesses without the use of arcane terminology. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to vote to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 4325.

I would like to thank the gentlewoman, the ranking member, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, for her leadership in this matter.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4325.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SMALL AND DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2016

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4326) to amend the Small Business Act to expand the duties of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4326

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 ''Small and Disadvantaged Business Enhancement Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. EXPANDING DUTIES OF THE OFFICE OF SMALL AND DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS UTILIZATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 15(k) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 644(k)), as amended by section 870 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 (Public Law 114–92), is amended—

(1) by striking ''section 8, 15 or 44'' and inserting ''section 8, 15, 31, 36, or 44'';

(2) by striking ''sections 8 and 15'' each place such term appears and inserting ''sections 8, 15, 31, 36, and 44'';

(3) in paragraph (10), by striking ''section 8(a)'' and inserting ''section 8, 15, 31, or 36'';

(4) by redesignating paragraphs (15), (16), and (17) as paragraphs (16), (17), and (18), respectively;

(5) by inserting after paragraph (14) the following new paragraph:

''(15) shall review purchases made by the agency greater than the micro-purchase threshold defined in section 1902(a) of title 41, United States Code, and less than the simplified acquisition threshold to ensure that the purchases have been made in compliance with the provisions of this Act and have been properly recorded in the Federal Procurement Data System, if the method of payment is a purchase card issued by the Department of Defense pursuant to section 2784 of title 10, United States Code, or by the head of an executive agency pursuant to section 1909 of title 41, United States Code;''; and

(6) in paragraph (17) (as so redesignated)—

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

(B) in subparagraph (C), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

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

''(D) any failure of the agency to comply with section 8, 15, 31, or 36.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Section 3(m) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632(m)) is amended to read as follows:

''(m) SIMPLIFIED ACQUISITION THRESHOLD.—In this Act, the term 'simplified acquisition threshold' has the meaning given such term in section 134 of title 41, United States Code.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) and the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, the Offices of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization were created in 1978 to serve as advocates within Federal agencies for small businesses seeking prime contracts and subcontracts.

These small offices help review contracts to prevent bundling, make sure small companies are paid promptly, and ensure that solicitations are written in a manner that maximizes the use of small businesses.

H.R. 4326, introduced by Ms. ADAMS of North Carolina, makes two improvements to this program.

First, H.R. 4326 makes a technical correction to the Small Business Act. When these offices were created in 1978, there was no contracting program for service-disabled, veteran-owned small businesses or for businesses located in and employing people from distressed areas, commonly known as HUBZones.

Therefore, H.R. 4326 updates the act to make it clear that these small-business advocates are authorized to provide assistance to service-disabled veterans and HUBZone small businesses.

Second, the bill allows the Offices of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization to crack down on credit card fraud by Federal employees.

Last year we learned that the Department of Veterans Affairs had ignored the law and hidden almost $6 billion in spending by using these credit cards.

These contracts should have gone to service-disabled, veteran-owned small businesses, but the small-business office didn't have access to the data that would have let them catch this fraud. H.R. 4326 gives these small-business advocates access to this data.

This legislation was included, as I mentioned some of the other bills were, as part of a larger bill that passed the Small Business Committee in January, and it received bipartisan support.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support and pass H.R. 4326.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4326, the Small and Disadvantaged Business Enhancement Act of 2016. Over the years, Congress has sought to ensure that small businesses have fair opportunities to compete for Federal contracting opportunities.

There are various provisions that require agencies to set aside or reserve contracts for performance by small businesses so long as they can perform at a fair and reasonable price.

□ 1545

These tools have provided small businesses with opportunities that may have otherwise been closed to them. They have also diversified the government's available suppliers and increased competition, thereby strengthening our country's industrial base.

However, last year, the Committees on Small Business and Veterans' Affairs held a hearing in which senior procurement officials at the Department of Veterans Affairs alleged that the Department was circumventing contracting regulations. Rather than using a contracting vehicle, contracting personnel used purchase cards to buy goods and services such as pharmaceuticals and prosthetics.

If true, these uses of purchase cards by the VA directly violated contracting regulations. Many of these purchases were of such value, that they should have been procured using either the small business reserve or set-asides. Additionally, as a result of their use, veterans were put at risk, as the goods purchased using these cards came without the warranties and protections provided under a contract.

The Small and Disadvantaged Business Enhancement Act of 2016, introduced by Ms. ADAMS and Mr. HARDY, seeks to ensure that the fraud alleged at the VA does not happen there or at any other agency. The bill will require the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization to review agency purchases made using government purchase cards to ensure compliance with the contracting mechanisms set forth in the Small Business Act.

Additionally, the bill provides OSDBU the ability to ensure that all small businesses have access to their services. We cannot allow agencies to bypass the protections afforded to small businesses.

I, therefore, ask my fellow Members to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HARDY), who is the chairman of the Subcommittee on Investigations, Oversight, and Regulations.

Mr. HARDY. Mr. Speaker, we hear about fraud, waste, and abuse as it pertains to the Federal Government spending too much in this country.

Last year, the Subcommittee on Investigations, Oversight, and Regulations within the Small Business Committee held a joint hearing with the Veterans' Affairs Committee to investigate the reports of fraud and manipulation at the VA when it comes to reporting small business goals. What we heard was shocking.

The VA unlawfully spent millions of dollars on medicine, medical care, and prosthetic contracts. And even more troubling, these contracts, if administered lawfully and transparently, would have allowed veteran and service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses the opportunity to compete.

That is why I stand in support of my colleague's bill, H.R. 4326, the Small and Disadvantaged Business Enhancement Act of 2016. It contains language to equip small businesses with the tools to root out deception and fraud.

By having access to data in their toolbox, the small business offices would have not only reduced fraud activities, but it could also have potentially saved money by allowing competition in the process.

I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense language to help reduce fraud, waste, and abuse.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. ADAMS), the author of H.R. 4326 and the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Investigations, Oversight, and Regulations.

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 4326, the Small and Disadvantaged Business Enhancement Act.

This bill will expand oversight over the government purchase card system by ensuring that all small businesses contracting programs are under the purview of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization.

This legislation follows a joint Small Business Subcommittee on Investigations, Oversight, and Regulations and House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations hearing, where we discussed reports that cited irregularities at the Department of Veterans Affairs. This hearing uncovered numerous violations of Federal procurement laws with regard to government purchase cards.

According to witness testimony, including individuals from the Department of Veterans Affairs, the VA's Office of Management issued government purchase cards that were being used illegally. This includes recipients using government purchase cards above the micro-purchase threshold in the same manner as micro-purchases.

As ranking member of the Small Business Subcommittee on Investigations, Oversight, and Regulations, I believe we must ensure that our small businesses have access to Federal contracts by guaranteeing that money associated with government purchase cards are not used for wasteful spending.

The reckless misuse of government funding uncovered at the VA has prevented some small businesses from accessing the Federal dollars owed to them. This legislation would ensure that every agency properly monitors purchase card activity to better free up the funds allocated to small businesses, including disadvantaged businesses.

We have a responsibility to our Nation's small businesses to guarantee that there is a level playing field for them to offer their products and services. We cannot provide that level playing field if there are inefficiencies and waste occurring within our Federal agencies.

Before I close, I would like to thank Representative HARDY for his support and cosponsorship.

I want to urge my colleagues to support the Small and Disadvantaged Business Enhancement Act because supporting small business is simply the right thing to do.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. COFFMAN). He is the chairman of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Small and Disadvantaged Business Enhancement Act of 2016.

In part, H.R. 4326 is the result of the outstanding joint effort between the House Veterans' Affairs Committee's Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations and the Small Business Committee's Subcommittee on Contracting and Workforce.

Our investigative work and joint hearing on the improper, and at times illegal, use of purchase cards revealed billions of dollars worth of inappropriate purchases within the Department of Veterans Affairs alone. This work underscores the need for the reform legislation to be applied across the Federal Government.

The bill requires purchase card procurements to be reviewed if they are above $3,500 and less than $150,000, and requires them to be properly entered into the Federal Procurement Data System. You might think this was already a clearcut requirement, but it

wasn't. H.R. 4326 corrects this glaring loophole. The bill also spells out the role of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization, a much-needed clarification.

I encourage all Members to support this outstanding, bipartisan piece of legislation.

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

In closing, last year, we saw the government achieve record high percentages of dollars awarded to small business. Unfortunately, these numbers have been called into question due to allegations of fraud, waste, and abuse at the VA.

Ultimately, we do not know the total value of small business contracts at the VA, but estimates suggest that small businesses lost out between $2.8 billion and $3.7 billion of contracts as a result of personnel using their purchase cards. If this is true, it is a failure not just of the VA, but of the procurement system more broadly.

Time and time again, we are presented with similar allegations in which opportunities were improperly diverted away from those that they were intended to reach. Every time this happens, a deserving small business loses out on revenue that could help create jobs in local communities. The truth is that we need more oversight, and H.R. 4326 will provide it.

Before I yield back, I want to thank Ms. ADAMS for her efforts and the efforts of all of the members of the committee to work in a bipartisan manner to help small businesses gain access to the Federal marketplace.

I also would like to take this opportunity to thank Chairman CHABOT for his leadership on these matters, as well as other legislation that has passed out of the committee. I am happy to be working with him again to ensure that small businesses get the help they need to grow and continue to create jobs for our communities.

I also would like to add a thank you note to the staff on the majority, Emily Murphy, and on the minority, Eminence Griffin.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

In closing, allowing service-disabled veterans access to small business advocates in Federal agencies is simply common sense. Allowing those advocates the tools necessary to detect fraud is good government.

This bill deserves the support of the House. I want to thank Mr. HARDY of Nevada for his leadership, Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado, Ms. ADAMS of North Carolina, and, as always, the ranking member, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, for her leadership in this matter and all the other bills we had today. I urge passage of H.R. 4326.

I also want to thank the Speaker pro tempore for his time this afternoon. I particularly enjoyed his pronunciation of the great State of Ohio.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4326.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

BLOCKING PROPERTY AND SUSPENDING ENTRY INTO THE UNITED STATES OF PERSONS CONTRIBUTING TO THE SITUATION IN LIBYA—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 114–124)

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. MCSALLY) 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:

Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*) (IEEPA), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order (the ''order'') expanding the scope of the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13566 of February 25, 2011, with respect to the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States posed by the situation in Libya.

In the order, I find that the ongoing violence in Libya, including attacks by armed groups against Libyan state facilities, foreign missions in Libya, and critical infrastructure, as well as human rights abuses, violations of the arms embargo imposed by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1970 (2011), and misappropriation of Libya's natural resources threaten the peace, security, stability, sovereignty, democratic transition, and territorial integrity of Libya, and thereby constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. The order blocks the property and interests in property of persons determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State:

- to be responsible for or complicit in, or to have engaged in, directly or indirectly, any of the following:
  - actions or policies that threaten the peace, security, or stability of Libya, including through the supply of arms or related materiel;
  - actions or policies that obstruct, undermine, delay, or impede, or pose a significant risk of obstructing, undermining, delaying, or impeding, the adoption of or political transition to a Government of National Accord or a successor government;
  - actions that may lead to or result in the misappropriation of state assets of Libya; or
  - threatening or coercing Libyan state financial institutions or the Libyan National Oil Company;
- to be planning, directing, or committing or to have planned, directed, or committed, attacks against any Libyan state facility or installation (including oil facilities), against any air, land, or sea port in Libya, or against any foreign mission in Libya;
- to be involved in, or to have been involved in, the targeting of civilians through the commission of acts of violence, abduction, forced displacement, or attacks on schools, hospitals, religious sites, or locations where civilians are seeking refuge, or through conduct that would constitute a serious abuse or violation of human rights or a violation of international humanitarian law;
- to be involved in, or to have been involved in, the illicit exploitation of crude oil or any other natural resources in Libya, including the illicit production, refining, brokering, sale, purchase, or export of Libyan oil;
- to be a leader of an entity that has, or whose members have, engaged in any activity described above;
- to have materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, logistical, or technological support for, or goods or services in support of any of the activities described above or any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order; or
- to be owned or controlled by, or to have acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order.

In addition, the order suspends entry into the United States of any alien determined to meet one or more of the above criteria.

I have delegated to the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, the authority to take such actions, including the promulgation of rules and regulations, and to employ all powers granted to the President by IEEPA as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the order. All agencies of the United States Government are directed to take all appropriate measures within their authority to carry out the provisions of the order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *April 19, 2016*.

EARTH DAY AND THE PARIS CLIMATE AGREEMENT

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

Mr. TONKO. Madam Speaker, the idea of Earth Day began as a single day for the Nation to focus on environmental protection. Soon after the very first Earth Day in 1970, the phrase ''every day is Earth Day'' became a

mantra among those who want to leave our planet in better shape than it was when we got here.

On Earth Day 2016, I am proud to note that the landmark Paris Climate Agreement is scheduled to be signed by more than 150 nations, including the world's biggest polluters: China, Brazil, and the United States. The quickest, most direct way we are making every day Earth Day, this Friday, is by implementing the largest international agreement the world has ever known.

Earth Day isn't just about the environment. It is about the people who inhabit it. It is about the air we breath, the water we drink, and the food we eat.

The Paris Agreement is already working, setting the foundation for an historic reduction in greenhouse gases, and paving the way to a thriving, clean global economy. Here at home, it is also about creating new jobs and empowering the private sector to once again harness that uniquely American brand on innovation to lead the global marketplace.

We may celebrate it once a year, but Earth Day truly is every day. That is a promise that is as important today as it was 46 years ago. And 46 years later, we are making Earth Day every day with the Paris Climate Agreement.

□ 1600

UNITED STATES V. TEXAS

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

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, I rise to talk about families.

Yesterday, the Supreme Court heard oral arguments on DACA and DAPA. I challenge anyone to look at the children who were protesting in front of the Supreme Court yesterday and not feel an urgency to protect them and their families.

Our unjust and broken immigration system has forced millions of families to live in the shadows. Where is our compassion?

Immigrants, regardless of legal status, deserve justice and dignity. We are a Nation of immigrants. Uniting and keeping our families together is an integral American value. We should be protecting the stability of our hard-working immigrant families instead of tearing them apart.

Comprehensive immigration reform is the moral imperative of our time, and I urge this Congress to pass it.

EARTH DAY

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

Mr. SARBANES. Madam Speaker, this coming Friday, April 22, is Earth Day.

I had the pleasure this morning to be at Masonville Cove in Baltimore. This is the first national wildlife urban refuge that was established in the country. I was there with a class of young people—high school students from Benjamin Franklin High School—who are learning science in the classroom but then are taking that knowledge outdoors and are connecting to nature.

I am very excited that recently, when we passed the new reauthorization of the Federal Education Act, we embedded in it environmental education, which is now going to allow nonprofits, local school districts, and others to apply for competitive grant funding from the U.S. Department of Education to support environmental education and outdoor activities all across this country.

The excitement these young people have today shows that our planet is in good hands.

OBSTRUCTION OF JUDGE MERRICK GARLAND'S APPOINTMENT TO THE UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent for all Members to have 5 legislative days in which 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 gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I rise to implore the Senate to fulfill its responsibility and give fair consideration to President Obama's nomination of Judge Merrick Garland to the Supreme Court.

During my tenure in this honorable body, I have witnessed no comparable examples of partisan politics and complete obstructionism with respect to the consideration of a Supreme Court nominee.

I introduced H. Res. 661, together with my Democratic colleagues on the House Judiciary Committee. This resolution calls on the Senate to hold hearings and an up-or-down vote on the President's nomination of Judge Garland. The Senate majority's flat-out refusal to consider President Obama's nominee, regardless of the nominee's qualifications, is historically unprecedented and is part of a longstanding pattern of disrespect shown to this administration in particular. Our Constitution relies on a system of checks and balances; yet the Senate majority's continued stonewalling of the President's nominee threatens to throw the system into an imbalance.

The President, of course, has the constitutional authority and obligation to appoint Justices to the Supreme Court, pursuant to Article II, section 2, and he has fulfilled his duty with his nomination of Judge Garland. The Senate has both the authority and the duty to provide advice and consent on the President's nominee; yet the Senate has, thus far, refused to do its job, which is simply unacceptable.

It is clear the Constitution requires that both the President and the Senate fulfill their respective roles in the Supreme Court nomination process in order for the Supreme Court to be able to fully perform its constitutional role. Otherwise, what is to stop the Senate from grinding the Court—a coequal branch of government, I remind you—to a halt by simply refusing to consider any nominees to fill any vacancies on the Court?

There is no merit to their argument that we have to wait until we elect a new President. After all, the American people twice elected President Obama to fulfill the duties of President, including the duty to appoint Supreme Court Justices. A strong and independent judiciary is a prerequisite for a strong democracy. This remains as true in the last year of a Presidency as it does in the first. Moreover, there is ample precedent for Presidents nominating and the Senate confirming Supreme Court nominees in a Presidential election year. For example, in 1988, during the last full year of Ronald Reagan's Presidency, the Democratic-controlled Senate confirmed the nomination of Justice Anthony Kennedy by President Reagan by a vote of 97–0.

There are 9 months left in President Obama's term. The President has nominated an eminently qualified jurist in Judge Garland, and the Senate has more than enough time to consider and vote on his nomination. It is vital that the Supreme Court have a full complement of Justices so that the critical constitutional and legal questions before the Court can be given the full attention they need. Already, we have seen a number of 4–4 decisions that have left much uncertainty in place for the lower courts, for the litigants, and for Americans generally.

The Senate should do its job: comply with regular order, hold hearings on Judge Garland's nomination, and then have an up-or-down vote on the nomination.

Now it is with great pleasure that I yield to the gentleman from Maryland, Mr. STENY HOYER, the distinguished minority whip.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his distinguished service.

Madam Speaker, I want to begin by expressing my appreciation to the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee for leading today's Special Order on the important issue of the vacancy on the Supreme Court and the Senate Republicans' unprecedented obstruction of the President's nominee.

That nominee, of course, is Judge Merrick Garland of the U.S. Circuit

Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia. He is one of the most highly qualified nominees ever. Let me repeat that. He is one of the most highly qualified nominees ever to be put forward for a seat on the Nation's highest court. He is a respected former prosecutor and is well regarded as an appellate judge. He was confirmed to his present position in 1997 by a vote of 76–23, with a majority of Republicans voting in favor.

Madam Speaker, in fact, notwithstanding the opposition of some Republicans, they articulated—in particular, Mr. GRASSLEY, who is now the chairman of the Judiciary Committee—that Judge Garland was eminently qualified and would be good for an appointment to another court but that he was not for expanding the Circuit Court of the District of Columbia, and it was for that reason alone that he voted against Mr. Garland.

Madam Speaker, today is the 21st anniversary of the Oklahoma City bombing. Judge Garland, as Deputy Assistant Attorney General during the Clinton administration, oversaw the successful investigation into the bombing and the prosecution of its perpetrators. His insistence on traveling to see the remains of the Murrah Building in the days after the attack and his hands-on approach to the investigation and prosecution won him praise across the political spectrum.

The Constitution is clear: the President has a responsibility to nominate Justices to the Court, and the Senate has the ability to advise and consent, but it also has the responsibility to provide its advice and consent with regard to these nominees. It can, of course, reject a nominee, and it can advise and consent to the appointment of a nominee; but the Senate has chosen to do neither. It has chosen to do nothing. It has chosen to perpetrate gridlock in the Supreme Court of the United States. President Obama met his responsibilities. Now the Senate must do the same. It needs to do its work. Senate Republicans can't just pick and choose when to do their jobs.

Last month, we saw the real-life consequences of an eight-member Supreme Court as it split 4–4 in a key case concerning the right of the teachers to organize and collect union dues. Madam Speaker, I was pleased with that particular outcome because the lower court had ruled in a way that I thought was appropriate. It is an example, however, of a case too important to be the result of a default to the lower court because of a split bench. In cases like these, the Court cannot set precedent. The American people, however, deserve a Court that operates at full strength so that it can establish precedent.

We cannot wait until after the election to vote on Judge Garland's nomination. Senate Republicans, Madam Speaker, continue to insist that, somehow, their obstruction is based in precedent—that a nomination ought not to be made in the final year of a President's term. Ranking Member CONYERS, the former chairman of the Judiciary Committee, just spoke to that. Nowhere in our Constitution is the President's authority limited by the number of days or months into or remaining in his or her term. The President is the President from January 20 until January 20 4 years later. This is yet another example of congressional Republicans holding this particular President to a different and unfair standard.

The Senate confirmed Justice Anthony Kennedy, as has been said, during the final year of President Reagan's second term. Thirteen other Justices have been confirmed during Presidential election years, including Louis Brandeis and Benjamin Cardozo—two of the great members of the Supreme Court of the United States.

During the Kennedy confirmation process in 1988, President Ronald Reagan said: ''The Federal judiciary is too important to be made a political football.''

I would hope that Senate Republicans, who often cite President Reagan as a guide for the kind of leaders they want to be, would heed this admonition. Some have had the political courage to reject their colleagues' disrespectful approach of refusing to even meet with Judge Garland. I congratulate them. They are doing their jobs.

□ 1615

Not only should all Members of the Senate give him the courtesy of a meeting, they ought to do their jobs as well and not stand in the way of hearings and consideration.

The Senate's duty to advise and consent certainly, Madam Speaker, was not envisioned by the Founders to be optional or that the Senate could effectively pocket veto a nomination to the Court. The Senate ought to do its job.

I don't think a single Founder would have conceived of the possibility of the Court receiving a nomination pursuant to the President's constitutional responsibility and authority and simply say: Too bad, Mr. President. Too bad, Supreme Court. We are not going to consider that nomination.

No Founding Father would have conceived that to be possible, and they, therefore, did not provide for a time limit in which the consideration could occur.

I suggest to you, Madam Speaker, that, if we meet our oath to the Constitution of the United States to uphold the laws of the United States, it is incumbent upon us to ensure that the Supreme Court of the United States is fully manned so that it can, in fact, assure the faithful execution and adherence to the laws and Constitution of this country.

I thank my colleague from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) for leading this Special Order tonight on a subject of profound consequence to all Americans.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland for his incredible analysis.

I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ).

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan.

I rise today to express my concern about the ongoing vacancy in the Supreme Court. The President has done his constitutional job, and that is to screen, to choose, to nominate, and to put forward a name.

The Senate must do its constitutional duty, to take a look at the nominee and give a vote. I don't know how the Senate would vote, depending on the nominee.

It is in their jurisdiction. It is in their individual right to take a look and to decide yea or nay. But it is their responsibility to take up that nominee. That is the constitutional requirement.

It has dire consequences for us when this vacancy is left unfilled. It has dire consequences for many, in particular, for example, the Latino community. Just yesterday the Supreme Court heard oral arguments in United States v. Texas, a challenge to the President's executive actions on immigration.

Because of the vacancy, we only have three Justices. So there is the clear possibility that it could be a 4–4 vote. That would leave in place the freeze on DACA and DAPA, and millions of immigrants' lives are hanging in the balance.

The Supreme Court must be able to make concrete decisions on the most pressing issues facing our country, but we are stuck in limbo.

Actually, if you think of the division of powers, we are purposely in a way hampering the power of that judiciary. It doesn't have to be that way.

President Obama has nominated Judge Garland, a worthy and a just successor to the late Justice Scalia's seat.

Yes, Senate Republicans refuse to give Judge Garland their consideration even though a majority of Senate Republicans voted to confirm this exact same judge to the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals in 1997.

They refuse to consider his nomination. Why? Because they are looking to block any Supreme Court nominee at any cost.

There is too much at stake to leave the Supreme Court vacancy open. It is time for the Senate to fulfill their constitutional duty by filling the Supreme Court vacancy with undue delay.

Wasting time, playing political games with the highest of the Court, is irresponsible and is unacceptable.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE), a distinguished member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. CICILLINE. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan for yielding and for his leadership on this Special Order hour.

Madam Speaker, 5 weeks ago President Obama fulfilled his constitutional responsibility and nominated Judge Merrick Garland to the Supreme Court.

Judge Garland is eminently qualified for this position. In 1997, he was confirmed to the United States Court of Appeals in the District of Columbia with a majority of both parties supporting his nomination. He oversaw the prosecution of Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols for the Oklahoma City bombing.

Before Judge Garland's nomination to the Supreme Court, Republican Senator ORRIN HATCH said he would be a consensus nominee and that there was no question he would be confirmed in the Senate.

Now, one month after President Obama nominated Judge Garland to the Supreme Court, Senate Republicans are refusing to hold hearings on his nomination or give him an up-or-down vote.

President Ronald Reagan said: The Federal judiciary is too important to be made a political football. But that is exactly what Senate Republicans are doing.

They are denying the American people a fully functioning Supreme Court and choosing to turn the Federal judiciary into a political football.

The Supreme Court was designated by the Founders of our country to make major decisions of law and to protect the rights of all Americans, but the Supreme Court can't function as it was designed without a full slate of nine Justices.

The Constitution makes clear that the President's job is to nominate Justices to the Supreme Court, and the Senate's job is to advise and consent on those nominations.

The President has done his job. It is outrageous and deeply offensive that Senate Republicans are saying they won't do their job for the remainder of the year.

This is yet another example, maybe the most consequential example, of Republican obstruction. The American people deserve more from their elected officials.

Leader MCCONNELL and Members of the Senate Republican caucus, do your job and consider Judge Garland's nomination as swiftly as possible. The American people deserve nothing less.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. FOSTER).

Mr. FOSTER. Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Maryland for coordinating this discussion, and I thank Ranking Member CONYERS for yielding.

Madam Speaker, a Supreme Court sitting with only eight Justices, including the Chief Justice, is not good for democracy.

The failure by the Senate to consider our President's nominee because of the electoral cycle is an abdication of constitutional responsibility that is without precedent and without reason.

Now, I am best known to my colleagues as the last Ph.D. scientist in Congress or perhaps as the businessman who founded a company with his brother that now manufactures most of the theater lighting equipment in the United States.

What is less well known is that I am also the son of a civil rights lawyer who wrote much of the enforcement language behind the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Like me, my father was a scientist, and he stepped away from his career in science to become a civil rights lawyer.

There was a decade between the Supreme Court decision in Brown v. Board of Education that held that racially segregated school systems were inherently unequal and the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

My father spent most of that decade traveling around the South, advising school boards and Federal judges on the nuts and bolts of school desegregation.

In August of 1969, President Richard Nixon nominated Judge Clement F. Haynsworth to be an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. The nomination was to replace Justice Abe Fortas, a liberal from the New Deal era. The confirmation of Clement Haynsworth would have shifted the balance of the Court significantly to the right.

Many liberal Democrats were strongly opposed to the nomination on ideological grounds, but my father knew Judge Haynsworth from his years working in civil rights. He knew him to be an intelligent and a fair-minded man.

So my father was called to testify before the Senate Judiciary Committee in support of the nomination of Clement Haynsworth.

My father's testimony cited specific cases in which he, my father, as an avowedly liberal Democrat, would have decided otherwise. But he pointed out that the decisions could be sustained by a reasonable man and could be sustained under precedent.

In the closing of my father's testimony, he said:

> The question for me is not whether I would have made another nominee for the Supreme Court. It is rather the question of whether Judge Haynsworth possesses the qualities required to become a fine Justice of the Supreme Court.

This is the standard that should be employed by the Senate today. The President alone has the authority and the obligation to nominate a person to serve on the Supreme Court.

The Senate can defeat that nomination through a vote on the Senate floor after hearings and thoughtful considerations of a person's judicial temperament and intellect.

I believe that considering those characteristics makes it clear that Judge Merrick Garland is eminently qualified to sit on the Supreme Court. But from the Framers, to my father, to today, we have established frameworks for making those decisions.

The Supreme Court should not be, as a famous President once said, a political football, and filling the bench is vitally important.

So I urge my colleagues in the Senate to give Merrick Garland what liberal Democrats gave Clement Haynsworth: hearings and a vote.

In 1969, finally, the Senate voted to withhold its consent for the appointment of Clement Haynsworth 3 months after his nomination, with 38 Democrats and 17 Republicans voting against him.

I think that the process will make it clear how qualified Merrick Garland is and that he will be confirmed, but the Senate must follow the process established in the Constitution for reviewing a nominee.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF), the ranking member on the Intelligence Committee and a former member of the House Judiciary Committee.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, last month President Obama nominated a fantastic jurist, Judge Merrick Garland, to the Supreme Court. Seconds later Republicans announced that he would not receive a vote, a hearing, or even a courtesy meeting in many cases.

Judge Garland has a sterling reputation as a brilliant centrist and, above all, a fair jurist. He has been praised by Members of both parties in the past.

He served in the criminal division of the Department of Justice before his nearly two-decades-long career as a U.S. circuit court judge.

Garland is a Harvard University and Harvard Law School graduate. He clerked for a U.S. Court of Appeals judge and then for Justice William Brennan on the U.S. Supreme Court.

During his stint with the Department of Justice, he was dispatched in the aftermath of the Oklahoma City bombing to help set up the prosecution team and help investigators build a case.

When Garland was appointed to the U.S. Court of Appeals, he received a broad and bipartisan vote. There is no doubt that Garland is superbly qualified.

This Nation's Constitution expressly states that the President has the power to appoint Supreme Court Justices with two-thirds of the Senate approving.

Nowhere is there some kind of an asterisk stating that, during their last year in office or even during the last few weeks of their term, the President must relinquish this power to a successor.

President Obama was elected by the American public in 2012 to serve another 4 years in office. With 9 months left in his term, there is no excuse for the Senate to block him from filling this Supreme Court vacancy.

Precedent demands action. In the past, six previous Supreme Court nominees were confirmed by the Senate in an election year, including current Justice Anthony Kennedy, who was nominated by then-President Reagan.

A Republican President who was in the final year of his term and a Democratic Congress hoping that one of

their own would replace him in The Oval Office, if that sounds familiar, it is.

But instead of the partisan gridlock in the midst of a heated presidential campaign, in 1988, Kennedy received a fair and lengthy hearing chaired by then-Senator JOE BIDEN and then received an overwhelming 97–0 bipartisan vote.

□ 1630

The Supreme Court is a coequal branch of government, not to be trifled with, not to be demeaned like some administrative backwater, and certainly not to be made the partisan and political plaything of a Senate GOP leadership desperate to hold on to its majority at all costs.

Judge Garland deserves a full and fair hearing before the Senate to discuss his qualifications and judicial philosophy, and he deserves an up-or-down vote on his nomination as soon as possible.

To do otherwise would set a dangerous new precedent that further politicizes the judicial nomination process and departs from our constitutional system.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I now yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ).

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. CONYERS for his leadership and for organizing this Special Order to highlight the grave consequences of Senate Republican obstructionism by blocking a simple up-or-down vote on the nomination of Judge Merrick Garland to the Supreme Court.

Republicans claim to love the Constitution, yet they refuse to acknowledge their constitutional duties. Senate Republicans have chosen to play politics instead of doing what is right for the American people. They simply don't want to do their job.

President Obama faithfully fulfilled his constitutional duty by nominating Chief Judge Merrick Garland to the Supreme Court, but Senate Republicans refuse to even hold a hearing to consider, to just consider, Chief Judge Garland's nomination.

This refusal to fulfill a constitutional duty of theirs to vet and vote on this nominee is indicative of Republicans' 8-year strategy of obstructing President Obama at every opportunity.

And who loses? The American people do.

The worst excuse that I have heard as to why Senate Republicans are shirking their duty is that the American people should have a say in the process. I would like to remind my Senate Republican colleagues that the American people—including 11.2 million Latinos who voted in the 2012 election cycle—already had a voice in this nomination.

The American people expressed their will when they overwhelmingly reelected President Obama to a second full term, with the understanding that if a vacancy occurred, it is part of the President's duty to nominate a Supreme Court Justice.

I would like to remind my Republican colleagues, a full Presidential term is 4 years, not just 3. I know math can be hard and a little tricky, so I wanted to make sure that my Republican colleagues in the Senate were clear on that.

The vacancy before us is one that is critically important for all Americans, but especially for Latinos living in the United States. The President has fulfilled his obligation. Now it is time for the Republican Senators to do their job.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman. I now yield to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GALLEGO).

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call on the Senate Republicans to give a full and fair hearing and vote to confirm President Obama's Supreme Court nominee, Judge Merrick Garland.

There is critical business before the Supreme Court this term. Our democracy relies on a full and functioning Supreme Court.

It has been more than a month since President Obama announced his nominee, and Republican leadership has refused to move forward with the confirmation process.

Judge Garland is an experienced and respected jurist with a long history of service to our Nation. He has more experience as a Federal judge than any nominee in history, but Republican leaders have decided they won't hold a hearing to consider Judge Garland's nomination. Instead of doing their jobs, Republicans are playing political games and leaving our Nation's highest court in limbo.

This kind of obstructionism is unprecedented. Since the 1980s, every person appointed to the Supreme Court has been given a prompt hearing and a vote within 100 days. There are 276 days until the next President takes office—plenty of time to consider Judge Garland's nomination.

The Constitution gives the President the responsibility to nominate Justices to the Supreme Court and gives the Senate the job of considering that nominee. There are no exceptions for election year. Never before in American history has a Senate majority said they refuse to consider or vote on anyone nominated by the current President. We have never stopped considering Supreme Court nominees during election years.

This is just the latest example of unconscionable Republican obstructionism. From shutting down the government to threatening to cause a catastrophic default, Republicans have proven that they don't know how to govern and they don't have our Nation's best interests in mind. Republicans continue to put partisan politics ahead of the well-being of the American people.

Nearly 60 percent of Americans want the Senate to hold hearings and vote on the nominee. They want and expect Republican Senators to do their jobs.

Justice Scalia dedicated his life to the Constitution. The Senate should honor his service by upholding their constitutional responsibility to give his replacement a fair hearing and a timely vote.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman, and I now yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CASTRO).

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Madam Speaker, yesterday I had the honor and the privilege of sitting in the Supreme Court chamber while the case of United States v. Texas was argued. It is a case that many of us hope will affirm the President's executive actions known as DACA and DAPA and allow for children who were brought here through no fault of their own as young kids to stay in the country, and also for their parents, the parents of U.S. citizen children, to also remain here so that families are not separated because of our laws.

I hope that the President prevails and the administration prevails and these families prevail in their arguments when we find out in June or so what the Supreme Court decides. As all of us sat there and watched the arguments, the elephant in the room was that there was one Justice who was not there. Instead of the Supreme Court being filled with nine Justices, there were only eight, which leaves open the possibility in this case, and many others, that the Court will be deadlocked 4–4.

Not only on this issue where both sides, whether you are in favor of the administration's actions or against them, have a right to have the case decided and not be left in limbo.

On the issue of immigration in this term, on the issue of abortion, criminal law issues, jury selection issues, these important constitutional questions, many of them could be left in limbo because the Senate Republicans refuse to even start to do their job.

The President has nominated somebody for the Supreme Court. The Senate is supposed to take that nomination up, give the person a hearing, and then take a vote.

Is it so much to ask that the Senate take a vote on the nomination?

They can vote ''no'' if they disagree with it, but they should at least take a vote.

Now, I say this in the context of the last few years in this Congress, putting aside this term that we are in right now, the last two terms of Congress before this were the least productive terms in American history, measured by the number of bills sent to the President's desk.

What this represents is the fact that the cancer of gridlock is spreading from the Congress to the judiciary because Senate Republicans refuse not only to do their job in their Chamber, but also to allow the Supreme Court to properly do its job.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the Senate and Senate Republicans to do their job and to take a vote on the nomination of Merrick Garland.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I am now pleased to yield to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HECK).

Mr. HECK of Washington. Madam Speaker, I thank the ranking member for yielding to me.

Please listen with me to the following timeless, universal, and wise words:

''Trust that justice will be done in our courts without prejudice or partisanship is what, in a large part, distinguishes this country from others. For a judge to be worthy of such trust, he or she must be faithful to the Constitution and to the statutes passed by the Congress. He or she must put aside personal views or preferences and follow the law, not make it.''

Timeless and universally wise words. And, yes, those are the words of Chief Judge Merrick Garland.

President Obama fulfilled his constitutional responsibility by nominating Chief Judge Garland, an eminently qualified American, to the Supreme Court. He does, indeed, deserve—and the American people deserve—a fair hearing and an up-or-down vote.

Chief Judge Merrick Garland has more Federal judiciary experience than any other Supreme Court nominee in history. Let me repeat that. He has more Federal judicial experience than any other Supreme Court judge in history. This approach has earned him bipartisan praise throughout his career. As he was, as noted earlier, confirmed by a majority of both political parties, Senator HATCH's words were referenced.

Here is what hasn't been referenced. None other than Chief Justice of the Supreme Court John Roberts said: ''Anytime Judge Garland disagrees, you know you're in a difficult area.''

I am proud to be from and in this body representing a region of Washington State. Of course, I am not over in the Senate. We here on the House floor don't get a vote. The nomination doesn't come here. But I am also proud that I am represented by both Senators PATTY MURRAY and MARIA CANTWELL, who are both committed to moving forward and prepared to do their job and vote. Washingtonians, frankly, should be proud of their leadership.

If only the Senate majority would also do their job and allow the Senate to function, then we can ensure that the Court is able to reach decisions that will produce the necessary precedent we need to resolve many matters going forward.

Someday I hope someone from the 10th Congressional District of Washington State is nominated to the highest court in our land. And I fear a kid from Tacoma known for resolving disputes on the playground or a teenager in Olympia showing a talent for judging policy debates or a law student from Shelton with their nose in administrative law textbooks, I fear they are seeing all of this play out and thinking, why would I want to devote my career and life to the judicial process only to be denied consideration from a stubborn Senate?

But worst of all, with this inaction, the Senate is basically erasing the lines, and they are creating a new level of gridlock. As an American, I, frankly, genuinely fear what this will become. Every American should fear what this will mean in the future. This kind of obstructionism can become and will become a slippery slope, and it will not bode well for our democracy. This is arbitrary and capricious.

Justice Scalia died February 12, so there was not enough time left because there was just a year left to go. Same is true in January.

What about December and November? That is holiday season. Hardly enough time.

What about October? Well, we are going into holiday season.

What about September? Well, we have got to get the budget out.

What about August? We are on recess.

We are erasing the lines, and that is for the Supreme Court.

Where does it go next? Does it go to all other judicial level appointments? Does it go to all administrative agencies?

We are erasing the lines. It will not bode well for the rule of law. It will not bode well for justice.

I am not in the business of giving advice to the eminent Members of the upper Chamber ever except today. Do your job. Hold a hearing. Give it an up-or-down vote. Were I there, yes, I would vote to confirm Chief Judge Garland. But, minimally, do your job. Hold a hearing and give it an up-or-down vote.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I now to yield to the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO).

Mr. TONKO. Madam Speaker, I thank the ranking member of our Committee on the Judiciary for yielding. I thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) for bringing us together tonight so as to speak to what I think is a necessary cry, an outspoken cry to please fill the post on the Supreme Court.

□ 1645

Madam Speaker, I am here this evening to join in spirit and voice with my colleagues who are urging, requesting our counterparts in the Senate, controlled by the Republican Party, to move forward on action taken by our President, as he nominated a gentleman by the name of Judge Merrick Garland to fill the vacancy on the Supreme Court. Their recalcitrance seems to strike a common theme of obstructionism.

The Republican-led Congress has embodied obstructionism over the last several years. We see in public opinion surveys where that has reduced the positive side of the image of Congress simply because we don't do our work when it is required of us.

Where else in this country in any other job can you say no when asked to do your job? That is what is happening here.

Our Republican-controlled Senate is suggesting and indicating by their action that they will not move in fairness to address this nomination. My colleagues and I are not asking for a rubber stamp process here. We are asking simply that a fair hearing be given to the individual nominated by our President.

President Obama has looked at qualifications, he has checked performance, he has looked at integrity, and he has named an individual that has received great reviews on both sides of the aisle in both Houses; but for some reason our colleagues in the other House—the Republicans of the Senate—will not allow for a fair hearing. That is saying no to your job. They embrace the Constitution, but seem to walk from it when it doesn't fit their agenda.

What we have here again is obstructionism, perhaps of an historic dimension. This show of recalcitrance is regrettable and it is unacceptable.

For the sake of argument, let me just share two numbers: 67 and 125. Sixty-seven days is the average length of time from nomination to confirmation for a Supreme Court nominee since 1975. Sixty-seven days. In terms of 127 days, that expresses the longest wait ever for a nominee from nomination to confirmation before that vote came. So 67 days and 125 days to make the case here.

President Obama nominated Judge Merrick Garland on March 17, a full 311 days before his term expires on January 20 of next year. So the math here is very plain. It is a sound, solid argument: 67 on average, 125 at fullest length for the time span for doing business in the Senate when it comes to addressing the highest court in the land. They have had 311 days to do their work.

People say: Well, the people need to decide. They want a President to be elected, come forth, and then address this vacancy.

Well, the people did decide when they named President Obama by vote to a second term. America didn't elect President Obama for his second term to serve three-quarters of a term. They elected him for a full 4 years. So the arguments are weak, if they are even arguments.

''Do your job'' is the message that we share today on this House floor to the other House and to the Republican-controlled Senate. Do your job. There is much unfinished business in the highest court of the land. The Supreme Court has great unfinished business. To render that an eight-member body, where there can be deadlock and virtual paralysis in the highest court in the land, is unacceptable.

Let's do the people's business. Let's fill the vacancy on the Supreme Court,

let's respect the Constitution, and let's understand that much time was available—is available—to get the work done here to confirm or to reject a nominee. Simply do your job and offer the gentleman a fair hearing.

Mr. CONYERS. I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES), whose father honored us by serving on the Judiciary Committee when he was here.

Mr. SARBANES. I thank the ranking member for yielding, and I appreciate the opportunity to speak on this important topic of filling the Supreme Court vacancy.

Madam Speaker, many of our colleagues in this Chamber carry a pocket Constitution—I have got one here myself—to remind ourselves of our duty to the country.

Article II, section 2, the so-called Appointments Clause, is very clear. It says that the President shall have the power to nominate and, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, judges of the Supreme Court.

It says ''shall,'' Madam Speaker. It doesn't say ''may.'' It doesn't say ''might.'' It says ''shall.'' Yet, many of our Senate colleagues on the Republican side—the very same people who routinely will brandish the Constitution as they speak to justify their actions—are now ignoring the very plain text of the Constitution.

MITCH MCCONNELL suggested that the President should not even have put forward a nominee for this vacancy on the Supreme Court. In other words, he suggested the President shouldn't do the job that the Constitution clearly dictates he should do. Well, the President decided he was going to do his job. And all we are asking is that the Members of the Senate do their job.

If you look at the nominee, Merrick Garland, it is hard to imagine a person better qualified to be on the Supreme Court. Nobody disputes the credentials of Judge Garland, an accomplished Federal prosecutor, a former senior official at the Department of Justice, the current chief judge of the ever-important D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals, and someone who throughout his career has been praised by both Democrats and Republicans alike.

So what is the problem here? What is the holdup? Why isn't this vacancy being filled?

Well, I think the Republicans in the Senate are just trying to run out the clock on President Obama's term. And it is not just that they are denying the President the process that he is entitled to. They are denying the country what the Constitution says the country deserves, which is a fully constituted Supreme Court with nine Justices serving and making important decisions.

The Supreme Court of the United States cannot function as it is intended to unless it has nine members sitting on the court. It cannot find its way to new jurisprudence and new thinking unless it has got a fully constituted court.

Many Americans look with expectation at this court and hope that certain kinds of decisions that we have seen over the last few years will maybe be revisited with some new thinking.

For example, the Citizens United case has unleashed this torrent of outside money on our politics, which has left everyday people feeling locked out and left out of their own democracy. That wrong-headed ruling has further surrendered our political system to the wealthy and the well connected.

The Shelby case gutted certain parts of the Voting Rights Act and enabled partisan operatives in State legislatures across the country to come up with new ways to limit access to the ballot box.

These are decisions which eventually will be revisited. And we don't know how Merrick Garland would come down on those kinds of decisions. That is not the point. We are not prejudging where a rethinking of that kind of jurisprudence would land, but what we are saying is that it is important that you have a fully constituted court to examine these questions. And the American people have a right to expect that that will happen.

When I came to this Chamber 10 years ago, I remember early on there was a very tough vote and I was going back and forth whether I should vote ''yes'' or I should vote ''no.'' And for a fleeting instant, I thought to myself: maybe I will just vote present.

I talked to a couple of my colleagues and they said: The one reason you are here is to cast a vote. You can't just show up and be present. You have got to make a decision.

And we are not asking Republican Members of the Senate to vote for Judge Garland. We are just asking them to take a vote. We are asking them to hold a hearing to meet the expectation of the Constitution. Have a hearing, put it to a vote, and let the chips fall where they may. You can't just show up and say: I am present.

To do your job, you have got to show up and vote. That is what we do. We are legislators. We are not fixing potholes, we are not managing some brigade of soldiers. We are here to vote on legislation. We are here to vote on nominations. That is our job under the Constitution. So you can't not vote and pretend that you are showing up for work.

So, Madam Speaker, I hope and encourage and beseech our colleagues on the Senate side to give Judge Garland a fair hearing, and then bring his nomination to a vote on the floor of the Senate. That is what the Constitution requires. That is what your job requires.

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

SUPREME COURT NOMINATION PROCESS

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

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, I am so grateful to my friends across the aisle for bringing up a subject that has bothered me for years.

Having been a State district judge, I was bothered when people would be nominated for a Federal bench and they wouldn't get their hearing. Or perhaps like a gentleman named Bork, a gentleman named Clarence Thomas, they got a hearing, but as Justice Thomas properly stated back at the time, it wasn't so much a hearing as it was a high-tech lynching.

I am sure all of us have our own personal stories that we are personally aware of. I just happen to be one of 435 who have personal knowledge of personal friends—people who were imminently qualified and were eventually confirmed.

□ 1700

One of them was my law school colleague, and we served in the same firm together for a few years, Leonard E. Davis. He was nominated in 1992 and, yes, as my friends across the aisle point out, it was the last of 4 years of the George H.W. Bush term, but there was no reason not to give him a hearing. The guy had been editor of the Baylor Law Review, a brilliant guy, engineer by undergraduate training.

And, Madam Speaker, it is really unfortunate, but not only did he not get a hearing in 1992, not only did the Senate Democrats drag their feet and refuse to give him a hearing in 1992, he had to wait 10 years for a hearing to become a Federal judge because the Senate Democrats refused to give him the hearing he deserved and the vote that he deserved. So he was nominated in 1992, and, in 2002—actually, May 9 of 2002—he was finally confirmed as a Federal judge.

Now, another law school classmate, colleague, was with one of the best firms in Houston. He and I entered law school at the same time. In fact, there is another justice now that we were all part of the same entering class at Baylor Law School, and that was Andrew Hanen.

Andrew Hanen was nominated to the Federal bench in 1992 by George H.W. Bush as President. I didn't hear any of my colleagues that are now here that were here in 1992 rushing here to the floor and saying: You know what? That Leonard Davis and that Andrew Hanen, they were at the top of their class. They are brilliant. They are obviously well qualified, got the highest bar ratings anybody could get. Everybody likes them. They ought to get their hearing and they ought to be confirmed. 1992, Andrew Hanen was nominated to the Federal bench, and he finally got his hearing as a Federal judge in 2002, 10 years later, and he was finally confirmed on May 9, 2002.

So I am so pleased to hear my friends here in the House complaining about

highly qualified, preeminent legal scholars not getting a hearing, because I wasn't even a judge in 1992. But I was running for judge in 1992, in Texas, and I knew how grossly unfair it was to have the Democrats in charge of the Senate sit on those nominations and sit and sit.

Now, in the case of brilliant Baylor lawyer Priscilla Owen, she made the top grade on the State bar exam when it was taken. I recall, I was sitting across the table from, now, Justice Owen, and when I got my grade, I was thrilled. I made a great grade on the bar exam.

And then people said: You were sitting right across the table from Priscilla. She made the high grade on the bar. Do you not even cheat at all?

Well, the answer is no, I don't cheat. And I was thrilled with the grade I got. But Priscilla made the top grade in the entire State on the bar exam.

She had been a member of the Texas Supreme Court, eminently qualified, obviously brilliant, and she was nominated to be a Federal judge by George W. Bush, the first time, May 9 of 2001. After her hearing, a wait. She was nominated May 9 of 2001, and she never got a hearing on that nomination. She was nominated again September 4 of 2001. She finally got a hearing July of 2002.

She was eminently qualified, absolutely brilliant. According to the Texas bar exam, she was the smartest lawyer taking the bar exam in Texas that month of that year we took the bar. It was only given three times a year. I think it may just be given twice now. It was given three times a year. On our bar exam, she was the smartest lawyer in the room.

I would have to tip my hat; as well as I did, she was a little smarter than I was—smart, able lawyer and justice.

So, over a year after she was first nominated, July of 2002, she gets a hearing. Three years later, she was never given a vote.

Now, I was thrilled to hear from my colleague across the aisle that 67 days is the average wait, from the nomination to confirmation, since the 1970s. So how is it, when a brilliant man or women is nominated by George H.W. Bush or George W. Bush, they run into this kind of wall from the Democrats? Even when the Republicans had the majority in the Senate, they didn't have 60, and the Democrats were able to hold up and prevent a vote on someone as eminently qualified as Priscilla Owen.

So, nominated 2001, her 67 days were up, and she didn't have a hearing, and didn't have a hearing for over a year, and then years go by. January of 2005 comes and goes, and she had gone an entire almost 4 years without the Senate Democrats giving her a chance to have a vote—nearly 4 years, and they wouldn't give her a vote.

So, February 14, right after George W. Bush took the oath of office again for a second term, 4 years, nearly 4 years after her first nomination, she was nominated again, and she had already had a hearing. She finally got a vote in 2005. It took 4 years and getting elected to a second term before they would even give Priscilla Owen the decency, just give her a vote, for heaven's sake.

Leonard Davis, it took not only the year of 1992, it took a son of that President that nominated Leonard Davis to renominate Leonard Davis before he finally ever got a hearing and a confirmation vote.

What a lot of people don't understand, if you are in a major law firm and you are nominated to the Federal bench, it wreaks absolute havoc on the life of the nominee because not only do they fill out massive pages of application forms, but they also undergo an FBI, thorough scrutiny that the Senate gets.

Then something that is not reported, but I know from having talked to these attorneys who were nominated for the Federal bench and then were put on hold for years and years: When you are nominated for a Federal bench and you are in a major firm, you have got tons of clients. They are coming to you with their business. You are bringing in lots of money for the firm, and you are bringing home a great deal of money because you are very successful because, with your experience, people trust your experience. But the minute you get nominated to the Federal bench, you life goes into chaos because the people at your firm are not going to send you over any cases that they need help on. Clients are no longer going to come to you because they know you have been nominated for the Federal bench, and so you are not getting the work anymore. Your production falls off dramatically. Who suffers then? You do; your family does.

So when someone like Andy Hanen, Andrew Hanen, was nominated to the bench and it took so long to get a hearing, it cost him a lot of money. It cost his firm a lot of money.

When Priscilla Owen, sitting on the Texas Supreme Court, is nominated to the Federal bench and the Senate Democrats prevent her from getting a vote that she deserves for over 4 years—whether they are Democrats or Republicans on the Texas Supreme Court, they are smart people, generally. Every now and then a ringer gets on there, but most of them are very smart.

They know if you have been nominated to the Federal bench that you could go to the Federal bench any day. You could go to the Federal bench in 67 days, according to my Democratic colleagues, after you are nominated. So why would they have you write any major opinions when you could be at appellate level, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, before you will have time to really dig into the appellate case?

So you go month after month, year after year, without being allowed to preside and write a majority opinion on a specific case. They may get you one here or there that they think won't be a major effort to write. But it affects your life; it affects your State; it affects those you care about. So nobody is more thrilled than I am to have heard, for nearly an hour, my colleagues across the aisle say, if somebody is nominated, they need to get a hearing, and they need to get a vote.

Now, that brings us up to current time, with President Obama having been in office over 7 years now. And it has been rather interesting, but this administration has set a record. My staff cannot find any administration that tops this.

There have been 11 decisions in a 4-year period by the United States Supreme Court where all nine Judges unanimously said the Obama administration has vastly overreached what they were doing, and they struck down the action unanimously. This Court, four very liberal judges, and they, 11 times in about 4 years, struck down, unanimously, effort after effort by this administration.

□ 1715

In fact, it is apparently a record that, in 4 years, this administration was struck down 23 times. They weren't all unanimous. They were before Justice Scalia's death.

But to have your work as President, along with those under you that you were ordering to do as you tell them and to follow your policies and your guidelines, to be struck down 23 times in 4 years—and that is like 2010 or 2011 through 2014, is my understanding.

So cases since then I am sure will add to the record of the Obama administration. Perhaps now that Justice Scalia has passed, it may enable the Obama administration to get through these last months without racking up too many more overrulings by the Supreme Court.

But it tells you the mindset of this administration: We are going to violate the Constitution.

Even the tremendously liberal judges on the Supreme Court, those four, come back and say: Eleven times, really, you have gone so far beyond what the Constitution allows. Even for us liberals you have gone way too far. We have got to reel you in. You just can't keep pushing that far.

So would it be a surprise when an administration makes a nomination in the last months, especially since the head of that administration as a Senator basically supported the idea that you can't even make a nomination in the last year of your Presidency?

His Vice President, when he was Senator JOE BIDEN—they were all for stopping any nomination the last year of a President. So maybe when they were Senators they weren't always wrong.

Perhaps when they were saying that it was a terrible idea for a President to make a nomination in the last year shouldn't even be given any consideration. Maybe like a broken clock is

right twice a day—maybe that is one of those times—well, they were right on that one.

I would not submit that that should always be the rule. I would not argue that, as President Obama and Vice President BIDEN were pushing, they shouldn't give a hearing to George W. Bush's nominations in the last year. I wouldn't push that far.

But I would submit that, when an administration is setting records for being the most unconstitutional administration in history, then perhaps in their case it merits slowing down a little bit before you allow them to contribute anymore to unconstitutional actions.

Because those who studied modern history, going back to World War II and pre-World War II, we know that President Franklin Roosevelt didn't like the way the Supreme Court was ruling; so, he was threatening to get the number added from 9 to 15. He would appoint 6 and then he could get them to do what he wanted. It had the desired effect upon the Supreme Court. They started ruling the things he wanted were not unconstitutional.

This is also the Democratic administration that ordered the interment of people just because of what they looked like and where they were from. No Republican has ever done that, but Franklin Roosevelt did.

With this administration 23 times having their actions struck down, 11 times unanimous, that record, perhaps it is an indication that we should hold up.

Our friend Andrew McCarthy, today with pjmedia.com, has an article. I want to read from part of that article.

His title is: As Primary Campaigns Roll on, Obama Shreds Constitutional Governance.

He says: ''Two cases in point: President Obama's pressure on the states to drop sanctions against Iran, and his continuing scheme to dictate immigration law unilaterally.''

Mr. McCarthy, who was the prosecutor that did a fabulous job in prosecuting the bombers of the first World Trade Center bombing from back in 1993, says this in his article: ''The invaluable Omri Ceren (citing a Bloomberg View report) alerts us that the State Department has sent monitory letters to the governors of all fifty states 'suggesting' that they review any sanctions imposed against Iran. Over half the states have such sanctions, targeting not only Iran's nuclear work but the regime's other weapons work, (e.g., ballistic missiles), terror promotion, human rights abuses, detention of Americans, etc.

''Explains Mark Dubowitz of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies: '[These sanctions] are an essential part of the non-nuclear sanctions architecture designed to both deter Iranian illicit behavior and to safeguard pension funds from the risk associated with entering Iran's economy.'

''Alas, any counter-Iranian measure with real teeth is certain to fly in the face of President Obama's Iran deal—the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.''

Mr. McCarthy points out the text of the JCPOA, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. That is the Iran treaty. It really was a treaty because you cannot amend a treaty the way this one amended prior treaties unless it is a treaty.

The difference is the Senate leadership couldn't work up the courage to bring it to the floor as the treaty it was so that a two-thirds vote would not be able to be reached, it would not be confirmed, and it could have been stopped dead in its tracks if it had been brought to the floor.

This is such a powerful, important issue, unlike some that Majority Leader REID set aside the cloture rule to bring to the floor without a cloture vote.

This is something that will affect and could bring about the end of millions of lives, and that is the largest supporter of terrorism in the world getting their hands on $100 to $150 billion. That is just the first year.

They could get $100 billion a year after that, but also getting the green light to go ahead and move forward with the nuclear work that they are doing. And the administration may allow them or help them to move along, as the Clinton administration did for the North Koreans.

You may recall, Mr. Speaker, the North Koreans struck a deal with Wendy Sherman, who helped out on the Iranian deal, and President Clinton—I know this is a shorthand rendition—basically, in effect, said: Hey, North Korea, if you will just sign saying you won't use what we give you to develop nuclear weapons, we will build you a nuclear power plant. We will give you everything you need for nuclear weapons if you will just sign saying you won't develop nuclear weapons.

Of course, thinking people knew what would happen, and it did happen just as thinking people knew it would. You couldn't trust the leader of North Korea. They took the materials that were provided for power plants.

They developed nuclear weapons. And now this administration has to be constantly concerned about what North Korea is doing because they have nuclear weapons.

They wanted to help Iran all because of the deal that Wendy Sherman helped do back during the Clinton administration and now she helped make happen with Iran. So they were able to keep working as they thought.

Then we found out more recently, in just recent weeks, that, actually, the Department of Justice and this President's administration—surely had to include the White House—knew that Iranians had hacked into our system here.

They were charged with hacking into the system, but, according to recent reports, the Justice Department was talked into holding up on the charges until after the Iranian deal could be made—it wasn't confirmed. It is not a legitimate treaty—but at least squeak through without the two-thirds of the Senate being opposed, which is not the treatment treaties are supposed to get, according to the Constitution. But that doesn't keep some folks from acting unconstitutionally.

So, anyway, it turns out the Obama administration encouraged the Justice Department to sit on those charges. They knew Iran had people hacking into our system. It had to be government sanctioned. You don't do that in Iran without government permission.

This administration knew about ballistic missile testing that violated all kinds of things; yet, this administration we knew.

And some of us said right here on this floor that there will be violations and this administration will have to turn their head and act like they don't really see the violations because they twisted so many arms and did so many deals to try to get the Iran treaty treated as if it is a treaty without the confirmation that they could not afford for people to know how blatantly Iran leaders were violating their agreements.

This article from Mr. McCarthy goes on: ''. . . the text of the JCPOA expressly indulges Iran's position that it will 'cease performing [its] commitments' under the deal if it deems the sanctions to have been 'reinstated in whole of part.' That threat should only relate to sanctions on Iran's nuclear program, but—as the Obama administration well knew—many of the sanctions against significant Iranian entities (e.g., the National Iranian Oil Company and Bank Melli) are based on activities in addition to support for the nuclear program.

''Moreover, Iran has publicly announced that it interprets the JCPOA''—the Iran treaty we will call it—''as a sweeping eradication of sanctions related both to various non-nuclear activities (e.g., other weapons and ballistic missiles) and to sectors of its economy sanctioned due to activities beyond support for the nuclear program.

''Against that backdrop, the JCPOA also purports to oblige the Federal Government to use 'all available authorities' [to eliminate any] law at the State or local level [that] is preventing the implementation of sanctions lifting as specified in this JCPOA.' ''

That is amazing. The administration makes a deal that they are willing to sign a deal with Iran that violates our own Constitution.

They have no right to dictate laws to State and local authorities, but they apparently signed a deal with Iran that they would dictate State and local law.

''This is a foreign relations matter. So why does the Iran deal commit Washington merely to 'encourage' and otherwise try to persuade state and local officials to honor the deal's terms? Because, for all its bluster

about domestic and international law, the administration knows this deal has no legal standing.

''Plainly, the President is trying to muscle his way through the inconvenience that the JCPOA is merely an executive agreement. It is not a legally enforceable treaty, nor is it supported by any legislation that would bind the states.

''Obama is willing it to work through sheer extra-legal executive power.''

The article goes on. It is a good article. But, then again, when we look at the record-setting slaps at this Administration's overreach in violation of the Constitution, 11 unanimous decisions in 4 years or so and 23 reversals by the Supreme Court in such a short period of time—4 or 5 years—these are records—have that many reversals in such a short time that it bears great scrutiny when an administration setting records for violating the Constitution says: Right before we go out, we want to get this person onto the Supreme Court because we have some other stuff that is still going to be ruled on by the Supreme Court after we are gone and we want some of that stuff that may be unconstitutional, like the 23 times the Supreme Court said they were, struck down things—they want those upheld in the future.

It seems like these are good reasons for the Senate to be very careful, much more so than they were about the Iran treaty.

There is an article from Paul Bedard: ''Obama's Open-Door Immigration Policy Blamed for Surge in Rural Gang Crime.''

□ 1730

''A rural Maryland sheriff on Tuesday blamed''—and this is Maryland. This isn't Texas. It is not Arizona.

''A rural Maryland sheriff on Tuesday blamed President Obama's open-door immigration policy for a surge in gangland crime that included a retaliation murder and assault on an officer doing paperwork in his cruiser.

'' 'Case-by-case amnesty, backdoor amnesty, DACA programs, and the DREAM Act were pushed through by executive order,' said Frederick County Sheriff Charles Jenkins.

'' 'Policy shifts by President Obama weakened and ruined secure communities, and did not allow action by ICE when sheriffs and police departments ignored detainers, allowing criminals to be released back on the streets. In effect, criminal aliens that should have been deported have been allowed to remain and commit more serious crimes, becoming violent offenders,' he told the House Judiciary Committee probing the criminal impact of illegals in the United States.

''He was joined by family members of victims of illegal immigrant crime, a surging issue around the Nation as Obama's policies allow more unauthorized aliens to leave jail and remain in the country.

''Frederick is north of Washington, D.C., but has become a haven for criminal 'transnational' gangs, especially in high schools. Members of MS–13 and 18th Street gangs have become influential in the schools and county. 'Transnational alien gangs are structured criminal enterprises involved in drug and human trafficking, crimes of violence over turf, retaliation, money laundering, and other serious crime. As these gangs are recruiting locally and increasing in number, so does the associated crime within communities,' said Jenkins.

''He gave details on the crimes by immigrant gangs in his county:

''There are over 75 active known validated transnational criminal gang members in Frederick County, many more suspected of gang affiliation. We also believe that MS–13 and 18th Street alien gangs are recruiting, locally, in our schools, in the region, and out of the country.

''Of the 52 validated criminal alien gang members identified since 2008, 25 of the 52, 48 percent, were identified since late 2014.

''Eighteen of the 25, 72 percent, gang members encountered since 2014 have been charged with felonies.

''Seven of 11, 64 percent, of the criminal alien gang members encountered in 2015 were unaccompanied juveniles when they entered the U.S. and eventually located to Frederick County, Maryland. Now they are adults committing serious felonies.

''Crimes committed include five occurrences of attempted first and second degree murder, armed robbery, first degree assault, home invasion, armed carjacking, kidnapping, use of a firearm in the commission of a violent felony, carrying concealed deadly weapons.

''In 2014, eight criminal aliens charged with rape and sexual assault of children ages 5 to 14, with two of the girls impregnated.

''One of my deputies was the victim of an unprovoked physical attack/assault with an MS–13 gang member while sitting in his cruiser doing paperwork.

''The U.S. District Court recently indicted a known alien gang member for involvement in a 2013 MS–13 hired killing in Frederick. The victim in the killing fled El Salvador to live in Frederick because of an MS–13 hit for him there, but the hit order carried to a local MS–13 clique. The victim was lured to a wooded area where he was shot in the head and stabbed to death.

''The growing alien gang problem has spread into one high school where fights and violence between MS–13 And 18th Street are routine.''

That goes back to this important point about this administration's urging and luring people into the United States illegally by talking about the amnesty, talking about legal status. And as has been made clear by Border Patrol, when anyone in Washington, whatever party, either House or Senate, talk about legal status or amnesty, it creates a surge across our southern border.

Having been there in the last few weeks, spending nights and days down there on the border, on the river, aside the river—and I do mean all hours of the day and night—you see these things firsthand. You see little bitty children. The Border Patrol are told they came unaccompanied. There is no way these little children came unaccompanied across a river flowing that fast and that deep. Some of them alleged to have come from Central America. Over a thousand miles they journeyed unaccompanied? That is garbage.

It is like border patrolmen have told me—one in particular, he said: I am Hispanic. I speak better Spanish than most of them. Ninety percent of the time when they tell me they came to escape gang violence, I will hit them up: You may convince some gringo of that, but you and I both know you paid a gang to bring you in to the United States. And he said—90 percent of the time the response is—Well, that is true, but we were told to say we were fleeing gang violence.

As other border patrolmen have told me down there, there is not one inch of our southern border that isn't considered the jurisdiction of some drug cartel, some drug lord. And if you cross within that sector without getting permission or properly paying, making sure the drug lord or the drug cartel is satisfied with your payment, then you will be sought and found and either killed or be forced to provide services until your debt is paid.

That is why it is staggering when people down on the border, having come across illegally, are asked about how much they paid. It is not part of the required questions, but some of our Border Patrol are really wanting to know what is the going rate here for this sector: For people like you from the country you came from, what are they charging you? And you get different answers: $5,000, $6,000, $7,000, $8,000, maybe $10,000 for a group.

The response comes back: How in the world could you have come up with that much money? The resulting answer is: Well, they said I could work it off when I get to the U.S. city where I am going.

You know they have agreed to work for a drug cartel, for a gang, for MS–13, for 18th Street. And it is not just along the Texas border, as we have seen from Frederick, Maryland, it is all over the country. People have agreed to provide the services.

As I have pointed out here before, Border Patrol says: The drug cartels, the gangs in Mexico, call us their logistics because they know under this administration, if they just get somebody across the border, across the Rio Grande, get them across illegally, then we become their logistics and we ship them wherever they want to go.

They tell us: We have got an address, or I have got a family member here, a family member there, or somebody that I have agreed to take care of me.

They don't say it, but it sounds like it could also mean: The drug cartel

gave me this address and they told me this is where I am supposed to go.

They don't say: This is where the drug cartel told me to go. What does anyone expect when they have said: The drug cartel is going to let me work it off?

Is it any wonder that so many of the crimes in America are being committed by people who have come into the country illegally?

We know that most people coming in illegally are not violent criminals. I got that. We have that. We understand that, but when people come into the country illegally—and, by the way, for those that have not noticed, they are not in the shadows. I know there were a few in the shadows under the trees because it got hot out there in front of the Supreme Court, but most were out in front of the Supreme Court.

They are not in the shadows. People keep saying we have got to bring them out of the shadows. Well, start looking. They are not in the shadows. In fact, we had a group come to some offices here in the Capitol. They are not in the shadows. They are coming right in the office and demanding that we legalize those of them who have come in illegally.

The problem is—and this is the biggest problem—when the brightest hope in the world as a Nation, which once was the freest Nation in the world, once was the freest Nation in the history of the world, now international polls say we are not, but we have been the freest Nation, but when the freest Nation stops trying to apply the law equally across the board, then we become like the countries these poor, unfortunate individuals fled because their country did not apply the rule of law equally. It depended on who you were, how much you could pay, or what you could do for them. We become like the countries they had to flee, and there is nowhere left for people holding out hope for one place in the world where they can come and be free. It is gone.

I have had people even in Congress say: Louie, if it gets too bad, we will just pack up and go to Australia.

When I told that to some Australians in January, none of them smiled. They said: If something happens to United States' freedom, China will take us over instantly; you won't have us to come to.

If something happens to the United States and we continue to damage ourselves the way Europe has damaged itself, there isn't going to be any place else left to go. That is what the west Africans told me 3 or 4 years ago. They said: You have got to tell people in Washington—you know, as thrilled as we were when you elected your first Black President, we have seen you getting weaker and weaker, you're not standing up like you used to.

We are Christians. We are going to heaven when we die, but our only hope of a life of peace in this world is if America is strong. When we weaken the rule of law, when we have a President make millions and millions of exceptions to the law, we are on our way to becoming like the countries people that came here illegally had to leave.

For those who say we need to follow the Bible, I certainly believe that. And for individuals, there is no better place to start than within the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. But when you are acting as part of the government and you refuse to do what the Bible says, and that is show no partiality to those because they are rich, show no partiality because someone is poor or unfortunate, you apply justice across the board. That is the ultimate good government.

□ 1745

You provide justice. You see that the rule of law is equally enforced across the board.

Again, as this administration is trying to stack the Supreme Court while on its way out, after setting a record for being found to be the most unconstitutional in the shortest time, this article from today is entitled: ''Obama Administration Unsure if Iran Spent $3 Billion in New Cash on Terrorism.'' It is an article about the Obama administration, with the complicity of Secretary of State Kerry, making sure Iran gets $100 billion to $150 billion.

The article reads: ''Obama administration officials disclosed Tuesday that Iran has been granted access to about $3 billion in unfrozen assets in the months since the nuclear agreement was implemented, but it remains unclear to the administration if the Islamic Republic has spent any of this money to fund its global terrorism enterprise.''

We know, Mr. Speaker, in having listened to the Iranian leaders—while this administration was saying: Oh, yes, we have got to abide by this Iranian deal—the Iranian leaders were assuring their people: We are not abiding by anything that the United States tells us to do. We are still doing everything we intend to do. We are not going to be restrained by any agreement with the United States.

They announced in Iran: We are going to be able to provide more financial support once we get the $100 billion to $150 billion more support for terrorist groups—Hamas and Hezbollah. They told us.

Now the administration, this week, is saying: Gee, we can't be sure they didn't use some or all of this money—who knows?—on terrorism. They quote State Department spokesman John Kirby as saying: ''We don't know. We don't have a way.''

When an administration, like the leaders of Iran, lie and lie and are responsible for providing more terrorism and more death and destruction in the world than any other country—the largest supporter of terrorism in the world—and when they tell you they are going to take money you give them and spend it on terrorism, that may be the one thing you can count on their being honest about.

In going back to November 2015, to the story by John Hayward, it talks about the State Department's social media accounts that were hacked by Iran: '' 'The surge has led American officials to a stark conclusion: For Iran, cyberespionage—with the power it gives the Iranians to jab at the United States and its neighbors without provoking a military response—is becoming a tool to seek the kind of influence that some hard-liners in Iran may have hoped its nuclear program would eventually provide,' The New York Times reports.''

We have this report from December of 2015—4 short months ago: ''Iranian hackers infiltrated a small New York dam in 2013 in a previously undisclosed incident, according to The Wall Street Journal.''

This is an article by Katie Bo Williams from The Hill, and this was December 21: ''Investigators said that the hackers didn't take control of the system but were probing its defenses.''

The White House knew about it. They knew about the intrusion into New York's system. So people are wondering: How could people support Donald Trump? New York got hacked by Iran, and this administration has done nothing about it but try to defend Iran from having the money cut that they have said they will use for terrorism. So is it any wonder New Yorkers are thinking: Well, here is a guy who says he is going to completely stop this kind of activity with radical Islamic groups? Sure. Of course, people will vote for a person who will say that.

Here is an article from January 25, 2015: ''Five Ways Iran is Cheating on the Interim Nuclear 'Deal.' '' That was the interim deal. It goes on and sets out how they have been cheating.

Here is an article from December 16, 2015: ''Iran's October Missile Test Violated U.N. Ban.'' That was the conclusion of an expert panel, according to this reuters.com story by Louis Charbonneau. It reads: ''Iran violated a U.N. Security Council resolution in October by test-firing a missile capable of delivering a nuclear warhead.'' Yet this administration did not see that as any reason to slow down rushing the $100 billion to $150 billion that they had coming to Iran.

This article from Katie Pavlich reads: ''White House: Likely Iran Violated U.N. Sanctions with Missile Test, but They'll Uphold Nuclear Agreement.''

She quotes from White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest: ''Despite the likely violation, Earnest stressed that the White House believes the Iranian regime will uphold its obligations to the recently made nuclear agreement.''

Amazing, because it turned out they already knew that Iran had been hacking our government Web sites and our government Internet. They had charges held up so that it wouldn't stop what we now know is an executive agreement acting like a treaty.

They are still doing it. Some of us said they would have to. They have bent over so far backwards to get an agreement with the largest state supporter of terrorism in the world that, once Iran continued to violate even to the point of taking our sailors prisoner, violating the Geneva Convention rules on prisoners—humiliating the prisoners—not only did this administration not send more Navy forces to take back the Navy sailors who were imprisoned, but it gushed about how wonderful Iran was to take charge of our sailors as the videos emerged—mocking America as they treated our Navy sailors as just trash.

Then we get this story by Bradley Klapper: ''U.S. Considers Easing Ban on Dollars to Help Iran.''

This administration wants to turn around and give Iran—the largest state supporter of terrorism—access to our dollars. Apparently, that would mean access to Internet sites, to bank sites when they know they have been hacking us. They are trying to figure out ways to bring down the United States, and now this administration wants to help them to show how good of friends we can be? That is like trying to convince a bully on the playground that you will keep giving him money because you are his dear friend. He will keep taking your money, but he will never see you as a friend. Not only does he not see you as a friend, but the more you give him, the more contempt he has for you as a coward.

This article today from Caroline May reads: ''Mother of Daughter Killed by Illegal: His Bail was 'Less Than it Cost to Bury My Baby.' ''

''The mother of a recent college graduate, who was killed by an illegal immigrant who later absconded after posting bail and remains at large, offered emotional testimony Tuesday before a House panel.

''Michelle Root, the mother of 21-year-old Sarah Root, spoke about the devastation of losing her daughter at the hands of Eswin Mejia, an illegal immigrant who killed Root while street racing drunk.'' This is different from the story we talked about yesterday. ''Mejia was able to flee when Immigration and Customs Enforcement declined to detain him, and he was able to post bail.

'' 'Eswin spent 4 days in jail and is believed to have fled the country,' Michelle Root said. 'He posted $5,000 bond, which was less than the cost it was to bury my daughter Sarah. Because of the lack of controls, the police, immigration, U.S. Marshals, and law enforcement have little or no information on his whereabouts.'

'' 'Eswin was not a stranger to law enforcement and failed to honor his legal obligations for minor traffic infractions prior to killing my daughter. Now a failed local judicial system that set his bail too low, coupled with flawed Obama administration policies, have rewarded the illegal and punished my family and hampered law enforcement in their investigations.' ''

There are plenty of good reasons to wait for a different nominee for the Supreme Court. We won't even make them wait 10 years like the Democrats in the Senate made my friends. We won't make them wait 4 or 5 years as Senate Democrats did my friends before they would give them a confirmation. In setting records for unconstitutionality in such a short time, it bears our being diligent when the administration is not. People's lives are at stake. They have already been lost. More are at stake. We have got to stand up.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MACARTHUR). Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward Members of the Senate and to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President, including by repeating extraneous material that would be improper if spoken in the Member's own words.

AMERICAN PROSPERITY AGENDA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. PETERS) for 30 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PETERS. 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 my Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, Americans have seen a change in our economy firsthand and are concerned about what it means for their place in a new economy. We can't stop the forces that are transforming our economy and our world, but we can and we must look to the future to find the solutions that adapt to this new economy. We can't live in the past. This means boosting the creation of high-quality jobs by lowering barriers for small businesses to succeed and investing in infrastructure and research. It also means giving Americans the skills to work the jobs of the future that are being created.

In March 2015, the New Democrat Coalition released Winning the Future, which outlines how we can grow our economy, preserve the American Dream, and make government work better for the people.

The principles presented in the agenda and report represent ideas that anyone—Democrat, Republican, Independent—can support. The recently released report consists of 200 legislative actions, including items for every one of our Members. More than 57 percent of those bills—110 in total—are bipartisan, and more than 30 bills have advanced through a committee of the House or through the House as a whole. More than 20 items in the report have become law or have been implemented by an executive agency.

This represents not just a plan but tangible progress. Today, we will share what that means for growing the economy in every town and city in America and for helping hardworking Americans thrive in the changing global economy.

Federal funding for research and development has been on a downward trend for the past several decades. Today, the Federal Government spends almost two-thirds less on research and development than it did in 1965 as a portion of discretionary spending. The lack of funding has led to a $1.5 trillion investment deficit, and a growing number of America's best young researchers are taking their talents to other industries and to other countries.

□ 1800

We need to reinvest in our young researchers to remain globally competitive.

On that subject, I yield to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. KILMER).

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, the date was October 4, 1957, and the time was 7:28 p.m. when the Soviet Union launched Sputnik 1. It was a wake-up call to the United States, and it was perceived as an existential threat.

The reaction to that was a focus by our Federal Government on national research, on basic research to drive innovation, to step up to that perception of threat. The outcome of that was extraordinary scientific breakthroughs. I often point to the cell phone in my pocket.

A lot of the technologies in that cell phone, from the lithium battery that powers it, to the touch screen that allows me to navigate on it, to the Internet that helps me find a delicious Chinese restaurant to go have dinner, to the GPS system that helps me navigate my way to that restaurant—all of those innovations, the basic research behind it was funded by the exact same venture capitalist, Uncle Sam.

Part of the American Prosperity Agenda that the New Democrat Coalition has put forward is focused on redoubling our investment in basic research, because the reality is that we don't have Sputnik being launched by the former Soviet Union.

The reality is we face a Sputnik moment every single day with the threat of new innovation happening someplace else and jobs being created someplace else.

You heard my friend suggest that research and development, as a percentage of gross domestic product since the early 1960s, has declined by nearly two-thirds just in these last four decades.

In contrast, you have seen China substantially increase its investment in higher education. In fact, according to the National Science Board, by 2022, China will invest more in research and development than the United States of America.

China has now surpassed the United States as the world's largest exporter of high technology. So every single day we are facing a Sputnik moment.

And the reality is, while the 20th century was defined by an arms race and a race for military might, the 21st century race is for brains and for research and development.

So that downward trajectory of investment in Federal research is something that, as part of the New Democrats' American Prosperity Agenda, we are seeking to stem. We want to revitalize investment in basic research and reauthorize what was known as the America COMPETES Act, which was passed by this body in a bipartisan form less than a decade ago.

That came out of a report by The National Academies called ''Rising Above the Gathering Storm'' that suggested that, if the United States was going to compete as a Nation, we had to significantly increase America's investment in research and development. Unfortunately, since the passage of that act, you have not seen Congress keep up with that.

On the wall of my office and on the wall of the office where I worked when I worked in economic development professionally, we had a sign up that said: We are competing with everyone, everywhere, every day forever.

That is true not just when you look at folks working in local economic development in Tacoma, Washington. It is true with regard to our Nation today. We are in a global competition.

Steve Jobs before he passed said: ''Innovation distinguishes between a leader and follower.'' I think it is important that the United States maintains its economic leadership and its leadership in innovation.

Lord knows, there are extraordinary challenges that still need to be tackled. Climate change could be 2016's Sputnik moment. Investing in breakthroughs in green technology. Increasing energy independence.

Not only will those innovations lead to solving our world's problems, they will create jobs here in the United States of America.

Paul Otellini, who was the former CEO of Intel, said: Without raising our game in Federal research, the next big thing won't be invented here and the jobs associated with that innovation won't be created here.

I think we can do better, I think we need to do better, and I think the American Prosperity Agenda that the New Democrat Coalition has put forward suggests a better path.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. KILMER for his leadership on this and for coming to join us today.

Speaking of climate change and those kinds of issues, front and center in the changing economy in this decade is a fundamental shift in the way that we provide power for our economy.

It is time to fully embrace the transition to a clean energy economy to reduce our alliance on foreign fuels, to create high-quality jobs, and to protect our environment.

Last year New Dems helped to extend tax credits for the investment in production of solar and wind power. This will drive an estimated $70 billion in private sector investment in wind and solar energy.

The wind and solar that will get built as a result of this investment will reduce emissions the equivalent of taking every American car off the road for 2 years.

New Democrats have put forward proposals to invest in alternative energy research in the military and further expand the deployment of clean energy across the country.

New Democrats are working to move the country forward to a clean energy economy that gives our children a better chance at a future with cleaner air, cleaner water, and economic prosperity.

The Harvard Business School's United States Competitiveness Project outlines eight actions it recommends that Congress take to make America the most economically competitive place in the world to do business, not just to raise corporate profits, but to increase wages for working people across America.

Among those eight steps, which include immigration reform, responsible Federal budgeting, simplification of Federal regulation, and investing in infrastructure and research, is tax reform.

A modern Tax Code for the United States should foster business development and innovation, support hardworking families, and create opportunities for Americans to prosper in a 21st century economy.

The current Tax Code is a complicated collection of outdated provisions riddled with loopholes in serious need of comprehensive overhaul.

New Democrats have advocated for comprehensive tax reform while putting forward commonsense proposals to fix some of the most critical provisions in our Tax Code.

This includes Chairman RON KIND's proposal to promote American manufacturing and Representative PATRICK MURPHY's proposal to spur investment in startups.

New Democrats are working to reform our Tax Code and make America the most competitive place in the world to do business.

With more than 11 million immigrants forced to live in the shadows and countless other waiting in line outside the United States, it is clear America needs bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform.

As long as Congress continues to delay action on comprehensive reform, the United States continues to lose out on top talent from around the world, our economy suffers as bright minds go elsewhere, and families remain separated.

I have worked with New Democrat Coalition member JOAQUIN CASTRO on one such effort to modernize and streamline the United States visa system.

Together, New Dems have advocated for a comprehensive solution that includes an earned path to citizenship and improved border security.

This is supported by groups from across the spectrum and will grow the economy, create good jobs, and reduce the budget deficit by $200 billion and the debt in the first decade alone.

I yield to the gentleman from Washington State (Mr. KILMER).

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, I want to speak further to some of the issues and ideas laid out in the New Democrat Coalition's American Prosperity Agenda.

I think one of the things I appreciate about the approach is it understands that there is not a silver bullet to getting this economy moving again. It is more like silver buckshot.

Frankly, there is a whole bunch of things that we have to do to get our economy ready for success in the 21st century and have it be an economy that works for everybody.

One of the things when I am home in Washington State that I hear quite a bit about is adequate investment in our roads and our bridges and our basic infrastructure, everything from transportation infrastructure to energy infrastructure. I know this is not always the most exciting subject.

I have often pointed out that infrastructure is a Latin word, ''structure'' meaning structure and ''infra'' meaning boring, but it is actually incredibly important.

We know that when we saw a bridge actually go down on Interstate 5 over the Skagit River just a couple of years ago.

We know that when, in many parts of my State and, frankly, in many parts of this country, speed limit signs are only there for nostalgic purposes because we are simply sitting in traffic and not able to get our goods to market.

So the New Democrat Coalition has called for an approach to modernizing our roads and bridges, but also modernizing our communications networks and our power grid to help drive economic growth and make it easier for everyone to do business in the United States.

The reality is there are too many parts of this country where it is either too difficult to get goods to market or, in a 21st century economy where one of the most important ways of connecting people is through technology, where people simply lack access to high-speed Internet.

I represent an area where about a third of the district I represent is rural and we continue to see folks who don't have access to high-speed Internet.

It makes it much more difficult to start a business or for students to do research on a project. As a consequence, it makes it much more difficult for our country to compete.

It is why the American Prosperity Agenda calls for a new approach of making smart investments in that basic infrastructure.

I actually wanted to speak to one more issue that is part of the American Prosperity Agenda. That is a focus on small-business ownership, and there are a number of pieces as part of that.

Congresswoman DELBENE, also of my State, has a bill that is focused on women's small-business ownership. Congressman HIMES of Connecticut is focused on issues around cybersecurity.

I have been working on legislation, along with Congressman HANNA of New York, focused on providing resources to small businesses that are working to combat cyber attack.

The reality is we know that small businesses are a key part of our economic future. You often hear that small businesses are the backbone of our economy. I like that saying. I think that is a good saying.

I always say that small businesses are our star running backs. They are Marshawn Lynch. They are who we should have handed the ball off to at the end of the Super Bowl a couple years ago.

I say that because, if you look at how the United States has generally made it out of recessions, it is not our largest employers that are the ones who are pulling us out of recessions. It is our small businesses that are racking up the tough yards and scoring the touchdowns.

I think one of the fundamental roles of the Federal Government, at the very least, is to get out of the way of our star running back, but, ideally, to do some blocking for them and to call some plays for them and enable them to score some touchdowns.

So a lot of the focus of the American Prosperity Agenda is to make it easier for entrepreneurs to succeed, whether that be to raise capital or to start a business or to combat hurdles that might present barriers to their business's success, like potential cyber attacks.

That is an important part of this agenda, and I think it is important to speak to that. Because, again, as we look at how to grow this economy, I think the small businesses of our country that already exist and those that are yet to be created are going to be an important part of that solution.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, we have heard an introduction as to how New Democrats are working to expand entrepreneurship, increase exports, invest in research and infrastructure, and set up Americans for success in the new economy.

Our economy isn't going to stop changing, and neither should our efforts to find the most innovative, effective solutions for adapting to those changes.

The Harvard Business School's United States Competitive Project has outlined eight actions it recommends that Congress take to make America the most economically competitive place in the world to do business, not just to raise corporate profits, but to increase wages for working people across America.

Those include New Democrat priorities like tax reform, responsible Federal budgeting, simplifying Federal regulation, investing in infrastructure and research, and fixing our broken immigration system.

□ 1815

I want to thank all the members of the New Democrat Coalition for their proposals and progress to increase prosperity and help hardworking Americans thrive in the changing global economy with more jobs, more skills, and more wealth.

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

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with amendments in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 636. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

THE WRETCHED STATE OF RACIAL RELATIONS IN AMERICA TODAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GRAYSON) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to discuss something that may not otherwise be discussed this year in this Congress: the wretched state of racial relations in America today.

We passed a bill here about a month ago in the House of Representatives to eliminate the term ''Oriental'' from the law books. I submit that eliminating a term does not eliminate the racism that embodies that term, and I think it is about time that we recognize what this problem is, the fact that it still festers in America, and give some thought to what we can do about it.

I want to begin by relating two stories, both from my home State of Florida. The first one involves a 16-year-old girl. She was White. She had an encounter with police officers who were also White. She lived on the Atlantic Coast, which is largely White, and I heard about this from a friend of a friend.

What happened to her is that her parents got a call from the police officers late one night. They didn't tell her why they were calling, but they said: You have to come to this location. We need to talk to you about your daughter. She is here with us.

The mother went to that location, spoke to the White police officers. They informed her that her daughter had been drinking in a car with her boyfriend, and they needed to take her home. She was shaken up a bit, so was the daughter, but everybody ended that night alive.

Now I want to tell you a different story. It didn't end so nicely. This was on the Gulf Coast, the coast of Florida that is heavily African American; and on the Gulf Coast one night there was a theme park, you could call it a fairgrounds, that was open to all students without having to pay. They could go on the rides, enjoy themselves one day each year. This is done in Tampa.

Now, teenagers being teenagers, some of them got a little bit out of hand. Many African Americans frequent that area, and they were out in force that night at the fairgrounds. There was a great deal of friction that night between the White police force and the African American teenagers who were there that night.

Some of them actually started running around, might have bumped into a few other people as they were running around. Someone started to scream. You will notice that apart from that physical contact, nothing I described is actually against the law, like, for instance, drinking in a car with your boyfriend when you are 16 years old.

A number of them, about a hundred African American youths, were arrested that night 2 years ago in Tampa. The White police officers insisted that they strip to the waist. That apparently was for the purpose, in the minds of the police officers, to see whether they had gang colors on their bodies—at least, that is what they said.

Now, one of them, Andrew Joseph III, actually hadn't done any of that running around, any of that screaming, any of that casual bumping. He hadn't done any of that, but he saw his classmates being arrested. He came to see what was going on. He saw that one of them had his hat fall off his head. He went over and he picked it up. The officer said: I didn't say you could do that.

They arrested him for picking up his friend's hat. They took Andrew Joseph, a 14-year-old boy, 2 miles away from the fairgrounds, and they pushed him out of the police car and said: You are on your own.

A 14-year-old boy who has parents who were reachable by a telephone, they pushed him out in a neighborhood he had never seen before, never been to before, had no idea where he was. He remembered that his father was going to pick him up at the fairgrounds. He felt pretty shaken up because he had just been arrested and was told to strip to the waist and, frankly, felt humiliated.

He found his way, as best he could, back to the fairgrounds 2 miles away. He didn't call his parents because, frankly, he was scared, embarrassed, didn't want them to know. He almost got as far as the fairgrounds. He tried to cross the interstate highway to get to the fairgrounds. In the midst of traffic in both directions, he was struck by

a car and died right on the spot, immediately.

One 16-year-old girl, White, alive today; one 14-year-old boy, African American, dead.

This is his picture, Andrew Joseph III. This is what this boy looked like. He was a good student, quite an athlete, had a wonderful future ahead of him. But not being White, his parents didn't get a call that night to say to come pick him up.

I submit to you, this is not just one person's tragedy. It is not just the tragedy of these parents standing at his gravesite. It is the tragedy of America. We persist in being a country of sometimes casual racism, racism that sometimes goes unnoticed.

If you say a bad word that begins with the letter N and there happens to be a recording device nearby, you will certainly be scolded and to some degree held accountable, that much is true. But institutionalized racism, racial profiling, redlining is not treated the same way because it is just too hard. It is much like the concept that, if we close our eyes to it, it will somehow disappear. A 1-year-old, maybe a 2-year-old might think that way, but a country of 330 million, why do we ever think that way?

Now, I wish I could tell you that the story somehow had a happy ending. It doesn't. This kind of institutionalized racism goes on today. I asked the FBI to investigate whether there is racial profiling by the police force in Tampa. They are thinking about it. I don't know if they are going to say yes or they are going to say no. I can't tell for sure. That is their decision, not mine.

I remember when I was a boy, a great man said he hoped to see a day in America where his four children were judged not by the color of their skin but by their character. I submit to you, this boy was judged by the color of his skin, and he is not the only one.

We live in an America today, a country where 29 percent of White adults have college degrees; 18 percent of African Americans have college degrees. If Andrew Joseph III had lived, then his chance of getting a college degree would have been stunted, perhaps even forbidden, by the color of his skin.

Now, if he had lived, whether or not he had gone to college, he would have grown up in a country where African Americans like him have an average household income of $37,000. Whites have an average income of $57,000. The color of his skin, you could say, if he lived, would have cost him $20,000 a year. That is our new poll tax, $20,000 a year.

If he had managed to get across that highway—I imagine him being picked up safely by his father that night, whom you see here on my right—then, as an African American male, his life expectancy would have been 73 years. The life expectancy of White males in this country, including me, is 78 years. Now, it is a great tragedy—a great, great tragedy—that we stole 50 years of life from this one boy, but how much greater tragedy is it that we steal 5 years of life from 40 million?

We are in danger at this point of becoming a society that is not colorblind, not blind to color, but, rather, a country that is blind to racism. There is an easy way to end this problem. It is called doing something about it. It is called pulling ourselves together in the same way that we began to do in the 1960s: acknowledging these differences, and then remedying them.

I well recall that in the current Presidential election, the former Governor of my State, Jeb Bush, spent $125 million on his campaign and got four votes—four votes, convention votes. But I remember that it never came up that Jeb Bush wiped out, destroyed, eliminated, blew up affirmative action in my State of Florida—and now it is gone.

So the question before us is, writ small: How do we acknowledge that Black lives matter? How do we acknowledge that a terrible tragedy took place here and robbed this good young man of his life? And, writ large, what do we finally do—finally, finally, finally—50 years after the civil rights movement began, to end inequality in this country, end it?

It starts with justice, and it ends with equality. Not just the pablum of equality of opportunity, that buzz phrase that we use in order to solve our consciences, but, rather, the equality of results: an America where an African American boy is just as likely to go to college as a White boy; an America where an African American is just as likely to earn as much money as a White, and, for God's sake, an African American can live as long as a White man does.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 28 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, April 20, 2016, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

5083. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a determination regarding countries of particular concern for having engaged in or tolerated particularly severe violations of religious freedom, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 6442(c)(5); Public Law 105-292, Sec. 402 (as amended by Public Law 106-55, Sec. 2(a)); (113 Stat. 405); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5084. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the Central African Republic that was declared in Executive Order 13667 of May 12, 2014, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); Public Law 94-412, Sec. 401(c); (90 Stat. 1257) and 50 U.S.C. 1703(c); Public Law 95-223, Sec 204(c); (91 Stat. 1627); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5085. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Syria that was declared in Executive Order 13338 of May 11, 2004, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); Public Law 94-412, Sec. 401(c); (90 Stat. 1257) and 50 U.S.C. 1703(c); Public Law 95-223, Sec 204(c); (91 Stat. 1627); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5086. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser, Office of Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report concerning international agreements other than treaties entered into by the United States to be transmitted to the Congress within the sixty-day period specified in the Case-Zablocki Act, pursuant to 1 U.S.C. 112b(d)(1); Public Law 92-403, Sec. 1; (86 Stat. 619); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5087. A letter from the Director, International Cooperation, Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's intent to sign a Project Arrangement to the Memorandum of Understanding Between the Department of Defense of the United States of America and the Secretary of State for Defense of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Transmittal No. 07-17, pursuant to Executive Order 13637 and Sec. 27(f) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5088. A letter from the Director, International Cooperation, Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's intent to sign a Project Arrangement to the Memorandum of Understanding Between the Department of Defense of the United States of America and the Secretary of State for Defense of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Transmittal No. 06-16, pursuant to Executive Order 13637, and Sec. 24(f) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5089. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting a notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer and Acceptance to France, Transmittal No. 16-22, pursuant to Sec. 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5090. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Transportation, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5091. A letter from the Director, Equal Employment Opportunity Compliance and Operations Division, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5092. A letter from the Director, National Science Foundation, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5093. A letter from the Auditor, Office of the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting a report entitled ''District of Columbia Agencies' Compliance with Fiscal Year 2015 Small Business Enterprise Expenditure Goals''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5094. A letter from the Chairman, U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, transmitting the FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, Sec. 302; (116 Stat. 575); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

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. HENSARLING: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 414. A bill to amend the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act to repeal certain additional disclosure requirements, and for other purposes (Rept. 114–504). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HENSARLING: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 1975. A bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to require the Securities Exchange Commission to refund or credit excess payments made to the Commission (Rept. 114–505). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HENSARLING: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 2357. A bill to direct the Securities and Exchange Commission to revise Form 5–3 so as to add listing and registration of a class of common equity securities on a national securities exchange as an additional basis for satisfying the requirements of General Instruction I.B.1. of such form and to remove such listing and registration as a requirement of General Instruction I.B.6. of such form (Rept. 114–506). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HENSARLING: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 3557. A bill to amend the Financial Stability Act of 2010 to require the Financial Stability Oversight Council to hold open meetings and comply with the requirements of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, to provide additional improvements to the Council, and for other purposes (Rept. 114–507). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HENSARLING: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 3868. A bill to amend the Investment Company Act of 1940 to remove certain restrictions on the ability of business development companies to own securities of investment advisers and certain financial companies, to change certain requirements relating to the capital structure of business development companies, to direct the Securities and Exchange Commission to revise certain rules relating to business development companies, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–508). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HENSARLING: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 4498. A bill to clarify the definition of general solicitation under Federal securities law (Rept. 114–509). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. CHABOT: Committee on Small Business. H.R. 1481. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to strengthen the small business industrial base, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–510). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. ROYCE:

H.R. 4992. A bill to codify regulations relating to transfers of funds involving Iran, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. HULTGREN (for himself, Mr. BARR, and Mrs. LOVE):

H.R. 4993. A bill to require the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct a study regarding the privacy of information collected under the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act of 1975, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. HASTINGS (for himself, Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. DEUTCH, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. HONDA, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. JONES, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. ROONEY of Florida, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SABLAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Mr. SERRANO):

H.R. 4994. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to exempt reimbursements of certain medical expenses and other payments related to accident, theft, loss, or casualty loss from determinations of annual income with respect to pensions for veterans and surviving spouses and children of veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. ROSKAM (for himself, Mr. POMPEO, and Mr. ZELDIN):

H.R. 4995. A bill to prohibit the facilitation of certain financial transactions involving the Government of Iran or Iranian persons and to impose sanctions with respect to the facilitation of those transactions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee (for himself, Mr. BOUSTANY, and Mrs. WAGNER):

H.J. Res. 88. A joint resolution disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to the definition of the term ''Fiduciary''; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LOEBSACK (for himself, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. TONKO, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. LEE, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

H. Res. 691. A resolution expressing support for designation of the week of April 18, 2016, through April 22, 2016, as ''National Specialized Instructional Support Personnel Awareness Week''; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. PALLONE:

H. Res. 692. A resolution honoring the 250th anniversary of the founding of Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. YOHO (for himself and Mr. WEBER of Texas):

H. Res. 693. A resolution amending the Rules of the House of Representatives to establish the Permanent Select Committee on Oversight of the Executive Branch; to the Committee on Rules.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII, memorials were presented and referred as follows:

199. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Idaho, relative to Senate Joint Memorial No. 105, urging Congress to pass legislation that would direct USPS to restructure their budget priorities, rethink their administrative model, make appropriate budget cuts if necessary, focus on customer service and acceptable delivery times, and reopen shuttered mail processing plants throughout the United States; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

200. Also, a memorial of the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, relative to Senate Resolution No. 261, urging the Congress of the United States to modernize the Federal cap on the locally set Passenger Facility Charges user fee by setting it at $8.50 and adjusting it periodically to offset the impacts of inflation; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

201. Also, a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Idaho, relative to Senate Joint Memorial No. 104, requesting that Congress ensure the continued appropriation of funds in the fiscal year 2017 budget to significantly enhance aquatic invasive species prevention efforts and to implement the intent of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act; jointly to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure and Natural Resources.

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. ROYCE:

H.R. 4992.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. HULTGREN:

H.R. 4993.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. HASTINGS:

H.R. 4994.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 14:

The Congress shall have Power to make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces

By Mr. ROSKAM:

H.R. 4995.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3: ''The Congress shall have the power . . . to regulate commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian Tribes.''

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: ''The Congress shall have the Power . . . to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United

States, or in any Department of Officer thereof.''

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.J. Res. 88.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 335: Mr. FORTENBERRY and Ms. DUCKWORTH.
H.R. 446: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 499: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 546: Mr. WITTMAN and Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 605: Mr. COLLINS of New York.
H.R. 664: Mrs. CAPPS.
H.R. 672: Mr. HUELSKAMP.
H.R. 711: Mr. POCAN, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mrs. HARTZLER, and Mr. GIBSON.
H.R. 748: Ms. MCSALLY.
H.R. 759: Mr. MESSER.
H.R. 923: Mr. HUDSON and Mr. YOUNG of Indiana.
H.R. 1095: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H.R. 1144: Mr. POSEY.
H.R. 1150: Mr. COOK and Mr. DONOVAN.
H.R. 1220: Ms. TITUS.
H.R. 1221: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 1312: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, and Mr. CONYERS
H.R. 1333: Mr. MESSER.
H.R. 1391: Mr. MOULTON.
H.R. 1427: Mr. WITTMAN and Mr. KNIGHT.
H.R. 1439: Mr. MOULTON.
H.R. 1516: Mr. HUFFMAN.
H.R. 1538: Mr. CONNOLLY.
H.R. 1550: Mr. MOULTON.
H.R. 1559: Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. STEWART, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. CLAWSON of Florida, and Mr. PALAZZO.
H.R. 1586: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 1594: Mr. MCCAUL.
H.R. 1603: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.
H.R. 1608: Mr. NUGENT.
H.R. 1625: Mr. MOULTON.
H.R. 1631: Mr. COLLINS of New York.
H.R. 1643: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 1706: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 1707: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.
H.R. 1763: Ms. DEGETTE.
H.R. 1859: Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 2170: Mrs. DINGELL.
H.R. 2290: Mr. RATCLIFFE.
H.R. 2293: Ms. CASTOR of Florida.
H.R. 2350: Ms. EDWARDS.
H.R. 2434: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 2450: Ms. DUCKWORTH.
H.R. 2460: Mr. SMITH of Washington.
H.R. 2515: Mr. WALZ, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. NADLER, and Mr. MCDERMOTT.
H.R. 2633: Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 2726: Ms. TITUS, Mr. NEAL, Mr. YOHO, Mr. FORBES, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, and Mr. GUTHRIE.
H.R. 2739: Mr. GIBSON, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 2740: Mr. HANNA.
H.R. 2775: Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 2817: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.
H.R. 2901: Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. MOOLENAAR, and Ms. Moore.
H.R. 2903: Mr. YOUNG of Indiana.
H.R. 2948: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri and Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 2963: Mr. CROWLEY.
H.R. 2980: Mr. ROUZER.
H.R. 2992: Mr. RANGEL, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. COOPER, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. LOBIONDO, and Mr. KING of New York.
H.R. 2993: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H.R. 3012: Ms. MCSALLY.
H.R. 3222: Mr. ROSS and Mr. GOHMERT.
H.R. 3283: Mr. MULVANEY.
H.R. 3308: Mr. AGUILAR, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mr. PETERSON.
H.R. 3323: Mr. ROGERS of Alabama and Mr. ASHFORD.
H.R. 3355: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY and Ms. DELAURO.
H.R. 3514: Ms. GABBARD, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. QUIGLEY, and Mr. Nolan.
H.R. 3520: Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.
H.R. 3706: Mrs. LOVE, Ms. PINGREE, and Ms. KUSTER.
H.R. 3713: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 3722: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. MEADOWS, and Mr. STIVERS.
H.R. 3870: Mr. GALLEGO, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, and Mr. JOLLY.
H.R. 3880: Mr. SCALISE.
H.R. 3913: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 3924: Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois.
H.R. 3953: Mr. CLAWSON of Florida.
H.R. 3974: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
H.R. 3981: Mr. LEWIS.
H.R. 3989: Mr. COOK, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. HANNA, Mr. BUCSHON, and Mr. WEBSTER of Florida.
H.R. 3990: Mrs. DINGELL and Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 4059: Mr. HUDSON.
H.R. 4116: Mr. DUFFY and Mr. SCHWEIKERT.
H.R. 4165: Ms. DELBENE.
H.R. 4194: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 4212: Ms. CLARKE of New York and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 4223: Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 4235: Mrs. LAWRENCE, Ms. EDWARDS, and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.
H.R. 4352: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 4365: Mr. NUGENT.
H.R. 4400: Mr. SHERMAN.
H.R. 4430: Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H.R. 4442: Mr. GARAMENDI and Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia.
H.R. 4469: Mr. MARCHANT.
H.R. 4481: Mr. DENT.
H.R. 4499: Mr. BERA.
H.R. 4500: Mr. BOST, Mr. BYRNE, and Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 4511: Mr. GOODLATTE.
H.R. 4519: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 4539: Mr. CROWLEY.
H.R. 4553: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.
H.R. 4559: Mr. GRIFFITH.
H.R. 4599: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 4611: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 4613: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4625: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.
H.R. 4626: Ms. ESTY, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. BOUSTANY, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, and Mr. BISHOP of Utah.
H.R. 4633: Miss RICE of New York.
H.R. 4640: Mr. MASSIE, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, and Ms. DELAURO.
H.R. 4653: Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. TAKANO, and Mr. DELANEY.
H.R. 4662: Mr. RUSH and Mr. COLLINS of New York.
H.R. 4667: Mr. GIBSON and Ms. MOORE.
H.R. 4680: Mr. SMITH of Texas.
H.R. 4701: Mr. FATTAH, Mr. ISRAEL, and Miss RICE of New York.
H.R. 4715: Mr. WALDEN.
H.R. 4720: Mr. HUDSON.
H.R. 4730: Mr. HENSARLING and Mr. RATCLIFFE.
H.R. 4754: Mr. RANGEL and Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois.
H.R. 4764: Mr. JOYCE.
H.R. 4773: Mr. HUDSON, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. DESJARLAIS, and Mr. MULLIN.
H.R. 4779: Mr. CONNOLLY.
H.R. 4792: Mr. HUFFMAN.
H.R. 4794: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania and Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
H.R. 4795: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania and Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
H.R. 4817: Ms. NORTON, Mr. NADLER, and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.
H.R. 4828: Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. MOOLENAAR, and Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
H.R. 4843: Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. ROKITA, and Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.
H.R. 4848: Mr. MARCHANT.
H.R. 4869: Mr. DOLD.
H.R. 4875: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania and Mr. FATTAH.
H.R. 4897: Mr. TAKANO and Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 4904: Mr. RENACCI and Mr. MCKINLEY.
H.R. 4905: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 4919: Mr. HIGGINS and Mr. BLUM.
H.R. 4925: Mr. KING of New York and Mr. COFFMAN.
H.R. 4932: Mr. FARR.
H.R. 4939: Mr. SHERMAN.
H.R. 4942: Mr. WILLIAMS and Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 4956: Mr. MESSER.
H.R. 4957: Ms. BROWN of Florida.
H.R. 4969: Mr. JOYCE.
H.R. 4978: Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.
H.R. 4980: Mr. PALMER, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, and Mr. GRAVES of Georgia.
H.R. 4991: Mr. JONES, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. BISHOP of Utah.
H. Con. Res. 89: Mr. POSEY, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mrs. NOEM, and Mr. HOLDING.
H. Res. 28: Mr. JEFFRIES.
H. Res. 126: Mr. DEFAZIO.
H. Res. 207: Ms. ESTY and Mr. SENSENBRENNER.
H. Res. 413: Mr. TED LIEU of California.
H. Res. 494: Mr. PERRY and Mr. HUELSKAMP.
H. Res. 551: Mr. DESANTIS.
H. Res. 569: Mrs. BEATTY.
H. Res. 645: Mr. BUCSHON.
H. Res. 647: Ms. LOFGREN and Ms. STEFANIK.
H. Res. 661: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H. Res. 674: Mr. CHABOT, Mr. WENSTRUP, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, and Mrs. BEATTY.
H. Res. 681: Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. DESAULNIER, and Ms. CLARKE of New York.

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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 162 WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, APRIL 19, 2016 No. 60

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Spirit, the splendor of Your presence delights us. You have been our help in ages past. You are our hope for the years to come. Thank You for leading us beside the still waters of Your wisdom and through the green pastures of Your peace.

Empower our Senators for the tasks of this day. May they put right before expediency, others before self, principle before partisanship, and You before all else. Lord, keep our lawmakers under the canopy of Your care, sustaining them with Your grace amid all sunshine and shadow.

Lord, thank You that America still stands with lamp held aloft as a beacon of freedom for our world.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The majority leader is recognized.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, later this morning the Senate will have an opportunity to pass the FAA reauthorization and security bill, which aims to secure our airports and look out for American travelers.

This legislation received bipartisan support from the start, and it shows what is possible with a Senate that is back to work. Under the guidance of Senator THUNE, the Commerce Committee chairman, and Senator AYOTTE, the Aviation chair, this FAA reauthorization and security bill incorporated ideas from both sides as it moved through the legislative process. I also appreciate the work of Ranking Member NELSON and Ranking Member CANTWELL in working with them to advance it.

After 7 hearings and nearly 60 amendments accepted, the bill passed the Commerce Committee by a voice vote. On the floor, the bill managers continued listening and working with Senators from both sides to process more amendments that Members thought would make this good bill even stronger. For instance, they worked to include a number of additional security measures in an amendment that earned bipartisan support. That amendment aims to enhance inspections and vetting of airport workers to improve security for international flights arriving at U.S. airports and to help ensure perimeter security is reviewed.

In addition to these important security provisions, we accepted an amendment from Senator HEINRICH to shore up security in prescreening zones, which could be particularly vulnerable to attacks. We also adopted an amendment from Senators TOOMEY and CASEY that addresses the security of cockpit doors. I appreciate these and other Senators who put forth ideas to make the final product something both sides can support.

The FAA reauthorization and security bill will make important strides for our national security and for travelers. It does so without increasing fees or taxes on passengers. It does so without imposing heavyhanded regulations that can stifle consumers' choices. I look forward to supporting this legislation later this morning.

ENERGY POLICY MODERNIZATION BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, moving forward, the Republican-led Senate will have another opportunity to pass bipartisan legislation—legislation aimed at modernizing America's energy policies. The Energy Policy Modernization Act is the result of more than a year's worth of work by our Energy and Natural Resources Committee chair Senator MURKOWSKI, and ranking member Senator CANTWELL. These Senators know it has been nearly a decade since the Senate considered major energy legislation, so they worked to do something about it. They also know that good policy results from good process, as this bill certainly demonstrates. It has meant working through countless listening sessions and oversight hearings; it has meant working through numerous amendment votes and debate hours; it has meant working to move this bipartisan Energy bill to final passage.

The Energy Policy Modernization Act aims to bring our energy policies in line with the demands of today and to position us to benefit from the energy opportunities of tomorrow. Here is how it can help achieve that goal: It expands domestic supply and improves efficiency. It addresses aging infrastructure and enhances safeguards. It promotes accountability and cuts through needless redtape. This broad, bipartisan bill does all these things. It builds on technological progress in order to strengthen and sustain America's energy advances. It protects our environment at the same time. It does all of this without raising taxes or adding a dime to the deficit.

Here is what that means for our country: It will help Americans save energy. It will help Americans produce more energy. It will help Americans pay less for energy. And, like the airport security legislation I mentioned earlier, the Energy Policy Modernization Act will help keep Americans safe.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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It includes provisions to bolster our national security by strengthening our cyber security defense mechanisms.

This legislation will make significant strides for American energy policies, and it wouldn't have been possible without the bill managers' leadership and dedication. So I want to thank them again for their diligence in advancing this critical legislation closer to passage.

TRIBUTE TO POLICE CHIEF RICK McCUBBIN

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I would like to say a few words about my good friend Police Chief Rick McCubbin of the Bardstown Police Department. We learned yesterday that he will be retiring from service after 5 years as chief and nearly 30 years in law enforcement.

Chief McCubbin led his officers through some of the most troubling times in the police department's history. He did so with rigor and resolve, with grit and with grace.

Nearly 3 years ago, the Bardstown Police Department took a blow to its very core with the tragic assassination of Officer Jason Ellis, who was killed in an ambush while driving home in uniform and in a marked vehicle. Authorities have strong reason to believe the killing was retaliation from drug traffickers against a police department that was making significant progress in rooting out trafficking and making drug arrests.

Chief McCubbin was the leader of that effort to stamp out drug crime. He spoke eloquently on behalf of the whole department about the loss of their brother Jason, who will never be forgotten. I know that while the case remains unsolved today, he has led the effort to see Officer Ellis's killers brought to justice.

Chief McCubbin continued the fight against drug trafficking by seeing to it that Bardstown's surrounding Nelson County earned inclusion in the Appalachia High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area program, which we call HIDTA, back in 2014. HIDTA is not just another government acronym but a model that works. It couples Federal law enforcement with State and local task forces and the supplies, training, and technology they need. By getting Nelson County included in the HIDTA program, Chief McCubbin brought a powerful force multiplier to his department's own efforts to fight drug trafficking and keep the citizens of Bardstown safe.

It has been an honor to work with Chief Rick McCubbin over the years. He received the honor of Kentucky's Police Chief of the Year in 2015, and I know the people of Bardstown and Nelson County certainly appreciate his diligence and determination to fight crime and to keep them safe. I thank him for his service to Bardstown, to Kentucky, and to the Nation.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

ENERGY BILL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I appreciate the Republican leader talking positively about the Energy bill, which we called the energy efficiency bill in the last two Congresses, when we tried so hard under the direction of Senator SHAHEEN from New Hampshire to get this done. We tried so very hard. We had many runs at it. There were promises from the Republicans; I don't need to mention names, but they know who they are: Let's get back on this bill. We will get it done. We have only three amendments. We have only two amendments. We did that time after time over 4 years. Every time, the obstruction would not go away, and we could not do the bill.

I am grateful that we have a bill now dealing with energy efficiency. The name has been changed, but it is the same bill. I hope that Senator SHAHEEN from New Hampshire has some degree of pride over what she started a long time ago. Her name is not on the legislation anymore, and I appreciate the junior Senator from Washington and the senior Senator from Alaska working hard to bring it to the floor today. We brought it to the point where we are today as a result of a very long struggle.

The Republican leader talks about the many years since we have had an Energy bill. The reason we didn't have one 4 years sooner is that they wouldn't let us. Gridlock, obstruction—the Republicans blocked Energy bills any chance they got. They insisted on offering amendments that weren't germane or relevant.

We are not acting the way they did. We want to get it done also. It is important for our country, and it is a positive step forward. I want to make sure there is a full understanding of the history behind this.

OKLAHOMA CITY BOMBING ANNIVERSARY AND NOMINATION OF MERRICK GARLAND

Mr. REID. Mr. President, 21 years ago today, in Oklahoma City at 9:02 a.m. Oklahoma City time, Timothy McVeigh detonated a bomb at the Federal building in Oklahoma City, killing 168 innocent people, and 19 of them were children who were there with their parents on business the family had. This was a work day, and Timothy McVeigh detonated that huge explosion. People could see the smoke from miles and miles away. It was the deadliest terrorist attack on American soil before 9/11.

I think we can all see—I know I can see in my mind's eye the images that were on television and the huge Federal building destroyed. It had been ripped in half. I recall, as I am sure people within the sound of my voice recall, the images of chaos: bloody, disoriented victims trying to determine if they were alive, if they had their arms, if they had their legs, if they had their mind, if they had their eyes. As soon as they got that straightened out, they started desperately trying to find and assist the injured.

This was a heart-wrenching day for our Nation. People watched the aftermath and wanted to help in any way they could.

One of those eager to help was a lawyer from the Department of Justice named Merrick Garland. His boss at the time was a well-known political figure, Deputy Attorney General Jamie Gorelick. She explained Garland's desire to go to Oklahoma City and help with the investigation. She said:

> Both of us had kids about the ages of the kids in the day care center [in Washington]. We were just sick to our stomachs. And Merrick said, ''I need to go.''

Merrick Garland went home that evening knowing that he would be gone for a while. He kissed his wife and his children, and he arrived in Oklahoma City less than 48 hours later.

At this time, Garland was a seasoned Federal prosecutor, having served as U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia prior to taking a senior role in the Department of Justice. Those who knew him recall how competent he was. Having done some criminal defense work in my past, I know how difficult it is for somebody trying to defend somebody when you come up against a prosecutor with the reputation of Garland. They have a way about them to make the case simple in the minds of a judge and jury, even though there could be a very complicated set of facts. Those who worked with him recall him as unwavering in his commitment to the law. He followed the law. He followed procedure. He was guided by an acute sense of fairness. The New York Times reported:

> Former colleagues also recalled that Mr. Garland insisted on doing the investigation by the book, like obtaining subpoenas even when phone and truck rental companies volunteered to simply hand over the evidence, to avoid any future trial problems. He also made sure there was a prosecutor responsible for keeping relatives and victims informed about the case as it developed.

In speech after speech, the senior Senator from Iowa has insisted that a nominee to the Supreme Court should be ''supreme,'' should be someone who—and I quote him—''adheres to the Constitution and the rule of law and decides cases based on wherever the text takes him or her.''

Merrick Garland is the person the senior Senator from Iowa described. With an entire nation wanting justice served immediately to those responsible for the bombing, Garland and his team refused to take shortcuts. They did it the right way. They did it the Garland way. They adhered to the law every step of the way.

So impressive was Mr. Garland throughout the investigation and prosecution, that Steven Jones, the attorney for Timothy McVeigh—listen to this. Here is what the attorney for McVeigh said about Merrick Garland.

Personally he's above reproach. He has integrity. He has the skills.

Merrick Garland was also devoted to the victims and their families. Claudia Denny was the mother of children in the building's daycare center. Her children were critically injured, but they survived. They are alive. This is what she said of Merrick Garland:

Early on we got invited to the U.S. attorney's office. They wanted all of our concerns, and I think Judge Garland set that up where we all got our voice heard.

The Oklahoma City prosecution ended with convictions and guilty pleas for all who were involved. To this day, Oklahomans still revere Merrick Garland for his good work. Frank Keating, the Governor of Oklahoma at the time of the attack, has been outspoken in his praise of Judge Garland. He told NPR recently:

People don't understand when they're eating a good dinner on Friday night, there is a chef in the kitchen that did it. And in the case of what we saw after April 19, there was a chef in the kitchen that did it, and it was Merrick Garland.

The junior Senator from Oklahoma recently praised Judge Garland saying, ''I do plan to meet with Merrick Garland in my office in the weeks ahead to say thank you for what he did for Oklahoma during the bombing trial.

But that is as far as Senator LANKFORD has said he will go. He has made it clear that he will do nothing to help Garland get a hearing or a vote.

Following his work in the Oklahoma City case, Merrick Garland continued to work on other notable criminal cases. He oversaw the prosecution of the Unabomber, Ted Kaczynski, this evil man who is now in prison. Garland ran the investigation on the Atlanta Olympics bombing. He then went on to serve with distinction on the DC Circuit Court of Appeals, where he now serves as the chief judge.

Supreme Court Justice John Roberts once said of Garland's judicial expertise: ''Anytime Judge Garland disagrees, you know you are in a difficult area.'' It is time for Republicans to allow the American people to see Merrick Garland themselves, not have me talking about him but see him for themselves. This is a super star. This is somebody who should be on the Court. Republicans should allow the American people to see this man for what the people of Oklahoma and litigants in the courtrooms have known for many years: This is a special man.

Last year, as part of the 20th anniversary of the Oklahoma City attack, Judge Garland and some of his fellow prosecutors were awarded the Reflections of Hope Award by the Oklahoma City National Memorial. The honor is awarded to those who exemplify the belief that ''hope can survive and blossom amidst the tragedy and chaos.''

That is the hope Merrick Garland brought to Oklahoma in the aftermath of that vicious day. We are reminded of Judge Garland's contributions in securing justice in Oklahoma City and wherever he has gone. He is a brilliant man. He is academically brilliant. He is a man who was not given anything on a silver platter. In my meeting with him, I asked him how he handled the situation at Harvard. It is an expensive place. He said: Well, among other things, I sold my comic book collection.

Now, that does not sound like much to most people. But those coins, for example, that my little brother—we are separated by 22 months—has been collecting since he was a little boy mean a lot to him. Most of them are not worth too much. Some of them are.

Merrick Garland collected comic books. One of my best friend's sons collects comic books. It is something they do. It meant a lot to him. He had to get rid of them to get through college. He has inspired those around him through his hard work and commitment and fairness always. That is why it is so disappointing that Republicans are denying this man the common decency of a hearing so the American people can see him.

Why not let Merrick Garland speak for himself at a hearing? Why not let him make his own case to the American people and their elected Senators? There is no excuse to delay his nomination any longer. Senate Republicans should give Merrick Garland the hearings and the vote he deserves. Republicans need to simply do their job.

BOKO HARAM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I want to say just a brief word on another subject. Last week marked another horrible anniversary, the 2-year anniversary since the terrorist group Boko Haram invaded a school in Nigeria and took away 300 little girls. They were girls. They were not young women. They were little girls.

The world watched as parents of the girls pleaded for help. People all over the world, including First Lady Michelle Obama, rallied behind the campaign ''Bring Back Our Girls.'' Despite the global outcry, most of these girls—the vast majority of these girls—are still missing 2 years later. But here is the horrible part about this—the shocking fate of some of these girls.

It has been a couple of years. They are older—teenagers. Boko Haram is weaponizing them, turning these little girls—they are now not so little—into suicide bombers. According to the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund, or UNICEF, in the 4 countries where Boko Haram operates, the number of children used in bombing attacks has sharply increased from 4 in 2014 to 44 last year. That record will be broken this year.

Nearly one out of every five bombers where Boko Haram is active is a child. Seventy-five percent of the child bombers are girls. As a father and grandfather of 19 children, I am sickened by what has happened to those schoolgirls. Although 2 years has passed since the abduction, the world must not forget the evil of this organization. We must be as resolved as ever to fight terrorism wherever it rears its ugly head. Whether it is ISIS or Boko Haram, we cannot stop. We must be vigilant.

Mr. President, the Chair announce the business that we are going to proceed with today.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Vermont.

OKLAHOMA CITY BOMBING ANNIVERSARY AND NOMINATION OF MERRICK GARLAND

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today we are going to remember the victims and families whose lives were forever changed by the bombing in Oklahoma City 21 years ago. This homegrown terrorist attack—this bombing shook our Nation to its core. In fact, it remains the worst act of homegrown terrorism our Nation has endured.

The destruction and the loss of life were overwhelming. This photograph I have never forgotten. The firefighter is carrying the limp and bloodied body of a toddler from the wreckage. Those of us who are parents and grandparents know the joy we have had in caring for children this age. You can only imagine the sadness of that firefighter. It symbolized the horror of the attack: 168 innocent lives perished that day; 19 of them were children.

The impact, of course, and the loss in the Oklahoma City community was enormous. Nearly everyone knew someone who had lost a friend or family member. The city's emergency services and their victims support resources were quickly overwhelmed. As the days went by and the needs mounted, it became clear that the existing State and Federal resources were simply insufficient to respond to such a massive attack.

So to respond to the victims' needs, I proposed, and Congress passed, the Victims of Terrorism Act of 1995. Among important matters, the legislation I wrote created an emergency reserve as part of the Crime Victims Fund to serve as an emergency resource in the wake of an act of terrorism or mass violence. Even though every one of us, Republicans and Democrats alike,

prayed there would never be such another act, we had, in my legislation, an emergency reserve, because without such a fund, State victim compensation and assistance programs are quickly overwhelmed. This new fund was critical to ensuring that additional resources got to the field quickly.

Over the last two decades, this fund has been instrumental in allowing the Federal government to immediately respond to the victims of other unspeakable acts of mass violence, including the 9/11 terrorist attack and more recently, the domestic terror attack in the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina.

Last month I met with the former Federal prosecutor who managed the investigation and the prosecutions of the Oklahoma City bombers. We talked about the prosecution. That former prosecutor was Chief Judge Merrick Garland. He was nominated to the Supreme Court last month. But before he was a judge and a nominee to serve on the highest Court in the land, he was a prosecutor and a senior official at the Justice Department. Those of us who have had the privilege of being prosecutors, none of us could ever think of facing what he did.

Immediately after hearing the news of the devastation in Oklahoma City, Merrick Garland turned to the Deputy Attorney General. He said, very simply: ''You need to send me there.'' The next day, Merrick Garland became the highest ranking Department of Justice official on the ground in Oklahoma City after the bombing. He helped to oversee every aspect of the criminal investigation and response. Years later, he still considers his work in Oklahoma City the most important in his life.

Chief Judge Garland's commitment to fairness during that difficult period and his work with the citizens of Oklahoma City were formative for him. I know from talking with him that it left a lasting impression on him, but it left especially a lasting impression on the people he served.

Last year, the Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum honored Merrick Garland with a Reflections of Hope Award for his work on behalf of victims. After his nomination to the Supreme Court last month, the Oklahoma museum's Executive Director said: ''We are so proud that Judge Garland, who kept the family members and survivors front and center during his work in Oklahoma City, has been nominated.''

We have also heard from a team of former prosecutors, law enforcement agents, and victims' advocates who worked directly with Chief Judge Garland in the aftermath of the Oklahoma City bombing. They have written to the leadership of the Senate and the Judiciary Committee to highlight Chief Judge Garland's work on this terrorism case. They strongly support his nomination to the Supreme Court. The law enforcement team writes of Chief Judge Garland:

> Twenty years ago, the nation could not find a better lawyer to manage the investigation and prosecution of what was then the worse crime ever committed on American soil. Today, our nation could not find a better judge, nor a more honorable man, to join its highest court.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the letter highlighting Chief Judge Garland's work on the Oklahoma City bombing.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

APRIL 19, 2016.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. HARRY REID,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. CHARLES E. GRASSLEY,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. PATRICK J. LEAHY,
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER MCCONNELL, MINORITY LEADER REID, CHAIRMAN GRASSLEY, AND RANKING MEMBER LEAHY: As former prosecutors, law enforcement agents and victim advocates who worked as a team with Merrick Garland, as well as state and local authorities, to secure justice for the thousands of victims of the Oklahoma City bombing, we write to offer our enthusiastic support for Chief Judge Garland to serve on the Supreme Court of the United States.

We are a diverse group: we live in different parts of the country and work in a variety of fields, we have no common political affiliation, and indeed some of us are occasionally adversaries in court. But despite those differences we are united today, as we were united two decades ago, in our respect and admiration for the integrity, brilliance, leadership, and judgment of Merrick Garland. Twenty years ago, the nation could not find a better lawyer to manage the investigation and prosecution of what was then the worst crime ever committed on American soil. Today, our nation could not find a better judge, nor a more honorable man, to join its highest court.

On April 19, 1995, while first responders were still searching for the injured and the dead in the ruins of the Alfred J. Murrah Federal Building, Merrick Garland worked with the folks on the ground to provide the best federal resources, personnel and counsel to assist with the investigation and prosecutions. He knew that the best thing he could do was to leave Washington and travel to Oklahoma City to ensure that the investigators, the prosecutors, the victims and the survivors had the full support of the Justice Department. He arrived to find the largest and most complex crime scene anyone in American law enforcement had ever encountered. He helped to ensure that the many different local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies worked together as a team, despite their sometimes differing ideas about how best to build a case. At the same time, he made sure the victims, the survivors and their families had the critical resources they needed to deal with the unspeakable losses they had suffered.

Once the two men responsible for the bombing had been identified and arrested, Judge Garland was careful to ensure that each was treated fairly and with dignity to ensure that no one could reasonably accuse the government of a rush to judgment. He meticulously oversaw every step of the prosecution's initial proceedings, building an overwhelming case and ensuring that no legal error would allow the bombers to escape responsibility for their atrocity. And with the victims' families and the nation desperate for information and justice, Judge Garland ensured that they would have both.

After the case was on a sound footing, Judge Garland returned to his critical responsibilities at the Justice Department, but maintained close contact with the rest of us who continued to work on the case. With his towering intellect, exceptionally sound judgment, and extraordinary decency, he provided the leadership and wise counsel that helped us face both novel legal issues in the courtroom and unprecedented challenges in supporting a community of victims that numbered in the thousands.

On a personal level, we all benefitted from having Judge Garland in our corner. For some of us, the bombing had ripped through our home town and killed and wounded neighbors and colleagues; for the rest of us who came to the task force from across the country, the case required many months away from friends and family. For all of us, working to secure justice for the victims and to reassure the nation that our judicial system could respond fairly but forcefully to such an act of domestic terrorism, the pressure to get it right was unyielding—and Judge Garland's support was critical. He was not just a supervisor; he was a mentor, a counselor, and a friend.

From the day of the Oklahoma City bombing until his judicial appointment at the start of the first of the trials, Merrick Garland provided our team with leadership, confidence, determination, and hope. If confirmed, he will bring to the Supreme Court the same humanity, talent, and judgment that we have seen in him for two decades. We unconditionally support his nomination and urge you to support his confirmation as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court.

Very truly yours,
Donna Bucella; Vicki Zemp Behenna; Sean Connelly; David Chipman; Aitan Goelman; Jamie Gorelick; Joseph Hartzler; Carolyn Hightower; Arlene Johnson; Wan Kim; Larry Mackey; Scott Mendeloff; James Orenstein; Patrick Ryan; Beth Wilkinson.

Mr. LEAHY. The American people need to know that it is this dedicated public servant who is now being denied a public hearing by Senate Republicans. No nominee to the Supreme Court has ever been treated the way Senate Republicans are treating Chief Judge Garland. Since public confirmation hearings began in 1916, the Senate has never denied a Supreme Court nominee a hearing and a vote. I say to my friends the Republicans, you have no good reason for your obstruction of Merrick Garland.

Americans by a 2-to-1 margin want Chief Judge Garland to have a public hearing in the Judiciary Committee. Based on more than four decades of that precedent, that hearing should take place in the Judiciary Committee next week. Instead, Senate Republicans continue to ignore the American people.

Neil Siegel, a law professor at Duke University, said: ''It does not matter constitutionally, nor as a matter of tradition, whether a nomination is made in an election year. Numerous

nominations have succeeded during election years. Without exaggeration, Senate Republicans have made up a distinction without a relevant constitutional difference.'' Even school children know that Presidents are elected to 4-year terms and they have to carry out their constitutional duties each and every year right up until noon of January 20 of their last year. It is no different for Senators. We can't just sit this year out because an election will be held in November. As Professor Siegel concludes, Senate Republicans ''are harming the court without a justification that passes the laugh test.''

Today, as we remember the victims, their families, and the entire Oklahoma City community, let's also remember the good the Senate has done when we have put aside destructive partisanship and come together to act for the good of the country. This body has done that time and again, under both Democratic and Republican leadership, as it has carried out its constitutional duty to consider nominees to the Supreme Court. I hope the Senate will carry out that duty for a public servant named Merrick Garland who has served this country so well.

INVESTING IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, on April 12, 2016, the Appropriations Subcommittee on State and Foreign Operations held a hearing on violent extremism and the role of U.S. foreign assistance. We heard testimony from four distinguished witnesses, including my good friend and partner in humanitarian work, Bono, the lead singer of U2 and cofounder of ONE. As I said at the hearing, there are millions of people who may never know Bono by name or have the privilege of listening to his music, but their lives are better because of the profound impact his advocacy has had on the world's efforts to combat poverty.

At the hearing, Bono testified about what he called the three extremes: extreme ideology, extreme poverty, and extreme climate. His testimony was powerful. It complemented the opinion piece he wrote that was published in the New York Times on the morning of the hearing in which he highlighted the importance of investing in international development in a way that empowers local populations, including refugees and other displaced persons.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a copy of Bono's article entitled ''Time to Think Bigger About the Refugee Crisis.''

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the New York Times, April 12, 2016]

BONO: TIME TO THINK BIGGER ABOUT THE REFUGEE CRISIS

(By Bono)

I've recently returned from the Middle East and East Africa, where I visited a number of refugee camps—car parks of humanity. I went as an activist and as a European. Because Europeans have come to realize—quite painfully in the past year or two—that the mass exodus from collapsed countries like Syria is not just a Middle Eastern or African problem, it's a European problem. It's an American one, too. It affects us all.

My countryman Peter Sutherland, a senior United Nations official for international migration, has made clear that we're living through the worst crisis of forced displacement since World War II. In 2010, some 10,000 people worldwide fled their homes every day, on average. Which sounds like a lot—until you consider that four years later, that number had quadrupled. And when people are driven out of their homes by violence, poverty and instability, they take themselves and their despair elsewhere. And ''elsewhere'' can be anywhere.

But with their despair some of them also have hope. It seems insane or naïve to speak of hope in this context, and I may be both of these things. But in most of the places where refugees live, hope has not left the building: hope to go home someday, hope to find work and a better life. I left Kenya, Jordan and Turkey feeling a little hopeful myself. For as hard as it is to truly imagine what life as a refugee is like, we have a chance to reimagine that reality—and reinvent our relationship with the people and countries consumed now by conflict, or hosting those who have fled it.

That needs to start, as it has for me, by parting with a couple of wrong ideas about the refugee crisis. One is that the Syrian refugees are concentrated in camps. They aren't. These arid encampments are so huge that it's hard to fathom that only a small percentage of those refugees actually live in one; in many places, a majority live in the communities of their host countries. In Jordan and Lebanon, for example, most refugees are in urban centers rather than in camps. This is a problem that knows no perimeter.

Another fallacy is that the crisis is temporary. I guess it depends on your definition of ''temporary,'' but I didn't meet many refugees, some of whom have been displaced for decades, who felt that they were just passing through. Some families have spent two generations—and some young people their entire lives—as refugees. They have been exiled by their home countries only to face a second exile in the countries that have accepted their presence but not their right to move or to work. You hear the term ''permanent temporary solution'' thrown around by officials, but not with the irony you'd think it deserves.

Those understandings should shape our response. The United States and other developed nations have a chance to act smarter, think bigger and move faster in addressing this crisis and preventing the next one. Having talked with refugees, and having talked to countless officials and representatives of civil society along the way, I see three areas where the world should act.

First, the refugees, and the countries where they're living, need more humanitarian support. You see this most vividly in a place like the Dadaab complex in Kenya, near the border of Somalia, a place patched together (or not) with sticks and plastic sheets. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is doing noble and exceedingly hard work. But it can't do everything it needs to do when it is chronically underfunded by the very governments that expect it to handle this global problem.

Second, we can help host countries see refugees not just as a burden, but as a benefit. The international community could be doing much more, through development assistance and trade deals, to encourage businesses and states hosting refugees to see the upside of people's hands being occupied and not idle (the World Bank and the Scriptures agree on this) The refugees want to work. They were shopkeepers, teachers and musicians at home, and want to be these things again, or maybe become new things—if they can get education, training and access to the labor market.

In other words, they need development. Development that invests in them and empowers them—that treats them not as passive recipients but as leaders and partners. The world tends to give humanitarian efforts and development efforts their own separate bureaucracies and unlisted phone numbers, as if they're wholly separate concerns. But to be effective they need to be better coordinated; we have to link the two and fund them both. Refugees living in camps need food and shelter right away, but they also need the long-term benefits of education, training, jobs and financial security.

Third, the world needs to shore up the development assistance it gives to those countries that have not collapsed but are racked by conflict, corruption and weak governance. These countries may yet spiral into anarchy. Lately some Western governments have been cutting overseas aid to spend money instead on asylum-seekers within their borders. But it is less expensive to invest in stability than to confront instability. Transparency, respect for rule of law, and a free and independent media are also crucial to the survival of countries on the periphery of chaos. Because chaos, as we know all too well, is contagious.

What we don't want and can't afford is to have important countries in the Sahel, the band of countries just south of the Sahara, going the same way as Syria. If Nigeria, a country many times larger than Syria, were to fracture as a result of groups like Boko Haram, we are going to wish we had been thinking bigger before the storm.

Actually, some people are thinking bigger. I keep hearing calls from a real gathering of forces—Africans and Europeans, army generals and World Bank and International Monetary Fund officials—to emulate that most genius of American ideas, the Marshall Plan. That plan delivered trade and development in service of security—in places where institutions were broken and hope had been lost. Well, hope is not lost in the Middle East and North Africa, not yet, not even where it's held together by string. But hope is getting impatient. We should be, too.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I see my distinguished colleague on the floor.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

MILITARY READINESS

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I have the honor to represent the tip of America's spear—Fort Bragg, NC. Fort Bragg is the largest military installation in the United States, and it is the home to the most decorated combat forces of the military, the All-American Division, the 82nd Airborne.

The 82nd is a subordinate command of the XVIII Airborne Corps, America's Global Response Force. Whenever a threat occurs, units of the XVIII Airborne can be wheels up and on top of any target in the world in just 48 hours.

In the 15 months that I have had the privilege to represent North Carolina

in the Senate, I have made the readiness of the XVIII Airborne one of my top priorities. In fact, you would think it would be everybody's top priority, but I have watched budget cutters in the Air Force slowly chip away at the ability of the commanders at Fort Bragg to adequately train their paratroopers at Pope Army Airfield.

This year, the Air Force began dismantling the one Air Force tactical unit at Pope—the 440th Airlift Wing—capable of providing daily and ad hoc support for Fort Bragg soldiers. I said at the time that the removal of the 440th created unreasonable risks to the readiness of critical airborne units. They must be prepared to respond to a range of contingencies in very short timeframes. I have pointed out repeatedly that the deactivation of the 440th comes at a time when the Nation is facing growing uncertainty and increasing threats abroad that could require a military response, and it is a response that only forces at Fort Bragg can fulfill.

Over the last 7 years, the 440th has provided the Army with unparalleled support, tailored training opportunities without the tyranny of distance that comes through logistical, bureaucratic, and operational delays by having aircraft stationed somewhere other than Pope Army Airfield.

The Air Force leadership stated that after any deactivation of the 440th, out-of-State aircraft would support all airlift requirements for Fort Bragg units at Pope. The Air Force asked me to suspend disbelief. They told me to accept that it is more cost-effective for units to fly from Little Rock, AK, or McChord Air Force Base in Washington State and support Fort Bragg in North Carolina rather than having planes stationed at Fort Bragg.

I did my best to ensure that the Air Force understood the Army's requirements, and I promised them that if they removed the 440th, I would be monitoring their progress and their ability to satisfy the Army's requirements for as long as I am in the Senate.

The first warning signs that the Air Force was in trouble came in December at the annual Operation Toy Drop. Operation Toy Drop is the world's largest combined airborne operation at Fort Bragg. The drop is actually a daytime, nontactical, airborne operation supervised by foreign military jumpmasters. They view it as a rare treat to participate so that they can get jump wings from a foreign country.

This year's operation was purposefully designed by the Air Force to prove to Congress—to prove to me—that they could support the training mission at Fort Bragg. To prove the point, the Air Force Reserve went so far as to reduce the 440th's role in the operation. However, when the Air Force planes could not get to Pope because of weather, mechanical, or other delays, the 440th had to step in and make up the deficit, as they have done so many times before.

This is the real world in action. Bad weather and mechanical problems happen. The Air Force knows this exercise happens every year. They know it is highly visible. They knew they were under a microscope. Still they couldn't meet the requirement. In fact, during Operation Toy Drop, the 440th provided for about 40 percent of the chutes and 43 percent of the lift for the entire operation.

Fort Bragg leadership has been clear to the Air Force in terms of their combat requirements, their training requirements at Fort Bragg. They have told the Air Force that they have to drop 10,000 paratroopers a month. Eight thousand drops a month is considered the bare minimum for the XVIII Airborne Corps. Sadly, the Air Force is not meeting those requirements. Only 6,100 paratroopers exited from Air Force planes in March. That is 1,300 fewer paratroopers dropped than in February, which is 77 percent of the 8,000 sustainable threshold and 61 percent of the Army's overall requirement. Where I went to high school, 61 percent was a D-minus, bordering on an F. They are failing.

The Air Force has missed the Army's minimum jump requirements every month this year. These numbers are illuminating and concerning because in the Southeast, this is the best flying weather. January, February, and March have the best flying weather in the Southeast. What is going to happen when the Southeast thunderstorms and tornado season kicks in? If the Air Force can't meet Fort Bragg's need when the skies are clear, how is it going to do when the storm clouds gather?

I hope the Air Force knows I have their back as a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee. But in this case, this is about fulfilling the Army's requirement. This is about me having the Army's back. This is about making sure the men and women who will be asked at a moment's notice to assemble on the Green Ramp at the Pope Army Airfield and go wherever they must go to defend freedom and save lives are at their highest state of readiness. But the performance to this point suggests that the Air Force is failing its customer service to the Army. No business in America would be able to dictate to the customer how and when they are going to get their product, but that is exactly what is happening with the Air Force's relationship with the Army—and they are failing.

I will ask Senator MCCAIN to inquire as to whether the Air Force expects to meet the needs of the Global Response Force. They haven't in this first quarter, and this is the first quarter that they were trying to transition to a Pope Army Airfield without the 440th. If they can't answer the question, then it is time for us to consider other options.

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. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ENERGY AND WATER APPROPRIATIONS BILL

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, when Republicans took the majority in the Senate last January, we were determined to get the Senate working again.

By 2014, the Democratic-controlled Senate had largely ground to a halt. Serious legislation had been replaced by political messaging, and the Democratic leadership refused to allow votes on amendments. In short, despite Democratic control of the Senate, Democrats and Republicans alike were shut out of the legislative process. Republicans were determined to change that.

Since we took control of the Senate in 2015, we have focused on taking up substantial legislation that addresses the challenges facing the country. We have made sure individual appropriations bills get written in committees with input from Senators of both parties, and we have opened the Senate floor to debate and amendment.

Why is that important? Because an open legislative process in the Senate means all Americans get represented. When legislation is written in the open using the committee process and Senators have a chance to highlight their constituents' concerns, the final bill is a lot more likely to reflect the American people's priorities.

One of our most basic responsibilities as Members of Congress is to pass appropriations bills. Appropriations bills give Senators and Congressmen a chance to take a look at where taxpayer dollars are being spent and how we can spend this money more efficiently and effectively. Unfortunately, too often Congress ends up skipping the appropriations process and rolling a number of the appropriations bills into one giant spending bill. That means we lose the opportunity to closely examine our spending priorities and make sure we are spending money wisely.

Since we took control of the Senate, Republicans have been determined to make sure Congress takes the appropriations process seriously. We have made sure individual appropriations bills are developed in committee, where Senators of both parties have the opportunity to help develop the bill and make sure their constituents' concerns are heard.

This week Congress is taking up the Energy and Water appropriations bill. This legislation funds a number of priorities: rural water projects, critical infrastructure projects, nuclear deterrence efforts, energy research, flood control, and environmental cleanup, to name a few. I am particularly pleased

that this bill funds important projects—like the Lewis & Clark Regional Water System—that will help provide communities with access to steady, reliable water sources.

I am also pleased that this bill invests in next-generation, high-energy physics research, including the Deep Underground Neutrino Experiment, which could revolutionize our understanding of some of the most fundamental elements of our universe. This funding demonstrates continued U.S. commitment to a project that will help train the next generation of scientists and engineers, retain and attract the best scientific minds to the United States, and garner additional investment from global partners. I am proud that South Dakota's Sanford Underground Research Facility will continue to play a leading role in this major international scientific effort.

The Energy and Water appropriations bill passed the Senate Appropriations Committee with the unanimous—unanimous—support of Democrats and Republicans with a 30-to-0 vote. I am hoping it will receive the same strong bipartisan support on the Senate floor. This bill will boost our Nation's energy security, making our economy more competitive, and promote energy innovation. It will help us produce more and pay less for energy.

This legislation is an important first step in our commitment to restore order to the appropriations process, and I look forward to consideration of additional appropriations bills on the Senate floor in the coming weeks.

RECOGNIZING THE RAPID CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT AND THE PENNINGTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I wish to take a few minutes to talk about the two ride-alongs I was privileged to take with Rapid City, SD, law enforcement officers at the end of March.

We live in a climate where police officers are often made to sound like criminals and criminals are often portrayed as victims. The result is, we forget about the real victims—the people who have suffered crimes or are forced to live in crime-ridden neighborhoods—and we forget about the work police officers do in making our communities places we can live.

Three weeks ago, I got to meet with law enforcement officers from the Rapid City Police Department and the Pennington County Sheriff's Office. After our meeting, I got to take a ride through Rapid Valley with Sheriff's Deputy Brandon Akley and a ride through Rapid City with Rapid City Police Officer Jim Hansen.

Not very long ago, some neighborhoods in Rapid City had their share of challenges. Law enforcement officers frequently responded to drug and alcohol calls, abuse calls, domestic violence, break-ins, and other violent crimes. Imagine what it is like to live in a neighborhood like that. Coming home after dark is dangerous. It may not be safe for your children to play in the yard. It is certainly not safe to send them to the playground. Your children constantly see things no child should see and hear things no child should have to hear. Your property isn't secure. Your car and your home are at risk all the time. There are no economic opportunities in your area because businesses don't want to locate in areas where it is not safe to do business. That is what life is like in some of these neighborhoods. In one instance in Rapid City, law enforcement officers responded to over 600 calls to one building over a period of a single year.

By partnering with residents in impacted neighborhoods, Rapid City law enforcement stepped in and conducted an aggressive, years-long campaign to rid this area of crime. Today, residents can let their children play outside without fear, and new economic opportunities are opening for residents as businesses move in. It is no exaggeration to say that what these police officers did changed the lives of countless Rapid City residents.

Every day, in every community in the United States, the men and women who make up our Nation's police forces and sheriff's departments put their lives on the line for the rest of us. They are first on the scene when someone is in danger, the first to come running when you call for help, and when evil threatens they step in.

I am grateful to the men and women of the Rapid City Police Department, the Pennington County Sheriff's Office, and to all the law enforcement officers keeping the peace in South Dakota and around the Nation. Because of their service, we can live in safety.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

OKLAHOMA CITY BOMBING ANNIVERSARY AND NOMINATION OF MERRICK GARLAND

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I come to the Senate floor to once again urge my Republican colleagues to do what they are elected to do: listen to their constituents and give Judge Garland the fair consideration he deserves.

As some of my colleagues have already noted, today marks 21 years since the Oklahoma City bombing, an attack that shocked the world and took 168 innocent lives. I had the honor of meeting with an individual last week who was not only involved in the immediate aftermath of this terrible attack but who went above and beyond to make sure justice was served on behalf of those who lost their lives.

Judge Merrick Garland, the President's nominee for the Supreme Court, was at the scene of the bombing within 2 days. With debris from the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building still smoldering in the streets, Judge Garland was helping first responders and working with local law enforcement.

As a top official in the Justice Department, he led a massive investigation of the bombing and supervised the prosecution of Timothy McVeigh. He did all of that, even if it meant more work and more time away from his family, with incredible delicacy and thoroughness. He called his work for the Justice Department following the Oklahoma City bombing the most important thing he has ever done in his life.

As we remember those who were lost on that day in 1995, and in light of last week being National Crime Victims' Rights Week, we remember how Judge Garland honored those victims with his dedicated service. Judge Garland not only did his job with a great deal of heart, working with families who had lost loved ones, but with the vigor to demand that justice be served. His fairness and diligence earned him praise from Members of both parties, from victims' families and law enforcement officers, and even from the lead lawyer defending McVeigh.

A person like that, driven by the desire to help people and serve the public, is someone who deserves fair consideration by all of us in the U.S. Senate. Unfortunately, that is not what is happening right now. We are 66 days into the Supreme Court vacancy, and so far Republican leaders are still refusing to do their jobs. They will not say they are opposed to Judge Garland. They are refusing to even live up to their constitutional responsibility and consider him. That kind of pure obstruction and partisanship is absolutely wrong. People across the country are not going to stand for that.

Last week I met with Judge Garland and talked through his background, his experiences, his philosophy, his judicial philosophy. What I found out—and it would be difficult for any right-minded person not to come to this conclusion after meeting with him—is that Judge Garland is highly passionate, he is highly respected, and highly qualified to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court.

I am very glad some Republicans have started meeting with him. That is a great first step, but it cannot be the last step. Families across this country deserve to hear from Judge Garland in a Judiciary Committee hearing, under oath, and in public, and then he should get a vote where every Senator will have the opportunity to do their job and weigh in.

If any Member doesn't think Judge Garland should serve on the highest Court in the land, they should feel free to vote against him, but give him a

hearing, give him a vote, and stop this partisanship and obstruction. Evaluating and confirming Supreme Court Justices is one of the most important roles we have in the United States, and it is this issue that actually pushed me to run for the Senate in the first place.

In 1991 I was a State Senator, a former school board member, and a mom. Similar to so many people across the country back then, I watched the Clarence Thomas confirmation hearings in frustration over how the nominee wasn't pushed on the issues that I and so many others thought were so important to the future of our country. I saw how a woman who came to talk about her experiences, Anita Hill, was treated by this Senate. I decided then and there to run for the U.S. Senate, to give Washington State families like mine a voice in this process.

I have had the opportunity to use that voice in the Senate and to make sure Washington State families had a seat at the table in Supreme Court nominations and confirmations over the years. I voted to support some of the candidates, including the Chief Justice nominated by a Republican President. I voted to oppose others, but I always thought it was important that a nominee got the consideration he or she deserved, and I always worked to make sure the people I represented got their questions answered as best as I could and that they could have a view into the process that should be above partisanship and politics.

If Republicans continue to play election-year politics and continue to refuse to do their jobs, my families in Washington State will not have a voice. Families across America will not have a voice. The tea party gridlock and dysfunction that has dominated too much of our work in Congress will have claimed another victory. That is unacceptable.

Once again, I am on the floor to call on my Republican colleagues to do your job; meet with Judge Garland, hold a hearing, and give him a vote. We owe that to our constituents. It is our constitutional responsibility, and we should get it done.

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. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, today, the 19th, marks the anniversary of one of the worst terrorist attacks ever to hit the United States. On April 19, 1995, at 9:02 a.m., a rented truck filled with fertilizer and diesel fuel exploded in front of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. The impact of the blast was devastating. One-third of the Federal Building was destroyed, and 168 men, women, and children lost their lives, with several hundred seriously wounded. At that time, it was the deadliest terror attack ever to take place on American soil.

The Oklahoma City bombing shocked America. In the days after April 19, Americans mourned the lives which were lost and called for those who committed this evil act to be brought swiftly to justice.

It was in this context that the U.S. Department of Justice sent one man to head this investigation and prosecution. His name is Merrick Garland. Merrick Garland was the Principal Associate Deputy Attorney General. He had volunteered to lead this investigation, telling his boss, Deputy Attorney General Jamie Gorelick, he had to do it.

Garland would stay in Oklahoma City for a long period of time. By all accounts, he worked around the clock, coordinating the efforts by law enforcement to gather evidence, building the case against Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols. Every step along the way, Merrick Garland was meticulous. He made sure no corners were cut in the investigation or the prosecution. There was so much at stake.

One of the roles Merrick Garland took most seriously was to be in touch with the survivors and the victims' families, keeping them informed, keeping them in the loop. He carried with him at all times a list of the names of the victims so he would never forget the historic importance of his assignment.

Merrick Garland would later call his work in Oklahoma City ''the most important thing I have ever done in my life.'' His work helped bring the perpetrators of this terrorist attack to justice and earned him the respect and gratitude of those he worked with and served. That is the definition of public service.

The record is clear that Merrick Garland has always done his job diligently and conscientiously. Throughout his decades in public service at the Justice Department and later on the Federal bench, Judge Garland has earned a reputation as a workhorse who leaves no task unfinished.

It is instructive to hear what his former law clerks say about him. Several dozen of them recently sent a letter to the Senate. Here is what they said about Judge Garland: ''Unrelenting work ethic.'' They said Judge Garland ''treated every matter before him with the same care and attention to detail, whether it affected the national interest or a single ordinary life.''

Judge Garland's devotion to his work is admired by many. This is a man who has received extraordinary praise because he did his job and did it well. It should come as no surprise, when President Barack Obama announced that Merrick Garland was his choice to be the nominee to fill the vacancy on the Supreme Court, he dwelled on this experience in Oklahoma City.

Unfortunately, Merrick Garland faces a historic blockade in the Senate. The Senate has never in its history denied a hearing to a Presidential nominee to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court. It has never ever happened before.

The death of Antonin Scalia, about 2 months ago, led to an almost immediate announcement by the Republican Senate leader, Senator MCCONNELL, that there would be no consideration, no hearing, and no vote for any nominee sent by President Barack Obama to this U.S. Senate. Senator MCCONNELL went further to say that he would not even meet with the nominee.

It has been more than a month since Judge Garland was nominated to the Supreme Court. It has been over 2 months now since Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia has passed. Why has the Republican majority leader decided to ignore the precedent of history? Why is he turning his back on our Constitution? That Constitution says explicitly, article II, section 2: The President of the United States shall appoint a nominee to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court.

Our Founding Fathers understood that you can play politics with vacancies, and they didn't want that to happen. So the President met his constitutional obligation but, sadly, this U.S. Senate has refused to meet its constitutional responsibility to advise and consent on that nominee. It is not automatic. There is no guarantee that any nominee sent by the President would be approved by the Senate, but it is our responsibility to ask the questions of that nominee.

People across the United States have a right to hear this nominee, Merrick Garland, under oath answer important questions about whether he is prepared to serve on the Supreme Court and, if he serves, whether he would bring integrity to that appointment.

We have extended that courtesy to every Presidential nominee to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court until this moment. The argument that is made on the other side of the aisle is that we have to go through an election—we have an election coming up—and let the American people decide, not the Senate. Let the American people decide, whether it will be a Democratic President or a Republican President.

What my friends on the other side of the aisle ignore is that when President Barack Obama was reelected, he was not elected to a 3-year term, he was elected to a 4-year term. He is the President of the United States this year. He has the power of that office this year not because I willed it—although I certainly did—but because by a plurality of 5 million votes the American people made that decision. Five million votes were cast for Barack Obama over Mitt Romney. The decision of the American people was that this President shall govern not for 3 years, not for 3 years and 2 months, but for 4 years.

A lot of people say: As a Democrat in the Senate, it is easy for you to say that Republicans should treat this Democratic President a little better. What if the shoe were on the other foot?

Well, we have a chance to take a look back and see exactly what happened when the roles were reversed. In 1988, during the last year of Republican President Ronald Reagan's term, we had a vacancy on the Supreme Court. He sent his nominee to the Senate, which was then controlled by the Democrats. Did we have an announcement from the Senate Democratic leadership that we will not consider any nominee sent by a Republican President in the last year of his term? Did we have an announcement by the Democratic leaders in the Senate that we won't even meet with the nominee? Exactly the opposite occurred. Anthony Kenney was given the opportunity to have a hearing, where he answered questions under oath, and had a vote which confirmed him on the Supreme Court. A Republican President, during the last year of his Presidency, filled a vacancy on the Supreme Court with the cooperation of a Democratic majority in the Senate.

The tables are turned now. We have a Democratic President with a Republican-controlled Senate, and they are ignoring the history and precedent of the Senate and they plan on ignoring this nominee. There is no basis in the Constitution for the position taken by the Senate Republicans. This is an unprecedented obstruction of a nomination to fill a key Supreme Court vacancy.

Yesterday I was across the street. It was the second time I have been honored to be included in a very small audience of about 250 people to listen to the oral arguments in a case before the Supreme Court on a critical decision that will affect the lives of millions of people in the United States. I looked up to the chairs on the Supreme Court, and obviously one was vacant. There are only eight Justices. If this Court on this case—or others—cannot resolve it with a majority and has a vote of 4 to 4 on a case, it invites confusion and chaos in one of the most critical branches of our government. It is confusion and chaos that can be avoided if the Senate Republicans simply do their constitutional duty: advise and consent.

Give Merrick Garland a hearing under oath so the American people can draw their own conclusions about whether this man is the right person for the Supreme Court, and then let's have a vote on the floor. In the past, even when the Senate Judiciary Committee rejected a Presidential nominee for the Supreme Court, the committee sent that nomination to the floor anyway for a vote so that the whole Senate could speak to the worthiness of that nominee. Merrick Garland deserves nothing less.

The Senate Republicans refusal to do their job under the Constitution has real-world consequences. Recently the solicitor general of Illinois, Carolyn Shapiro, came to the Capitol to talk to the Senators about how the vacancy on the Supreme Court is actually hurting States by leaving important legal questions unresolved.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that her speech be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

STATEMENT ON THE IMPORTANCE OF A NINE-MEMBER SUPREME COURT FOR STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

[Before the Senate Democratic Steering and Outreach Committee, April 6, 2016, Carolyn E. Shapiro, Solicitor General of Illinois, Office of the Illinois Attorney General]

Good morning. Thank you very much for the opportunity to talk with you about the importance of a fully functional Supreme Court to state and local governments.

My name is Carolyn Shapiro, and I am the Illinois Solicitor General. I am also a tenured faculty member at IIT Chicago-Kent College of Law where I founded the Institute on the Supreme Court of the United States and where my research and scholarship focuses largely on the Supreme Court as an institution.

State and local governments regularly rely on the Supreme Court to provide clarity and certainty in numerous areas of law, many of which do not involve the headline-grabbing, hot-button issues we hear about on the news.

But in some of these areas, the risk of an equally divided court is real, and a Supreme Court unable to provide clarity and certainty would have very real and harmful effects.

I could talk about a variety of different areas of law, but my focus here will be on the Fourth Amendment. The Fourth Amendment of course regulates what law enforcement can and cannot do in investigating crime and it protects the privacy interests of the citizenry. It is crucial for law enforcement to know what the rules are and it is crucial for the citizenry to have confidence that law enforcement is following the rules and doing so uniformly.

These things cannot happen without the Supreme Court being able to resolve some of the difficult and contested issues in this area of law.

In the past three years, the Supreme Court has decided at least eight Fourth Amendment cases by close votes, and in several of those cases, Justice Scalia was in a five-member majority. In other words, without nine justices, the court might well have been unable to resolve the issues presented in those cases, leading to ongoing uncertainty. And some of those cases, as often happens in the Fourth Amendment area, have created new areas of uncertainty that must be resolved—but that may require a nine-member court to do so.

I will briefly mention two such areas. In 2013, the Supreme Court decided Florida v. Jardines, in which Justice Scalia wrote the opinion on behalf of five justice majority. Jardines held that when police bring a drug dog onto the front porch of a single family home, that constitutes a search for purposes of the Fourth Amendment.

This holding has led to new questions. Earlier this year, the Illinois Supreme Court held that Jardines extends to a drug sniff outside an apartment door in the common area of a building. But in similar cases around the country, other courts have reached different conclusions. Not only can this lead to inconsistent law from state to state, but even within a jurisdiction. A search held constitutional in state court might be held unconstitutional in federal court in the same state. This kind of uncertainty is untenable.

A second issue involves the implications of the 2013 case of Missouri v. McNeely in which Justice Scalia joined a five-member majority to hold that the natural dissipation of alcohol in the blood does not in and of itself create exigent circumstances allowing the police to obtain a blood test without a warrant. This term the court is poised to hear a case, Birchfield v. North Dakota, about the implications of some of McNeely's reasoning for state statutes that criminalize the refusal to submit to a blood or breath test when pulled over for a DWI. Illinois does not have such a statute, but we do have a statute making refusal to submit to such a test grounds for the suspension of a license. And a case challenging that statute is apparently being held by the Supreme Court pending the result in Birchfield. So if the court is unable to resolve Birchfield because it is equally divided, or is unable to resolve our case, should the Court later decide to hear it, those statutes will remain under a constitutional cloud and neither law enforcement nor state legislatures will know the scope of their authority in this area.

There are of course other areas of law I could discuss, but the point I want to leave you with is that state and local governments, and the citizenry, depend on a functional court to provide clarity and certainty in areas of law that affect government officials and citizens on a daily basis.

Thank you.

Mr. DURBIN. As an example, Solicitor General Shapiro pointed out how right at this moment numerous States and Federal circuits are governed by different standards on important Fourth Amendment search and seizure issues. These cases are working their way through the courts, but only the Supreme Court can finally resolve the issues. But the Court may be unable to do that. A 4-to-4 Court with a tie will not resolve an issue. Unless the Senate Republicans do their job, the Supreme Court will be stuck with eight members for more than a year.

I have a trivia question. When was the last time the Senate left a vacancy on the Supreme Court for a year or more? During the Civil War. It took a war between the States for us to leave a vacancy that long in the Court—a vacancy which the Senate Republicans are continuing by this obstruction.

As we reflect on the anniversary of the Oklahoma City bombing, I hope my friends on the other side of the aisle will take a step back from politics. I hope they will acknowledge that Merrick Garland stepped up for this Nation, did the right thing, and proved he could do his job. Senate Republicans have no less responsibility. It is time for the Senate Republican majority to do its job.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

HOUSTON FLOODING

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, over this last weekend and through yesterday, large parts of central and southeast Texas experienced torrential

downpours. The Houston region in particular experienced so much rain, it led to widespread flooding. I know many people have seen that on TV, in news reports, or online.

Many will recall that last year over Memorial Day weekend, Harris County, which is where Houston is located, suffered from similar flooding. This year's rain seems to be even more widespread, with some areas receiving as much as 20 inches of rain in a relatively short period of time. Whole subdivisions were submerged, interstate highways were impassable, and power was knocked out, which affected more than 100,000 people at one point. Tragically, several people have died as a result of these floods.

Amidst this tragedy, Texans have been quick to help one another. Crews had performed more than 1,000 rescues as of yesterday afternoon, and even one TV reporter on location covering the story rushed to rescue an elderly man from a flooded underpass. The rescue is on YouTube. I recommend anybody who is interested to watch it. It is really quite a rescue.

This morning I spoke to County Judge Ed Emmett of Harris County, and I will continue to stay in close contact with him, as well as the chief of the Texas Department of Emergency Management, in the coming days.

The one thing I do know is that Texans are resilient. In particular, the people in the Houston region, where I happen to have been born, are used to storms that cause that kind of flooding. But the rebuilding effort will be long and one that will require support from officials at all levels.

Going forward, I will do everything I can to help mobilize Federal resources for the Houston area should the Governor determine a Federal disaster declaration is necessary. In the meantime, our thoughts and prayers are with the people of Houston and other affected areas in Texas, and we hope and pray for their safety and their fast recovery.

JUSTICE AGAINST SPONSORS OF TERRORISM ACT

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I will spend a few minutes talking about a piece of legislation that is bipartisan and deserves this Chamber's consideration.

Last year, around the anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, I reintroduced the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act, or JASTA. This bill makes minor adjustments to our laws to help Americans who are attacked on U.S. soil get justice from those who sponsored and facilitated that terrorist attack on U.S. soil.

When the Judiciary Committee considered this bill earlier this year, it was reported out without objection. I think the reasons for that are pretty clear. We should use every means available to prevent the funding of terrorism, and the victims of terrorism in our country should be able to seek justice from people who do fund that terrorist attack. We have to maintain our diligence to hold those who sponsor terrorism accountable, particularly on our own soil, and we must leverage all of our resources—or as many as possible—to shut off the funding sources for terrorists. Using civil liability to do so has been Federal policy for decades, and JASTA would strengthen that.

It is my hope that this legislation will serve as a defective deterrent and will make foreign governments think twice before sending money to terrorist groups who target our homeland. Our country confronts new and expanding terror networks that are focused on targeting our citizens, and we need to do everything we can to stop it, including passing this legislation.

JASTA is also important because it would help the victims of the 9/11 attacks achieve closure from that horrific tragedy.

I mentioned that this is a bipartisan bill, and I am glad to introduce it with my colleague CHUCK SCHUMER of New York. But unfortunately the President doesn't seem to share these bipartisan concerns about helping the victims of terrorism or deterring others from funding and facilitating it in the future. Unfortunately, the administration has worked to undercut progress of this legislation at every turn.

Yesterday the White House insisted that the President does not oppose JASTA on behalf of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia even though the administration has made that argument in private. In light of his upcoming trip there this week, it appears that the Obama administration is pulling out all the stops to keep this bill from moving forward before the President's visit to Riydah. I wish the President and his aides would spend as much time and energy working with us in a bipartisan manner as they have working against us trying to prevent victims of terrorism from receiving the justice they deserve.

I was glad to see the President abandon an argument that I always found strange, especially coming from him. He didn't seem to care that much about our relationship with Saudi Arabia when he ran through his misguided nuclear deal with Iran, running roughshod over serious concerns raised by the Kingdom. He didn't seem to care much about our relationship with Saudi Arabia when he contended that they should learn to ''share the neighborhood with its mortal enemy Iran.'' In a very real way, the President's opposition to this bill looked like it was asking the victims of 9/11 and their families to pay some of the political price for the President's mishandling of our relationship with Saudi Arabia.

Well, yesterday the White House claimed it opposed the bill because it undermined the principle of sovereign immunity. In the past, the President said U.S. citizens could sue foreign governments and the United States would get sued abroad. Now, sovereign immunity is an important principle to be sure, but the fact is, the White House is misrepresenting the law. We have had statutory exemptions to this immunity for years for business conduct, torts, and many things, including terrorism. We already had these exceptions in the law, and that has been the law for decades. The only real change is allowing victims of terrorist attacks on the homeland to sue even if the defendant is not designated by the State Department as a state sponsor of terrorism. That is right. All this would do would be to allow victims of terrorist attacks on our homeland to sue even if the sponsor of the terrorist activity was not a State Department designated state sponsor of terrorism. This is a narrow piece of legislation, and it would not upend traditional principles of sovereignty.

Yesterday a White House spokesman claimed that JASTA would lead to liability for U.S. humanitarian aid work. That is just false. I am confident that Senator SCHUMER and I can make that abundantly clear to anybody who shares that misconception.

The President's attempt so far to derail this legislation that would help the victims of 9/11 pursue justice under the law is completely unacceptable. Unfortunately, this shouldn't be a surprise. The President has steadfastly refused to declassify and release 28 pages of the ''9/11 Commission Report'' that pertain to allegations of Saudi Arabia's support for the 9/11 terrorists. According to some news reports, President Obama has vowed several times to release this information, but he hasn't followed through on that promise yet. His actions to shield the Saudi Government instead of advocating on behalf of his own citizens rings much louder than his words. That doesn't sound to me like the most transparent administration in American history, which is what the President promised the Nation at his inauguration.

The good news is that there is bipartisan support in this Chamber for those who will stand up for these victims of the 9/11 terrorist attacks and hold the people responsible accountable. I look forward to continuing to work with our colleagues to get this critical legislation passed.

The President has his prerogatives under the Constitution. If he wants to veto legislation passed by the Congress on a strong bipartisan vote, he can do that, but 67 Senators and two-thirds of the House can override a Presidential veto. That is in the Constitution too. So the President needs to step up, instead of trying to kill this legislation by private conversations in the Senate. The Senate needs to do its work: Pass this bipartisan legislation, help the victims of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, and hold those who fund and facilitate terrorist attacks responsible. If the President wants to get in the way, he can veto the legislation, and we can override that veto. That is the way the Constitution works.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

CHILD NICOTINE ADDICTION

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I rise today to call attention to a dangerous complacency that threatens the health and the lives of our children, and I rise today to urge our administration to take long overdue action to protect our children.

Two years ago this month, the Food and Drug Administration, or the FDA, released a proposed tobacco deeming rule, which is a blueprint for a regulatory framework for e-cigarettes and other tobacco products. Administration officials believed and conveyed that the final rule would be out by the end of the summer 2015. Well, the summer of 2015 is now history, and soon it will be the summer of 2016, and we wait. We have been waiting a very long time.

In total, it has been 7 years since the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act was passed by the Senate and the House and signed by President Obama. This legislation gave the Food and Drug Administration the authority to regulate tobacco products.

This legislation was sponsored by Senator Ted Kennedy. It was passed in the final months of his life. It was a tribute to his long advocacy for the regulatory control of tobacco—a dangerous, destructive drug widespread throughout America. The passage was part of his legacy. But now we are failing that legacy, and we are failing millions of our children.

When the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act was passed into law, it was heralded as a major victory, giving the FDA real power to crack down on the marketing of tobacco products to our children. After a year, there is no action—2 years, no action. That took us to 2011—3 years, no action; 4 years, no action; 5 years, no action; 6 years, no action; 7 years, no action. Over the course of those 7 years, a lot more Americans have become addicted to nicotine products.

In 7 years, the industry has had time to develop new innovative products to entrap our youth, and they have utilized that time well. How much longer will this inaction continue while our children are addicted to products newly invented and aimed directly at them? Each passing month, thousands of children become addicted to these new products. Each passing month, the nicotine addiction industry becomes more deeply entrenched and determined to prevent the regulation that we authorized back in 2009. It has been said that while Nero fiddled, Rome burned. In this situation, while the administration has failed to act, millions of children have become addicted to nicotine, with profound consequences for their health.

Once this rule is final, the FDA will be able to regulate new tobacco products in important ways, including imposing minimum age standards, limits on advertising, health warnings on the products, child-proof packaging, and requiring the registration of tobacco product manufacturers by the FDA and FDA approval of some novel products.

It is time to get this done because lives are at stake. We all are familiar with the cycle: Tobacco use leads to tobacco addiction. Tobacco addiction leads to disease. Disease leads to suffering and often to death. In fact, tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death in the United States—the leading cause. It imposes a terrible toll on health and lives and dollars. It affects families and businesses and government.

So the best way to improve the health of Americans 10, 20, 30 years into the future or 40 years down the line is to stop the process by which this industry is targeting our youth. Here is what they know. They know that after the age of 21, very few people become addicted to nicotine. It is a product that people try in their youth, and with repeated use they become addicted to it and then continue, normally for years and years. That makes for a very good customer of the tobacco industry, a very good customer of the nicotine industry, and very bad consequences for the health of our children, who become our young adults, who become our middle-aged adults—very bad costs for health at each stage.

According to a Surgeon General's report released in March 2012, tobacco use among youth is a ''pediatric epidemic.'' But the thing is that our children just aren't starting to smoke because of happenstance. No, they are aggressively targeted by the tobacco industry. Big Tobacco is working day and night to design products to appeal to kids, to get them hooked on this deadly habit so that they will be reliable consumers or reliable customers.

In fact, the industry calls them ''replacement smokers.'' The products we supplied before have resulted in a whole lot of our customers dying. So we need replacement smokers; we need replacement consumers.

This clearly is a product with great harm associated with it. There are cigars, cigarillos, tobacco candy, snus, and e-cigarettes, and the list goes on and on. Products cost often as little as 99 cents and are sold in colorful or cool packaging, and nowhere is that more true than in the burgeoning e-cigarette industry.

This chart shows very readily the strategy of using candy flavors and fruit flavors targeted at kids. They have everything from cherry and watermelon, and the list continues with all kinds of—check this out—gummy bear flavors. When you advertise e-cigarette flavors like gummy bears, you are not targeting people over 21. You are targeting our children. You are targeting them with bubble gum flavor and wild cherry flavor and candy apple flavor. These flavors are not for adults. They mask the taste of the product and make it more tempting, more exciting for our young people.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to use a prop.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MERKLEY. I thank the Chair.

This is an actual container, like these containers that are shown on the poster. This is called JJuice. They call it juice. They put juice in the title, as if to imply it is healthy. This is liquid nicotine targeted at our children with all of these kinds of flavors.

This particular container was a response to the advocacy of myself and others to say that this targeting of our children is not OK. So the industry decided to create a ''Senator's Choice'' flavor, and they call this flavor ''the greatest blend to date'' using ''the purist, highest quality liquid essence of guava, combin[ing] it with all-natural, American-made raw ingredients.'' It is almost like a review of a fine wine, this ''Senator's Choice.'' Again, they created this specifically to protest the fact that Senators were standing up and saying that this targeting of children is not OK. It is immoral, and it is wrong. We have a law in place to end it, but the administration must act or that law has no impact.

What is actually in this? Well, the ingredients list does not have essence of guava on the ingredient list. It has glycerin and propylene glycol, nicotine, and artificial flavorings, which somehow doesn't sound nearly as nice as the description on their Web site.

Let's see the impact of this targeting of our youth because, unfortunately, Big Tobacco's—the nicotine addiction industry—strategies work. That is why they are continuing to employ them. High school e-cigarette use tripled in just 1 year, from 2013 at 4.5 percent to 2014 at 13.4 percent. When we have the numbers for 2015, I am sure we will find that it is substantially higher because of this aggressive marketing campaign aimed at our junior high and high school students.

Nearly one in seven high school students have used an e-cigarette in the last 30 days. That represents 2 million of our children—2 million of our teenagers nationwide.

An updated CDC study released recently confirmed that youth tobacco use is continuing to grow. Our children are not using e-cigarettes to quit smoking; they are using e-cigarettes to start smoking. So when the industry claims that all of these e-cigarettes are improving the health of those who currently use cigarettes, it is another tobacco industry big lie. Big Tobacco brings us another big lie. Children are using these products to start smoking, not to stop smoking. Every day that we don't act, more of our children are at risk for a lifetime of tobacco and nicotine addiction.

The choice is simple. Let's end this irresponsible inaction. Let's stop enriching the multibillion-dollar tobacco

industry by continuing to delay the regulations authorized back in 2009. Let's do the right thing for America's children. Let's assist our children in living longer, healthier, happier lives by ending the targeting by Big Tobacco.

Thank you, Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, I would like to find out how long the Senator from North Carolina wants to speak because I need to wrap up a matter on the FAA bill, which we are voting on in 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Madam President, through the Chair, I will take about 5 minutes, not more.

Mr. NELSON. Very fine.

Thank you, Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

COROLLA WILD HORSES

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I come to the floor to talk about something that is very important to many of us in North Carolina and to the people who come to the North Carolina coast to enjoy our beautiful beaches and a group of wild horses at Corolla.

They are called the Corolla wild horses. They are a piece of American heritage. They have been there since ships have been wrecked in what we call the graveyard of the Atlantic. These horses of Spanish origin ended up finding their way to shore, and they set up a habitat on the East Coast that is actually an attraction to tourists and something that brings a smile to your face when you are out on the water and you see them coming to the shore. They have been there for almost 400 years, and they are roaming over about 7,500 acres of land right now.

The problem we have, though, is that with development over time their habitat has shrunk. As a result of that, we only have about 80 horses out in Corolla now. To have a healthy population, we have to figure out a way to provide them with genetic diversity or they are going to become extinct in a very brief period of time. The entire herd is in grave danger as a result.

The solution to the problem is to try to figure out a way to produce genetic diversity, which is why the senior Senator from North Carolina, Mr. BURR, has offered an amendment that I hope we can get support for.

The horses roam mostly on private land, but there are some public lands they roam freely on that are managed by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife. The county and private philanthropic organizations are managing the horses. No taxpayer dollars are being used to manage these horse populations, but they do need some help and relief from the amendment Senator BURR has put forward.

To give an idea of what we are dealing with, I want to tell a story of a typical example of what is happening in Corolla. This is a heartbreaking story. It was shared with me by Karen McCalpin, the executive director of the Corolla Wild Horse Fund, who manages the horses now with no taxpayer dollars:

> When Cordero was first seen, the tides were too high to bring a trailer up the beach so we had to wait until the next day at low tide to bring panels and a trailer. We looked for him every day for 4 days after that. We went through wooded areas and marsh with no success. We finally found his harem on July 20, 2013. It was a difficult capture and the poor thing was trying to run to keep up with his mother. We had to capture her as well. Due to his young age and poor condition, he needed his mother's milk as well as her company to help relieve some of the stress of captivity. Unfortunately, that became an exercise in futility.

Cordero, because of his health problems, had to be euthanized.

We want a solution to this problem. It is a great solution that only requires a minimum amount of influence from us to get this done—largely done by private and local entities. What we need to do is put an amendment forward that requires the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the State of North Carolina, and Currituck County—the State of North Carolina and Currituck County want to do this—working with the Corolla Wild Horse Fund to establish a management plan that would allow for the transfer of horses from a related herd located at Shackleford Banks. This would allow the herd size to grow and will provide more genetic diversity to prevent situations that poor Cordero experienced.

Our amendment asks for no money. The amendment is supported by the Humane Society, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the Animal Welfare Institute, the Corolla Wild Horse Fund, and other key animal welfare organizations.

Contrary to what some people have said who may oppose this amendment, it doesn't change the mission of U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services. It doesn't require any taxpayer dollars. All it simply does is allow local government to solve this problem.

I hope that later today or tomorrow, when we can get on these amendments, we can convince our Members that this is a very important asset not only for North Carolina but for the Nation, and a simple gesture on our part can solve a very difficult problem on the part of the Corolla wild horses.

Thank you, Madam President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, we are close to the vote on the FAA bill. I want to underscore the importance for the Senate because it contains some of the most significant passenger-friendly reforms and airport security enhancements that we have seen in years.

To get to this point has been no small task, especially in this era in which it is so difficult to find consensus and a bipartisan way to pass something. We have been able to do it with the able leadership of the chairman, Senator JOHN THUNE. The two of us have felt like we needed to focus on areas where we agree, and as a result the entire Commerce Committee came together to get this done. Now we are about to pass this and get it on to the House.

In a complicated bill like this, it doesn't contain everything that everybody wants, but we hope our counterparts in the House are going to take up and pass this bill without delay. We have given them a good bipartisan blueprint to follow and one they ought to pass easily.

If they add controversial or partisan measures such as privatizing our air traffic control system, this bill will fail. The U.S. Department of Defense is unalterably opposed to private controllers controlling our military aircraft. If that path is taken in the House, it is going to be a big loss for consumers and for the safety of the flying public.

When thinking about some of the irritations of passengers, such as the growing list of airline fees and charges, consumers feel they are nickel-and-dimed to death. This bill is going to require greater transparency and relief. Building on a minority Commerce Committee report that was released last summer, it requires fee refunds for delayed baggage. It requires refunds for ancillary services, such as seating fees that are paid for by a customer and then not delivered by the airline. It requires new standardized disclosure of fees for consumers and increased protections for disabled passengers.

There are important safety reforms. Last night's national news was led by an international news report from London about an inbound British Airways flight into Heathrow that was struck by a drone. Computer analysis has been done. What would happen if the drone is sucked into a jet engine? It can certainly cause it to be inoperable and might start an explosion.

Remember what happened when two seagulls were sucked into the engine of a flight called the Hudson River miracle, when captain Sully Sullenberger was able to belly it in because he had no power. That was caused by a seagull with feathers, webbed feet, and a beak. Imagine what the metal and plastic of a drone being sucked into a jet engine could do. Do we need any more reminders?

This bill has a pilot program to test and develop technologies to intercept or shut down drones when they are near airports.

Remember the tragedy in Brussels. Remember the downing of a Russian airliner in Egypt because somebody was on the inside and snuck a bomb onto the airplane. There are parts in this bill that will help reduce the insider threat that terrorists have previously exploited, including the soft

targets in the queues at the TSA lines and at the ticket counters.

This bill will improve the background checks and security screenings for airport workers and prevent hackers from potentially gaining control of an airplane. This bill also requires that the FAA develop standards on how aircraft manufacturers can keep flight control systems separate from inflight passenger entertainment systems. Remember what was shown on ''60 Minutes'' about the takeover and control of a car by someone going on the Internet and hacking into the car's entertainment system.

The bottom line is, this is a good bill. It is the result of a hard-earned collaborative effort. I thank Senator THUNE and his staff for their good work and their good will in our negotiations. I also thank the Members of our staff who worked endlessly to get us to this point. After the vote, I am going to read a list of their names because I want them to be recognized.

To our colleagues in the Senate, I thank you for working with Senator THUNE and me on the creation and development of the bill up to this point and now the passage of the bill. I suspect the Senate will respond overwhelmingly and I certainly urge that result.

Madam President, we have just a couple minutes until the vote.

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. NELSON. 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. NELSON. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, we are trying to get clearance for a package of 26 noncontroversial amendments that Senator THUNE and I put together in a package. They are noncontroversial. They are amendments sponsored by a multiplicity of Senators, a whole array of different things that are needed.

We have one Senator objecting to proceeding with the package of 26 amendments. We are trying to get that objection removed; otherwise, we are going to be in a position of going to the bill, which we will have the votes to pass, but without these 26 amendments. These are amendments by Senators HATCH, MCCAIN, THUNE, MORAN, BROWN, MURPHY, KAINE, FEINSTEIN, JOHNSON, LEAHY, INHOFE, CORNYN, MARKEY, KIRK, CORNYN, DURBIN, MORAN, WARNER, SULLIVAN, HIRONO, HOEVEN, HEITKAMP, ISAKSON, MURRAY, and TESTER.

All are noncontroversial. But we have one objection with regard to this package, which is noncontroversial.

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. THUNE. 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. THUNE. Madam President, we have pending before us final passage on the FAA reauthorization. We have been waiting to see if there were not another 26 amendments that have been cleared on both sides that we can get added to the bill. Despite our best efforts, we have an objection to that. We have been trying all morning to get that cleared, but that has not been possible.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESS TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 636, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 636) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

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

The bill was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FLAKE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 95, nays 3, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 47 Leg.]

YEAS—95

Alexander	Booker	Carper
Ayotte	Boozman	Casey
Baldwin	Brown	Cassidy
Barrasso	Burr	Coats
Bennet	Cantwell	Cochran
Blumenthal	Capito	Collins
Blunt	Cardin	Coons
Corker	Johnson	Reid
Cornyn	Kaine	Risch
Cotton	King	Roberts
Crapo	Kirk	Rounds
Daines	Klobuchar	Sasse
Donnelly	Lankford	Schatz
Durbin	Leahy	Schumer
Enzi	Manchin	Scott
Ernst	Markey	Sessions
Feinstein	McCain	Shaheen
Fischer	McCaskill	Shelby
Flake	McConnell	Stabenow
Franken	Menendez	Sullivan
Gardner	Merkley	Tester
Gillibrand	Mikulski	Thune
Graham	Moran	Tillis
Grassley	Murkowski	Toomey
Hatch	Murphy	Udall
Heinrich	Murray	Vitter
Heitkamp	Nelson	Warner
Heller	Paul	Warren
Hirono	Perdue	Whitehouse
Hoeven	Peters	Wicker
Inhofe	Portman	Wyden
Isakson	Reed	

NAYS—3

Boxer	Lee	Rubio

NOT VOTING—2

Cruz	Sanders

The bill (H.R. 636), as amended, was passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I rise today to express my appreciation to my colleagues for the passage of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016. By passing this legislation, which I offered with the Commerce Committee's ranking member, Senator NELSON, and our Aviation Subcommittee leaders, Senator AYOTTE and Senator CANTWELL, the Senate is seeking to end a string of short extensions with a comprehensive reform proposal now on its way to the House of Representatives. Bipartisan efforts at both the Commerce Committee and on the Senate floor made an already strong bill even better.

Only weeks ago, horrific attacks by ISIS created new concern for air travelers. Recognizing the need to enhance security, Senators from both sides of the aisle offered amendments to strengthen safety and security protections for passengers in this aviation bill. To guard against the threat of airport insiders helping terrorists, we added provisions that I authored along with Senator NELSON to improve the scrutiny of individuals applying to work in secure airport areas.

For the first time, we put requirements in place so applicants needing access to secure areas of airports can be denied security credential if they have been convicted of embezzlement, racketeering, robbery, sabotage, immigration law violations, or assault with a deadly weapon.

While very few criminals are terrorists, it is not at all uncommon for terrorists to get their start as criminals. The Brussels attackers, for example, were known to the police as criminals long before they carried out terrorist

attacks. Ensuring that dangerous criminals don't work behind the scenes at airports is one important thing we can do to reduce the threats facing airport passengers. Tightening the vetting process for airport employees is especially critical, as many experts believe the recent bombing of a Russian passenger jet leaving Egypt had help from an aviation insider.

Our bill also includes security provisions to better safeguard public areas outside the security checkpoints at airports and to help reduce passenger backups. These reforms could help prevent a future attack, like the one in the Brussels terminal last month, which targeted a crowd of passengers in an area where the attackers didn't even need tickets.

While many of our security enhancements addressed problems highlighted by recent attacks, none of these proposals were cobbled together in a rush to do something. All of the security proposals added to this bill have existed for months and were developed as a result of congressional oversight, independent evaluations of agencies, and the study of existing problems. What recent attacks by ISIS did create is new urgency to enact these security safeguards as the threat of terrorism remains a menace.

As I have mentioned more than once, this legislation has been praised for the many ways it helps airline passengers. Under this bill, airlines will be required to return fees if they lose or significantly delay delivery of passengers' luggage. We also require airlines to automatically return fees for services purchased but not delivered so travelers don't have to go through the hassle of trying to reclaim their money from an airline.

Because many customers are frustrated by lengthy legal jargon that can make it difficult to understand add-on costs, our bill creates a new and easy-to-read uniform standard for disclosing baggage, ticket change, seat selection, and other fees. We even help families with children find flights where they can sit together without additional costs by requiring airlines to tell purchasers about available seat locations at the time of booking.

A Washington Post consumer columnist called our bill ''one of the most passenger-friendly Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization bills in a generation.''

I am proud that the FAA bill before the Senate today is the product of a bipartisan process. Over at the Commerce Committee, we approved 57 amendments before this bill came to the floor, and 60 percent of those amendments came from Members of the minority. Here on the Senate floor, we approved an additional 19 amendments.

In addition to helping passengers and enhancing security, this legislation addresses a number of other priorities, including the cyber security of aircraft, the aircraft design approval process, undue regulatory burdens on noncommercial pilots, airport infrastructure, rural air service, lithium battery safety, mental health screening for pilots, communicable disease preparedness, drone safety, and many other important areas. Without going through them in detail, the bill's provisions for unmanned aerial systems are groundbreaking.

Twenty years from now, when drones play significant roles in our economy and making the public safer, Congress will look back at this bill as landmark legislation. Provisions in this bill will give the FAA authority to address safety issues unique to drones and advance the development of drone technology.

Thanks to this legislation, the FAA will be able to consider and grant permission for new and safe drone usage, stop dangerous practices, and deploy new tools to put sensitive parts of our national airspace under restricted access for drones.

Finally, as I have noted, Ranking Member NELSON, Senator AYOTTE, and Senator CANTWELL deserve high praise for their collaboration on this legislation. Senator NELSON, in particular, has been a real partner in the effort, and I want to express my sincere thanks to him and to his talented staff.

I also want to acknowledge the important contributions of Finance Committee Chairman HATCH, Ranking Member WYDEN, and their staffs. Without the Finance Committee provisions they provided for revenue and expenditure authority, we would not have an FAA bill.

I also want to thank Leader MCCONNELL, his lead liaison to the Commerce Committee, Scott Rabb, and Leader REID for helping us get this bill passed.

I also appreciate the Senators and their staff members who worked with us so that we could include so many amendments here on the floor.

Finally, it goes without saying that I want to thank my own staff for their great work on this bill, especially Nick Rossi, Adrian Arnakis, Bailey Edwards, Michael Reynolds, Jessica McBride, Missye Brickell, Suzanne Gillen, Jaclyn Keshian, Christopher Loring, Rebecca Seidel, Cheri Pascoe, Peter Feldman, Andrew Timm, Frederick Hill, and Lauren Hammond. Long hours and even a few all-nighters have been put into this bill over the course of many months. I am the first to say that nothing consequential or substantial gets done around this place without the important, hard work of the very talented and skilled staff. I am blessed on the Commerce Committee to be surrounded with people who care passionately about these issues, who work very diligently to get the best possible outcomes and results. I am grateful for the contributions of our staff and those of Senator NELSON's staff and of the many Members who were involved in shaping this bill. It is another accomplishment that we can all be proud of.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, the feeling is mutual. I made my comments earlier, so I won't go into the substance of the bill. Senator THUNE has certainly been a delight to work with, as was his committee staff.

I wish to personally thank our staff: Tom Chapman, Jenny Solomon, Chris Day, Mohsin Syed, Melissa Alvarado, Laura Ponto, Dan Hurd, Renae Black, Maria Stratienko, Nick Russell, Christian Fjeld, Brian No, Peder Magee, Meeran Ahn, Brad Torppey, and our staff director Kim Lipsky. I also wish to thank the Democratic staff here on the floor—they make this place run day in and day out—Gary Myrick, Tim Mitchell, Trisha Engle, Dan Tinsley, and all the cloakroom staff.

I thank the Senate for responding so affirmatively to this FAA bill. Now let's get the House to understand the importance of this bill so we can get it into law.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

AMENDMENT NO. 3799

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the title amendment at the desk be agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 3799) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To amend the title)

Amend the title so as to read: ''An Act to amend title 49, United States Code, to authorize appropriations for the Federal Aviation Administration for fiscal years 2016 through 2017, and for other purposes.''.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to make some remarks on the Burr-Tillis amendment No. 3175 to the Energy bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COROLLA WILD HORSES PROTECTION AMENDMENT

Mr. BURR. Mr. President and colleagues, I am embarrassed that I am having to come to the floor to talk about an amendment that makes so much sense, that embraces everything that I think the legislative branch and, more importantly, the American people support: the protection of a species.

I rise today to ask my colleagues to support the Corolla Wild Horses Protection Act. The amendment mirrors legislation Senator TILLIS and I introduced, S. 1204. This bill passed the House twice, in 2012 and 2013.

Let me be specific. This bill directs the Secretary of the Interior to enter into an agreement with the Corolla Wild Horses Fund to provide for the management of free-roaming wild horses in and around Currituck National Wildlife Refuge.

As I have learned, North Carolina is mostly inhabited by people from Virginia and Maryland—up and down the east coast—in the summer. As a matter

of fact, as to the homes in the northern portion of the Outer Banks where the wild horses are found, where there isn't a road, 60 percent of the homes are owned by Virginians, not North Carolinians. These horses have existed there for hundreds of years. As a matter of fact, these horses have been such an important part of North Carolina's history that in 2010 it was made North Carolina's State horse.

People have seen these horses on the beach and between cottages. They have co-existed with the habitat for over 200 years. The turtles, ducks, and wildlife have thrived. The species of that habitat have survived because there is no better protector of the species than these animals. They eat what they need without removing the roots, which is what helps them to repopulate and stay alive.

Here is the problem: This herd has been mandated to be held at 60 horses, and every scientific study on genetics shows you have to have more than 100 or 120 to have genetic sustainability.

What are we proposing? This act proposes that we bring 20 horses from the Shackleford reserve and integrate them with the horses on the Outer Banks, which is a mere 2 hours away. This herd is similar from the standpoint of its creation. By doing this, we will begin to inject genetics into this so we don't have the genetic deformities that are beginning to be experienced with the Corolla horses. If we don't act now, we could lose these horses, and it is all due to genetic inbreeding.

The reason I am embarrassed to be here is that this is something that ought to be done by unanimous consent. Every person in this body should embrace this legislation. Yet the Fish and Wildlife Service is opposed to this. And there is nothing that says that Fish and Wildlife can't build a fence around the wildlife reserve. It existed for hundreds of years in the wildlife reserve before and after it was designated as a wildlife reserve. As a matter of fact, 70 percent of the land on which these horses roam is private. The land for the wildlife refuge is only 30 percent, but 70 percent of the land is privately owned, and the private landowners are all for making this herd genetically sustainable.

If we don't do this legislatively, let me assure you that the Fish and Wildlife Service is going to hold the number at 60. If they hold the herd at 60, the herd will genetically burn out. I don't know what Fish and Wildlife is going to do. The herd is at 80 today. The herd needs new genetics entered into it to change the trend, but Fish and Wildlife could go out tomorrow and shoot 20 horses. I am sure they would probably tell us that they would take 20 horses and put them somewhere else. Where are they going to put them? Inject them into another genetic herd and increase their sustainability? Maybe so. But if you do it somewhere else, why wouldn't you do the same thing here?

No landowners are clamoring to let this herd die out. As a matter of fact, there are a million and a half people in this country who have expressed support for the sustainability of this herd. But this is where science dictates. Science says that it is not sustainable if you leave this herd without a genetic injection from somewhere else.

This is not a new proposal. It passed in the House twice. It is not a new proposal. Fish and Wildlife has done this in other places. For some reason, they don't want to do it in North Carolina.

The last test for any Member of Congress and anybody in this country should be: What will it cost us to do this? What am I asking you to pay to do this? The answer is zero. There is no Federal cost to this legislation. We can sustain the herd for the future, and it will not cost taxpayers anything. We have a private entity that will take responsibility for the management of the fund.

We don't in any way, shape, or form limit Fish and Wildlife from the standpoint of their ability to fence off whatever they believe is environmentally sensitive. And we have horses that have lived with ducks, geese, and sea turtles for over 200 years and have never seen a problem with it.

The Presiding Officer has been patient. I say to my colleagues: Don't make a mistake. Support this legislation. It is the right thing to do. It doesn't cost the taxpayers money, and it embraces everything that I think America stands for, and that is the preservation of the history of this country. Believe it or not, these horses represent over 200 years of history in North Carolina, and that is why we made it our State horse.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield back my time.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:54 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

ENERGY POLICY MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 2012, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2012) to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Murkowski amendment No. 2953, in the nature of a substitute.

Murkowski (for Cassidy/Markey) amendment No. 2954 (to amendment No. 2953), to provide for certain increases in, and limitations on, the drawdown and sales of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve.

Murkowski amendment No. 2963 (to amendment No. 2953), to modify a provision relating to bulk-power system reliability impact statements.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 3276; 3302, AS MODIFIED; 3055; 3050; 3237; 3308; 3286, AS MODIFIED; 3075; 3168; 3292, AS MODIFIED; 3155; 3270; 3313, AS MODIFIED; 3214; 3266; 3310; 3317; 3265, AS MODIFIED; 3012; 3290; 3004; 3233, AS MODIFIED; 3239; 3221; 3203; 3309, AS MODIFIED; 3229; 3251; AND 2963 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2953

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I call up the following amendments en bloc and ask that they be reported by number and be considered en bloc, along with amendment No. 2963, offered by Senator MURKOWSKI: Cantwell amendment No. 3276; Klobuchar amendment No. 3302, as modified; Flake amendment No. 3055; Flake amendment No. 3050; Hatch amendment No. 3237; Murkowski amendment No. 3308; Heller amendment No. 3286, as modified; Vitter amendment No. 3075; Portman amendment No. 3168; Shaheen amendment No. 3292, as modified; Heinrich amendment No. 3155; Manchin amendment No. 3270; Cantwell amendment No. 3313, as modified; Cantwell amendment No. 3214; Vitter amendment No. 3266; Sullivan amendment No. 3310; Heinrich amendment No. 3317; Vitter amendment No. 3265, as modified; Kaine amendment No. 3012; Alexander amendment No. 3290; Gillibrand amendment No. 3004; Warner amendment No. 3233, as modified; Thune amendment No. 3239; Udall amendment No. 3221; Coons amendment No. 3203; Portman amendment No. 3309, as modified; Flake amendment No. 3229; and Inhofe amendment No. 3251.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendments by number.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Alaska [Ms. MURKOWSKI], for herself and others, proposes amendments numbered 3276; 3302, as modified; 3055; 3050; 3237; 3308; 3286, as modified; 3075; 3168; 3292, as modified; 3155; 3270; 3313, as modified; 3214; 3266; 3310; 3317; 3265, as modified; 3012; 3290; 3004; 3233, as modified; 3239; 3221; 3203; 3309, as modified; 3229; and 3251 en bloc to amendment No. 2953.

The amendments are as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 3276

(Purpose: To strike certain provisions relating to technology demonstration on the distribution system, large-scale geothermal energy, and bio-power initiatives)

Strike section 2303.
Strike section 3009.
Strike section 3017.

AMENDMENT NO. 3302, AS MODIFIED

(Purpose: To modify provisions relating to the energy efficiency materials pilot program)

Beginning on page 37, strike line 16 and all that follows through page 41, line 14 and insert the following:

SEC. 1004. ENERGY EFFICIENCY MATERIALS PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPLICANT.—The term ''applicant'' means a nonprofit organization that applies for a grant under this section.

(2) ENERGY-EFFICIENCY MATERIALS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''energy-efficiency materials'' means a measure (including a product, equipment, or system) that results in a reduction in use by a nonprofit organization for energy or fuel supplied from outside the nonprofit building.

(B) INCLUSIONS.—The term ''energy-efficiency materials'' includes an item involving—

(i) a roof or lighting system, or component of a roof or lighting system;

(ii) a window;

(iii) a door, including a security door; or

(iv) a heating, ventilation, or air conditioning system or component of the system (including insulation and wiring and plumbing materials needed to serve a more efficient system); and

(v) a renewable energy generation or heating system, including a solar, photovoltaic, wind, geothermal, or biomass (including wood pellet) system or component of the system.

(3) NONPROFIT BUILDING.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''nonprofit building'' means a building operated and owned by a nonprofit organization.

(B) INCLUSIONS.—The term ''nonprofit building'' includes a building described in subparagraph (A) that is—

(i) a hospital;

(ii) a youth center;

(iii) a school;

(iv) a social-welfare program facility;

(v) a faith-based organization; and

(vi) any other nonresidential and noncommercial structure.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall establish a pilot program to award grants for the purpose of providing nonprofit buildings with energy-efficiency materials.

(c) GRANTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may award grants under the program established under subsection (b).

(2) APPLICATION.—The Secretary may award a grant under this section if an applicant submits to the Secretary an application at such time, in such form, and containing such information as the Secretary may prescribe.

(3) CRITERIA FOR GRANT.—In determining whether to award a grant under this section, the Secretary shall apply performance-based criteria, which shall give priority to applications based on—

(A) the energy savings achieved;

(B) the cost-effectiveness of the use of energy-efficiency materials;

(C) an effective plan for evaluation, measurement, and verification of energy savings; and

(D) the financial need of the applicant.

(4) LIMITATION ON INDIVIDUAL GRANT AMOUNT.—Each grant awarded under this section shall not exceed $200,000.

(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section $10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020, to remain available until expended.

AMENDMENT NO. 3055

(Purpose: To establish a pilot project relating to the Western Area Power Administration)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. WESTERN AREA POWER ADMINISTRATION PILOT PROJECT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Western Area Power Administration (referred to in this section as the ''Administrator'') shall establish a pilot project, as part of the continuous process improvement program and to provide increased transparency for customers, to publish on a publicly available website of the Western Area Power Administration, a searchable database of the following information, beginning with fiscal year 2008, relating to the Western Area Power Administration:

(1) By power system, rates charged to customers for power and transmission service.

(2) By power system, the amount of capacity or energy sold.

(3) By region, a detailed accounting of the allocation of budget authority, including—

(A) overhead costs;

(B) the number of contractors; and

(C) the number of full-time equivalents.

(4) For the corporate services office, a detailed accounting of the allocation of budget authority, including—

(A) overhead costs;

(B) the number of contractors;

(C) the number of full-time equivalents; and

(D) expenses charged to other Federal agencies or programs for the administration of programs not related to the marketing, transmission, or wheeling of Federal hydropower resources, including—

(i) overhead costs;

(ii) the number of contractors; and

(iii) the number of full-time equivalents.

(5) Capital expenditures, including—

(A) capital investments delineated by the year in which each investment is placed into service; and

(B) the sources of capital for each investment.

(b) REPORT.—Not less than once each year for the duration of the pilot project under this section, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives a report that—

(1) describes the annual estimated avoided costs and the savings as a result of the pilot project under this section; and

(2) includes a certification from the Administrator that—

(A) the rates for each power system do not recover costs and expenses recovered by other power systems; and

(B) each expense allocated by the corporate services office to an individual power system is only recovered once.

(c) TERMINATION.—The pilot project under this section shall terminate on the date that is 10 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 3050

(Purpose: To require the Secretary of Energy to make available certain information about research grants of the Department of Energy.)

At the end of subtitle E of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 4405. RESEARCH GRANTS DATABASE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish and maintain a public database, accessible on the website of the Department, that contains a searchable listing of every unclassified research and development project contract, grant, cooperative agreement, task order for federally funded research and development centers, or other transaction administered by the Department.

(b) CLASSIFIED PROJECTS.—Each year, the Secretary shall submit to the relevant committees of Congress a report that lists every classified project of the Department, including all relevant details of the projects.

(c) REQUIREMENTS.—Each listing described in subsections (a) and (b) shall include, at a minimum, for each listed project, the component carrying out the project, the project name, an abstract or summary of the project, funding levels, project duration, contractor or grantee name, and expected objectives and milestones.

(d) RELEVANT LITERATURE AND PATENTS.—To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary shall provide information through the public database established under subsection (a) on relevant literature and patents that are associated with each research and development project contract, grant, or cooperative agreement, or other transaction, of the Department.

AMENDMENT NO. 3237

(Purpose: To require the Secretary of the Interior to submit recommendations to Congress on incorporating Internet-based lease sales for the sale of Federal oil and gas in certain circumstances)

At the end of subtitle B of title III, add the following:

SEC. 31___. REPORT ON INCORPORATING INTERNET-BASED LEASE SALES.

Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior shall submit to Congress a report containing recommendations for the incorporation of Internet-based lease sales at the Bureau of Land Management in accordance with section 17(b)(1)(C) of the Mineral Leasing Act (30 U.S.C. 226(b)(1)(C)) in the event of an emergency or other disruption causing a disruption to a sale.

AMENDMENT NO. 3308

(Purpose: To clarify certain provisions relating to the natural gas pipeline authorized in the Denali National Park and Preserve)

At the end of subtitle B of title III, add the following:

SEC. 31_____. DENALI NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE NATURAL GAS PIPELINE.

(a) PERMIT.—Section 3(b)(1) of the Denali National Park Improvement Act (Public Law 113–33; 127 Stat. 516) is amended by striking ''within, along, or near the approximately 7-mile segment of the George Parks Highway that runs through the Park''.

(b) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—Section 3(c)(1) of the Denali National Park Improvement Act (Public Law 113–33; 127 Stat. 516) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by inserting ''and'' after the semicolon;

(2) by striking subparagraph (B); and

(3) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (B).

(c) APPLICABLE LAW.—Section 3 of the Denali National Park Improvement Act (Public Law 113–33; 127 Stat. 515) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(d) APPLICABLE LAW.—A high pressure gas transmission pipeline (including appurtenances) in a nonwilderness area within the boundary of the Park, shall not be subject to title XI of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 3161 et seq.).''.

AMENDMENT NO. 3286, AS MODIFIED

(Purpose: To promote the development of renewable energy on public land)

On page 244, between lines 13 and 14, insert the following:

Subpart B—Development of Geothermal, Solar, and Wind Energy on Public Land

SEC. 3011A. DEFINITIONS.

In this subpart:

(1) COVERED LAND.—The term ''covered land'' means land that is—

(A) public land administered by the Secretary; and

(B) not excluded from the development of geothermal, solar, or wind energy under—

(i) a land use plan established under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.); or

(ii) other Federal law.

(2) EXCLUSION AREA.—The term ''exclusion area'' means covered land that is identified by the Bureau of Land Management as not suitable for development of renewable energy projects.

(3) PRIORITY AREA.—The term ''priority area'' means covered land identified by the land use planning process of the Bureau of Land Management as being a preferred location for a renewable energy project.

(4) PUBLIC LAND.—The term ''public land'' has the meaning given the term ''public lands'' in section 103 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1702).

(5) RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECT.—The term ''renewable energy project'' means a project carried out on covered land that uses wind, solar, or geothermal energy to generate energy.

(6) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

(7) VARIANCE AREA.—The term ''variance area'' means covered land that is—

(A) not an exclusion area; and

(B) not a priority area.

SEC. 3011B. LAND USE PLANNING; SUPPLEMENTS TO PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENTS.

(a) PRIORITY AREAS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy, shall establish priority areas on covered land for geothermal, solar, and wind energy projects.

(2) DEADLINE.—

(A) GEOTHERMAL ENERGY.—For geothermal energy, the Secretary shall establish priority areas as soon as practicable, but not later than 5 years, after the date of enactment of this Act.

(B) SOLAR ENERGY.—For solar energy, the solar energy zones established by the 2012 western solar plan of the Bureau of Land Management shall be considered to be priority areas for solar energy projects.

(C) WIND ENERGY.—For wind energy, the Secretary shall establish priority areas as soon as practicable, but not later than 3 years, after the date of enactment of this Act.

(b) VARIANCE AREAS.—To the maximum extent practicable, variance areas shall be considered for renewable energy project development, consistent with the principles of multiple use as defined in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).

(c) REVIEW AND MODIFICATION.—Not less frequently than once every 10 years, the Secretary shall—

(1) review the adequacy of land allocations for geothermal, solar, and wind energy priority and variance areas for the purpose of encouraging new renewable energy development opportunities; and

(2) based on the review carried out under paragraph (1), add, modify, or eliminate priority, variance, and exclusion areas.

(d) COMPLIANCE WITH THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT.—For purposes of this section, compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) shall be accomplished—

(1) for geothermal energy, by supplementing the October 2008 final programmatic environmental impact statement for geothermal leasing in the western United States;

(2) for solar energy, by supplementing the July 2012 final programmatic environmental impact statement for solar energy projects; and

(3) for wind energy, by supplementing the July 2005 final programmatic environmental impact statement for wind energy projects.

(e) NO EFFECT ON PROCESSING APPLICATIONS.—A requirement to prepare a supplement to a programmatic environmental impact statement under this section shall not result in any delay in processing an application for a renewable energy project.

(f) COORDINATION.—In developing a supplement required by this section, the Secretary shall coordinate, on an ongoing basis, with appropriate State, tribal, and local governments, transmission infrastructure owners and operators, developers, and other appropriate entities to ensure that priority areas identified by the Secretary are—

(1) economically viable (including having access to transmission);

(2) likely to avoid or minimize conflict with habitat for animals and plants, recreation, and other uses of covered land; and

(3) consistent with section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1712), including subsection (c)(9) of that section.

(g) REMOVAL FROM CLASSIFICATION.—In carrying out subsections (a), (c), and (d), if the Secretary determines an area previously suited for development should be removed from priority or variance classification, not later than 90 days after the date of the determination, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the determination.

SEC. 3011C. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW ON COVERED LAND.

(a) IN GENERAL.—If the Secretary determines that a proposed renewable energy project has been sufficiently analyzed by a programmatic environmental impact statement conducted under section 3011B(d), the Secretary shall not require any additional review under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

(b) ADDITIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW.—If the Secretary determines that additional environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) is necessary for a proposed renewable energy project, the Secretary shall rely on the analysis in the programmatic environmental impact statement conducted under section 3011B(d), to the maximum extent practicable when analyzing the potential impacts of the project.

(c) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAW.—Nothing in this section modifies or supersedes any requirement under applicable law, including the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

SEC. 3011D. PROGRAM TO IMPROVE RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECT PERMIT COORDINATION.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish a program to improve Federal permit coordination with respect to renewable energy projects on covered land.

(b) MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall enter into a memorandum of understanding for purposes of this section, including to specifically expedite the environmental analysis of applications for projects proposed in a variance area, with—

(A) the Secretary of Agriculture; and

(B) the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works.

(2) STATE PARTICIPATION.—The Secretary may request the Governor of any interested State to be a signatory to the memorandum of understanding under paragraph (1).

(c) DESIGNATION OF QUALIFIED STAFF.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the memorandum of understanding under subsection (b) is executed, all Federal signatories, as appropriate, shall identify for each of the Bureau of Land Management Renewable Energy Coordination Offices an employee who has expertise in the regulatory issues relating to the office in which the employee is employed, including, as applicable, particular expertise in—

(A) consultation regarding, and preparation of, biological opinions under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1536);

(B) permits under section 404 of Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1344);

(C) regulatory matters under the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.);

(D) planning under section 14 of the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 472a);

(E) the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.);

(F) the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. 703 et seq.); and

(G) the preparation of analyses under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

(2) DUTIES.—Each employee assigned under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) be responsible for addressing all issues relating to the jurisdiction of the home office or agency of the employee; and

(B) participate as part of the team of personnel working on proposed energy projects, planning, monitoring, inspection, enforcement, and environmental analyses.

(d) ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL.—The Secretary may assign additional personnel for the renewable energy coordination offices as are necessary to ensure the effective implementation of any programs administered by those offices, including inspection and enforcement relating to renewable energy project development on covered land, in accordance with the multiple use mandate of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).

(e) RENEWABLE ENERGY COORDINATION OFFICES.—In implementing the program established under this section, the Secretary may establish additional renewable energy coordination offices or temporarily assign the qualified staff described in subsection (c) to a State, district, or field office of the Bureau of Land Management to expedite the permitting of renewable energy projects, as the Secretary determines to be necessary.

(f) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than February 1 of the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this Act, and each February 1 thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a report describing the progress made pursuant to the program under this subpart during the preceding year.

(2) INCLUSIONS.—Each report under this subsection shall include—

(A) projections for renewable energy production and capacity installations; and

(B) a description of any problems relating to leasing, permitting, siting, or production.

SEC. 3011E. SAVINGS CLAUSE.

Nothing in this subpart establishes—

(1) a priority or preference for the development of renewable energy projects on public land over other energy-related or mineral projects or other uses of public land; or

(2) an exception to the requirement that public land be managed consistent with the principle of multiple use (as defined in section of section 103 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1702)).

On page 244, line 14, strike ''**Subpart B**'' and insert ''**Subpart C**''.

AMENDMENT NO. 3075

(Purpose: To require the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement to review the economic impact of a rule on small entities)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. REVIEW OF ECONOMIC IMPACT OF BSEE RULE ON SMALL ENTITIES.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term ''BSEE'' means the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement;

(2) the term ''Chief Counsel'' means the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration;

(3) the term ''covered proposed rule'' means the proposed rule of the BSEE entitled ''Oil and Gas and Sulphur Operations in the Outer Continental Shelf—Blowout Preventer Systems and Well Control'' (80 Fed. Reg. 21504 (April 17, 2015)); and

(4) the term ''small entity'' has the meaning given the term in section 601 of title 5, United States Code.

(b) REQUIREMENT TO CONDUCT REVIEW.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If the BSEE issues a final rule for the covered proposed rule, then not later than 1 year after the effective date of the final rule the BSEE, in consultation with the Chief Counsel, shall complete a review of the final rule under section 610 of title 5, United States Code.

(2) ASSESSMENT OF ECONOMIC IMPACT.—In conducting the review required under paragraph (1), the BSEE, in consultation with the Chief Counsel, shall assess the economic impact of the final rule on small entities in the oil and gas supply chain.

(3) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which the review is completed under this subsection, the BSEE, in consultation with the Chief Counsel, shall submit to Congress a report on the findings of the review.

AMENDMENT NO. 3168

(Purpose: To exclude power supply circuits, drivers, and devices designed to be connected to, and power, light-emitting diodes or organic light-emitting diodes providing illumination or ceiling fans using direct current motors from energy conservation standards for external power supplies)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

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

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

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

''(A) EXTERNAL POWER SUPPLY.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The term''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

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

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

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

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

(b) STANDARDS FOR LIGHTING POWER SUPPLY CIRCUITS.—

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

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

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

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

(c) TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.—

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

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 3292, AS MODIFIED

(Purpose: To reduce barriers to combined heat and power systems and waste heat to power systems)

At the end of subtitle D of title II, add the following:

SEC. 23___. MODEL GUIDANCE FOR COMBINED HEAT AND POWER SYSTEMS AND WASTE HEAT TO POWER SYSTEMS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADDITIONAL SERVICES.—The term ''additional services'' means the provision of supplementary power, backup or standby power, maintenance power, or interruptible power to an electric consumer by an electric utility.

(2) WASTE HEAT TO POWER SYSTEM.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''waste heat to power system'' means a system that generates electricity through the recovery of waste energy.

(B) EXCLUSION.—The term ''waste heat to power system'' does not include a system that generates electricity through the recovery of a heat resource from a process the primary purpose of which is the generation of electricity using a fossil fuel.

(3) OTHER TERMS.—

(A) PURPA.—The terms ''electric consumer'', ''electric utility'', ''interconnection service'', ''nonregulated electric utility'', and ''State regulatory authority'' have the meanings given those terms in the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2601 et seq.), within the meaning of title I of that Act (16 U.S.C. 2611 et seq.).

(B) EPCA.—The terms ''combined heat and power system'' and ''waste energy'' have the meanings given those terms in section 371 of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6341).

(b) REVIEW.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary, in consultation with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and other appropriate entities, shall review existing rules and procedures relating to interconnection service and additional services throughout the United States for electric generation with nameplate capacity up to 20 megawatts to identify barriers to the deployment of combined heat and power systems and waste heat to power systems.

(2) INCLUSION.—The review under this subsection shall include a review of existing rules and procedures relating to—

(A) determining and assigning costs of interconnection service and additional services; and

(B) ensuring adequate cost recovery by an electric utility for interconnection service and additional services.

(c) MODEL GUIDANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary, in consultation with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and other appropriate entities, shall issue model guidance for interconnection service and additional services for use by State regulatory authorities and nonregulated electric utilities to reduce the barriers identified under subsection (b)(1).

(2) CURRENT BEST PRACTICES.—The model guidance issued under this subsection shall reflect, to the maximum extent practicable, current best practices to encourage the deployment of combined heat and power systems and waste heat to power systems while ensuring the safety and reliability of the interconnected units and the distribution and transmission networks to which the units connect, including—

(A) relevant current standards developed by the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers; and

(B) model codes and rules adopted by—

(i) States; or

(ii) associations of State regulatory agencies.

(3) FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION.—In establishing the model guidance under this subsection, the Secretary shall take into consideration—

(A) the appropriateness of using standards or procedures for interconnection service that vary based on unit size, fuel type, or other relevant characteristics;

(B) the appropriateness of establishing fast-track procedures for interconnection service;

(C) the value of consistency with Federal interconnection rules established by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission as of the date of enactment of this Act;

(D) the best practices used to model outage assumptions and contingencies to determine fees or rates for additional services;

(E) the appropriate duration, magnitude, or usage of demand charge ratchets;

(F) potential alternative arrangements with respect to the procurement of additional services, including—

(i) contracts tailored to individual electric consumers for additional services;

(ii) procurement of additional services by an electric utility from a competitive market; and

(iii) waivers of fees or rates for additional services for small electric consumers; and

(G) outcomes such as increased electric reliability, fuel diversification, enhanced power quality, and reduced electric losses that may result from increased use of combined heat and power systems and waste heat to power systems.

AMENDMENT NO. 3155

(Purpose: To ensure that minority serving-institutions are considered in developing a strategy for the support and development of a skilled energy workforce, and to ensure the Secretary of Energy shall provide direct assistance in carrying out the energy workforce pilot grant program)

On page 320, between lines 2 and 3, insert the following:

(f) OUTREACH TO MINORITY-SERVING INSTITUTIONS.—In developing the strategy under subsection (a), the Board shall—

(1) give special consideration to increasing outreach to minority-serving institutions (including historically black colleges and universities, predominantly black institutions, Hispanic serving institutions, and tribal institutions);

(2) make resources available to minority-serving institutions with the objective of increasing the number of skilled minorities and women trained to go into the energy and manufacturing sectors; and

(3) encourage industry to improve the opportunities for students of minority-serving

institutions to participate in industry internships and cooperative work-study programs.

On page 320, line 3, strike ''(f)'' and insert ''(g)''.

On page 324, strike line 9 and insert the following:

(j) DIRECT ASSISTANCE.—In awarding grants under this section, the Secretary shall provide direct assistance (including technical expertise, wraparound services, career coaching, mentorships, internships, and partnerships) to entities that receive a grant under this section.

(k) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall

On page 324, line 14, strike ''(k)'' and insert ''(l)''.

On page 325, line 3, strike ''(l)'' and insert ''(m)''.

AMENDMENT NO. 3270

(Purpose: To modify provisions relating to the coal technology program)

Beginning on page 304, strike line 11 and all that follows through page 311, line 7, and insert the following:

(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF COAL TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM.—The Energy Policy Act of 2005 (as amended by subsection (a)) is amended by inserting after section 961 (42 U.S.C. 16291) the following:

''SEC. 962. COAL TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) LARGE-SCALE PILOT PROJECT.—The term 'large-scale pilot project' means a pilot project that—

''(A) represents the scale of technology development beyond laboratory development and bench scale testing, but not yet advanced to the point of being tested under real operational conditions at commercial scale;

''(B) represents the scale of technology necessary to gain the operational data needed to understand the technical and performance risks of the technology before the application of that technology at commercial scale or in commercial-scale demonstration; and

''(C) is large enough—

''(i) to validate scaling factors; and

''(ii) to demonstrate the interaction between major components so that control philosophies for a new process can be developed and enable the technology to advance from large-scale pilot plant application to commercial-scale demonstration or application.

''(2) NET-NEGATIVE CARBON DIOXIDE EMISSIONS PROJECT.—The term 'net-negative carbon dioxide emissions project' means a project—

''(A) that employs a technology for thermochemical coconversion of coal and biomass fuels that—

''(i) uses a carbon capture system; and

''(ii) with carbon dioxide removal, can provide electricity, fuels, or chemicals with net-negative carbon dioxide emissions from production and consumption of the end products, while removing atmospheric carbon dioxide;

''(B) that will proceed initially through a large-scale pilot project for which front-end engineering will be performed for bituminous, subbituminous, and lignite coals; and

''(C) through which each use of coal will be combined with the use of a regionally indigenous form of biomass energy, provided on a renewable basis, that is sufficient in quantity to allow for net-negative emissions of carbon dioxide (in combination with a carbon capture system), while avoiding impacts on food production activities.

''(3) PROGRAM.—The term 'program' means the program established under subsection (b)(1).

''(4) TRANSFORMATIONAL TECHNOLOGY.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'transformational technology' means a power generation technology that represents an entirely new way to convert energy that will enable a step change in performance, efficiency, and cost of electricity as compared to the technology in existence on the date of enactment of this section.

''(B) INCLUSIONS.—The term 'transformational technology' includes a broad range of technology improvements, including—

''(i) thermodynamic improvements in energy conversion and heat transfer, including—

''(I) oxygen combustion;

''(II) chemical looping; and

''(III) the replacement of steam cycles with supercritical carbon dioxide cycles;

''(ii) improvements in turbine technology;

''(iii) improvements in carbon capture systems technology; and

''(iv) any other technology the Secretary recognizes as transformational technology.

''(b) COAL TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a coal technology program to ensure the continued use of the abundant, domestic coal resources of the United States through the development of technologies that will significantly improve the efficiency, effectiveness, costs, and environmental performance of coal use.

''(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The program shall include—

''(A) a research and development program;

''(B) large-scale pilot projects;

''(C) demonstration projects; and

''(D) net-negative carbon dioxide emissions projects.

''(3) PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.—In consultation with the interested entities described in paragraph (4)(C), the Secretary shall develop goals and objectives for the program to be applied to the technologies developed within the program, taking into consideration the following objectives:

''(A) Ensure reliable, low-cost power from new and existing coal plants.

''(B) Achieve high conversion efficiencies.

''(C) Address emissions of carbon dioxide through high-efficiency platforms and carbon capture from new and existing coal plants.

''(D) Support small-scale and modular technologies to enable incremental capacity additions and load growth and large-scale generation technologies.

''(E) Support flexible baseload operations for new and existing applications of coal generation.

''(F) Further reduce emissions of criteria pollutants and reduce the use and manage the discharge of water in power plant operations.

''(G) Accelerate the development of technologies that have transformational energy conversion characteristics.

''(H) Validate geological storage of large volumes of anthropogenic sources of carbon dioxide and support the development of the infrastructure needed to support a carbon dioxide use and storage industry.

''(I) Examine methods of converting coal to other valuable products and commodities in addition to electricity.

''(4) CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED.—In carrying out the program, the Secretary shall—

''(A) undertake international collaborations, as recommended by the National Coal Council;

''(B) use existing authorities to encourage international cooperation; and

''(C) consult with interested entities, including—

''(i) coal producers;

''(ii) industries that use coal;

''(iii) organizations that promote coal and advanced coal technologies;

''(iv) environmental organizations;

''(v) organizations representing workers; and

''(vi) organizations representing consumers.

''(c) REPORT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report describing the performance standards adopted under subsection (b)(3).

''(2) UPDATE.—Not less frequently than once every 2 years after the initial report is submitted under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report describing the progress made towards achieving the objectives and performance standards adopted under subsection (b)(3).

''(d) FUNDING.—

''(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this section, to remain available until expended—

''(A) for activities under the research and development program component described in subsection (b)(2)(A)—

''(i) $275,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2017 through 2020; and

''(ii) $200,000,000 for fiscal year 2021;

''(B) for activities under the demonstration projects program component described in subsection (b)(2)(C)—

''(i) $50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2017 through 2020; and

''(ii) $75,000,000 for fiscal year 2021;

''(C) subject to paragraph (2), for activities under the large-scale pilot projects program component described in subsection (b)(2)(B), $285,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2017 through 2021; and

''(D) for activities under the net-negative carbon dioxide emissions projects program component described in subsection (b)(2)(D), $22,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2017 through 2021.

''(2) COST SHARING FOR LARGE-SCALE PILOT PROJECTS.—Activities under subsection (b)(2)(B) shall be subject to the cost-sharing requirements of section 988(b).''.

AMENDMENT NO. 3313, AS MODIFIED

(Purpose: To express the sense of the Senate on accelerating energy innovation)

At the end of subtitle C of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 42___. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON ACCELERATING ENERGY INNOVATION.

It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) although important progress has been made in cost reduction and deployment of clean energy technologies, accelerating clean energy innovation will help meet critical competitiveness, energy security, and environmental goals;

(2) accelerating the pace of clean energy innovation in the United States calls for—

(A) supporting existing research and development programs at the Department and the world-class National Laboratories (as defined in section 2 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 15801));

(B) exploring and developing new pathways for innovators, investors, and decision-makers to leverage the resources of the Department for addressing the challenges and comparative strengths of geographic regions; and

(C) recognizing the financial constraints of the Department, regularly reviewing clean energy programs to ensure that taxpayer investments are maximized;

(3) the energy supply, demand, policies, markets, and resource options of the United States vary by geographic region;

(4) a regional approach to innovation can bridge the gaps between local talent, institutions, and industries to identify opportunities and convert United States investment into domestic companies; and

(5) Congress, the Secretary, and energy industry participants should advance efforts that promote international, domestic, and regional cooperation on the research and development of energy innovations that—

(A) provide clean, affordable, and reliable energy for everyone;

(B) promote economic growth;

(C) are critical for energy security; and

(D) are sustainable without government support.

AMENDMENT NO. 3214

(Purpose: To proved for improved energy emergency response efforts of the Department of Energy)

At the end of subtitle E of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 44_____. ENERGY EMERGENCY RESPONSE EFFORTS OF THE DEPARTMENT.

(a) CONGRESSIONAL DECLARATION OF PURPOSE.—Section 102 of the Department of Energy Organization Act (42 U.S.C. 7112) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(20) To facilitate the development and implementation of a strategy for responding to energy infrastructure and supply emergencies through—

''(A) continuously monitoring and publishing information on the energy delivery and supply infrastructure of the United States, including electricity, liquid fuels, natural gas, and coal;

''(B) managing Federal strategic energy reserves;

''(C) advising national leadership during emergencies on ways to respond to and minimize energy disruptions; and

''(D) working with Federal agencies and State and local governments—

''(i) to enhance energy emergency preparedness; and

''(ii) to respond to and mitigate energy emergencies.''.

(b) UNDER SECRETARY FOR SCIENCE AND ENERGY.—Section 202(b)(4) of the Department of Energy Organization Act (42 U.S.C. 7132(b)(4)) (as amended by section 4404(a)(3)) is amended, in subparagraph (B), by inserting ''and applied energy'' before ''programs of the''.

(c) RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASSISTANT SECRETARIES.—Section 203(a) of the Department of Energy Organization Act (42 U.S.C. 7133(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(12) Emergency response functions, including assistance in the prevention of, or in the response to, an emergency disruption of energy supply, transmission, and distribution.''.

AMENDMENT NO. 3266

(Purpose: To require the Comptroller General of the United States to prepare a report relating to the statutory and regulatory authority of the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement relating to the legal procurement of privately owned helicopter fuel, without agreement, from lessees, permit holders, operators of federally leased offshore facilities, or independent third parties)

At the end of subtitle E of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 44____. GAO REPORT ON BUREAU OF SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT STATUTORY AND REGULATORY AUTHORITY FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF HELICOPTER FUEL.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a report that defines the statutory and regulatory authority of the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement with respect to legally procuring privately owned helicopter fuel, without agreement, from lessees, permit holders, operators of federally leased offshore facilities, or independent third parties not under contract with the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement or an agent of the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement.

AMENDMENT NO. 3310

(Purpose: To provide for the correction of a survey of certain land in the State of Alaska)

At the end of subtitle E of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 44_____. CONVEYANCE OF FEDERAL LAND WITHIN THE SWAN LAKE HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT BOUNDARY.

Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior, after consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, shall—

(1) survey the exterior boundaries of the tract of Federal land within the project boundary of the Swan Lake Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2911) as generally depicted and labeled ''Lost Creek'' on the map entitled ''Swan Lake Project Boundary—Lot 2'' and dated February 1, 2016; and

(2) issue a patent to the State of Alaska for the tract described in paragraph (1) in accordance with—

(A) the survey authorized under paragraph (1);

(B) section 6(a) of the Act of July 7, 1958 (commonly known as the ''Alaska Statehood Act'') (48 U.S.C. note prec. 21; Public Law 85–508); and

(C) section 24 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 818).

AMENDMENT NO. 3317

(Purpose: To require the Secretary of Energy to ensure that the costs of general and administrative overhead are not allocated to laboratory directed research and development)

At the end of subtitle C of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 42____. RESTORATION OF LABORATORY DIRECTED RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

The Secretary shall ensure that laboratory operating contractors do not allocate costs of general and administrative overhead to laboratory directed research and development.

AMENDMENT NO. 3265, AS MODIFIED

(Purpose: To provide additional priorities for an energy workforce pilot grant program)

In section 3602(d)(9), strike ''or'' at the end.

In section 3602(d)(10), strike the period and insert a semicolon.

In section 3602(d), insert at the end the following:

(11) establish a community college or 2-year technical college-based ''Center of Excellence'' for an energy and maritime workforce technical training program; or

(12) are located in close proximity to marine or port facilities in the Gulf of Mexico, Atlantic Ocean, Pacific Ocean, Arctic Ocean, Bering Sea, Gulf of Alaska, or Great Lakes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3012

(Purpose: To remove the use restrictions on certain land transferred to Rockingham County, Virginia)

At the end, add the following:

TITLE VI—MISCELLANEOUS

SEC. 6001. REMOVAL OF USE RESTRICTION.

Public Law 101–479 (104 Stat. 1158) is amended—

(1) by striking section 2(d); and

(2) by adding the following new section at the end:

''SEC. 4. REMOVAL OF USE RESTRICTION.

''(a) The approximately 1-acre portion of the land referred to in section 3 that is used for purposes of a child care center, as authorized by this Act, shall not be subject to the use restriction imposed in the deed referred to in section 3.

''(b) Upon enactment of this section, the Secretary of the Interior shall execute an instrument to carry out subsection (a).''.

AMENDMENT NO. 3290

(Purpose: To add a provision relating to secondary use applications of electric vehicle batteries)

At the end of section 1306, add the following:

(h) SECONDARY USE APPLICATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out a research, development, and demonstration program that—

(A) builds on any work carried out under section 915 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16195);

(B) identifies possible uses of a vehicle battery after the useful life of the battery in a vehicle has been exhausted;

(C) conducts long-term testing to verify performance and degradation predictions and lifetime valuations for secondary uses;

(D) evaluates innovative approaches to recycling materials from plug-in electric drive vehicles and the batteries used in plug-in electric drive vehicles;

(E)(i) assesses the potential for markets for uses described in subparagraph (B) to develop; and

(ii) identifies any barriers to the development of those markets; and

(F) identifies the potential uses of a vehicle battery—

(i) with the most promise for market development; and

(ii) for which market development would be aided by a demonstration project.

(2) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress an initial report on the findings of the program described in paragraph (1), including recommendations for stationary energy storage and other potential applications for batteries used in plug-in electric drive vehicles.

(3) SECONDARY USE DEMONSTRATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Based on the results of the program described in paragraph (1), the Secretary shall develop guidelines for projects that demonstrate the secondary uses and innovative recycling of vehicle batteries.

(B) PUBLICATION OF GUIDELINES.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall—

(i) publish the guidelines described in subparagraph (A); and

(ii) solicit applications for funding for demonstration projects.

(C) PILOT DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.—Not later than 21 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall select proposals for grant funding under this section, based on an assessment of which proposals are mostly likely to contribute to the development of a secondary market for batteries.

AMENDMENT NO. 3004

(Purpose: To allow the use of Federal disaster relief and emergency assistance for energy-efficient products and structures)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. USE OF FEDERAL DISASTER RELIEF AND EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FOR ENERGY-EFFICIENT PRODUCTS AND STRUCTURES.

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

"SEC. 327. USE OF ASSISTANCE FOR ENERGY-EFFICIENT PRODUCTS AND STRUCTURES.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

''(1) the term 'energy-efficient product' means a product that—

''(A) meets or exceeds the requirements for designation under an Energy Star program established under section 324A of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6294a); or

''(B) meets or exceeds the requirements for designation as being among the highest 25 percent of equivalent products for energy efficiency under the Federal Energy Management Program; and

''(2) the term 'energy-efficient structure' means a residential structure, a public facility, or a private nonprofit facility that meets or exceeds the requirements of Standard 90.1–2013 of the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers or the 2015 International Energy Conservation Code, or any successor thereto.

''(b) USE OF ASSISTANCE.—A recipient of assistance relating to a major disaster or emergency may use the assistance to replace or repair a damaged product or structure with an energy-efficient product or energy-efficient structure.''.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to assistance made available under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) before, on, or after the date of enactment of this Act that is expended on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 3233, AS MODIFIED

(Purpose: To authorize, direct, facilitate, and expedite the transfer of administrative jurisdiction of certain Federal land)

At the end, add the following:

TITLE VI—MISCELLANEOUS

SEC. 6001. INTERAGENCY TRANSFER OF LAND ALONG GEORGE WASHINGTON MEMORIAL PARKWAY.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) MAP.—The term ''Map'' means the map entitled ''George Washington Memorial Parkway—Claude Moore Farm Proposed Boundary Adjustment'', numbered 850_130815, and dated February 2016.

(2) RESEARCH CENTER.—The term ''Research Center'' means the Turner-Fairbank Highway Research Center of the Federal Highway Administration.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

(b) ADMINISTRATIVE JURISDICTION TRANSFER.—

(1) TRANSFER OF JURISDICTION.—

(A) GEORGE WASHINGTON MEMORIAL PARKWAY LAND.—Administrative jurisdiction over the approximately 0.342 acres of Federal land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary within the boundary of the George Washington Memorial Parkway, as generally depicted as ''B'' on the Map, is transferred from the Secretary to the Secretary of Transportation.

(B) RESEARCH CENTER LAND.—Administration jurisdiction over the approximately 0.479 acres of Federal land within the boundary of the Research Center land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Transportation adjacent to the boundary of the George Washington Memorial Parkway, as generally depicted as ''A'' on the Map, is transferred from the Secretary of Transportation to the Secretary.

(2) USE RESTRICTION.—The Secretary shall restrict the use of 0.139 acres of Federal land within the boundary of the George Washington Memorial Parkway immediately adjacent to part of the perimeter fence of the Research Center, generally depicted as ''C'' on the Map, by prohibiting the storage, construction, or installation of any item that may interfere with the access of the Research Center to the restricted land for security and maintenance purposes.

(3) REIMBURSEMENT OR CONSIDERATION.—The transfers of administrative jurisdiction under this subsection shall not be subject to reimbursement or consideration.

(4) COMPLIANCE WITH AGREEMENT.—

(A) AGREEMENT.—The National Park Service and the Federal Highway Administration shall comply with all terms and conditions of the agreement entered into by the parties on September 11, 2002, regarding the transfer of administrative jurisdiction, management, and maintenance of the land described in the agreement.

(B) ACCESS TO RESTRICTED LAND.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the terms of the agreement described in subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall allow the Research Center—

(I) to access the Federal land described in paragraph (1)(B) for purposes of transportation to and from the Research Center; and

(II) to access the Federal land described in paragraphs (1)(B) and (2) for purposes of maintenance in accordance with National Park Service standards, including grass mowing, weed control, tree maintenance, fence maintenance, and maintenance of the visual appearance of the Federal land.

(c) MANAGEMENT OF TRANSFERRED LAND.—

(1) INTERIOR LAND.—The Federal land transferred to the Secretary under subsection (b)(1)(B) shall be—

(A) included in the boundary of the George Washington Memorial Parkway; and

(B) administered by the Secretary as part of the George Washington Memorial Parkway, subject to applicable laws (including regulations).

(2) TRANSPORTATION LAND.—The Federal land transferred to the Secretary of Transportation under subsection (b)(1)(A) shall be—

(A) included in the boundary of the Research Center land; and

(B) removed from the boundary of the George Washington Memorial Parkway.

(3) RESTRICTED-USE LAND.—The Federal land that the Secretary has designated for restricted use under subsection (b)(2) shall be maintained by the Research Center.

(d) MAP ON FILE.—The Map shall be available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the National Park Service.

AMENDMENT NO. 3239

(Purpose: To establish a subcommittee to coordinate and facilitate United States leadership in high-energy physics)

At the end of subtitle C of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 42___. NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL COORDINATING SUBCOMMITTEE FOR HIGH-ENERGY PHYSICS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the National Science and Technology Council shall establish a subcommittee to coordinate Federal efforts relating to high-energy physics research (referred to in this section as the ''subcommittee'').

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the subcommittee are—

(1) to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of United States investment in high-energy physics; and

(2) to support a robust, internationally competitive United States high-energy physics program that includes—

(A) underground science and engineering research; and

(B) physical infrastructure.

(c) CO-CHAIRS.—The Director of the National Science Foundation and the Secretary shall serve as co-chairs of the subcommittee.

(d) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The responsibilities of the subcommittee shall be—

(1) to provide recommendations on planning for construction and stewardship of large facilities participating in high-energy physics;

(2) to provide recommendations on research coordination and collaboration among the programs and activities of Federal agencies;

(3) to establish goals and priorities for high-energy physics, underground science, and research and development that will strengthen United States competitiveness in high-energy physics;

(4) to propose methods for engagement with international, Federal, and State agencies and Federal laboratories not represented on the subcommittee to identify and reduce regulatory, logistical, and fiscal barriers that inhibit United States leadership in high-energy physics and related underground science; and

(5) to develop, and update once every 5 years, a strategic plan to guide Federal programs and activities in support of high-energy physics research.

(e) ANNUAL REPORT.—Annually, the subcommittee shall update Congress regarding—

(1) efforts taken in support of the strategic plan described in subsection (d)(5);

(2) an evaluation of the needs for maintaining United States leadership in high-energy physics; and

(3) identification of priorities in the area of high-energy physics.

(f) SUNSET.—The subcommittee shall terminate on the date that is 10 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 3221

(Purpose: To establish a voluntary WaterSense program within the Environmental Protection Agency)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. WATERSENSE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Part B of title III of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act is amended by adding after section 324A (42 U.S.C. 6294a) the following:

"SEC. 324B. WATERSENSE.

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF WATERSENSE PROGRAM.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—There is established within the Environmental Protection Agency a voluntary WaterSense program to identify and promote water-efficient products, buildings, landscapes, facilities, processes, and services that, through voluntary labeling of, or other forms of communications regarding, products, buildings, landscapes, facilities, processes, and services while meeting strict performance criteria, sensibly—

''(A) reduce water use;

''(B) reduce the strain on public and community water systems and wastewater and stormwater infrastructure;

''(C) conserve energy used to pump, heat, transport, and treat water; and

''(D) preserve water resources for future generations.

''(2) INCLUSIONS.—The Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (referred to in this section as the 'Administrator') shall, consistent with this section, identify water-efficient products, buildings, landscapes, facilities, processes, and services, including categories such as—

''(A) irrigation technologies and services;

''(B) point-of-use water treatment devices;

''(C) plumbing products;

''(D) reuse and recycling technologies;

''(E) landscaping and gardening products, including moisture control or water enhancing technologies;

''(F) xeriscaping and other landscape conversions that reduce water use;

''(G) whole house humidifiers; and

''(H) water-efficient buildings or facilities.

''(b) DUTIES.—The Administrator, coordinating as appropriate with the Secretary, shall—

''(1) establish—

''(A) a WaterSense label to be used for items meeting the certification criteria established in accordance with this section; and

''(B) the procedure, including the methods and means, and criteria by which an item may be certified to display the WaterSense label;

''(2) enhance public awareness regarding the WaterSense label through outreach, education, and other means;

''(3) preserve the integrity of the WaterSense label by—

''(A) establishing and maintaining feasible performance criteria so that products, buildings, landscapes, facilities, processes, and services labeled with the WaterSense label perform as well or better than less water-efficient counterparts;

''(B) overseeing WaterSense certifications made by third parties;

''(C) as determined appropriate by the Administrator, using testing protocols, from the appropriate, applicable, and relevant consensus standards, for the purpose of determining standards compliance; and

''(D) auditing the use of the WaterSense label in the marketplace and preventing cases of misuse; and

''(4) not more often than 6 years after adoption or major revision of any WaterSense specification, review and, if appropriate, revise the specification to achieve additional water savings;

''(5) in revising a WaterSense specification—

''(A) provide reasonable notice to interested parties and the public of any changes, including effective dates, and an explanation of the changes;

''(B) solicit comments from interested parties and the public prior to any changes;

''(C) as appropriate, respond to comments submitted by interested parties and the public; and

''(D) provide an appropriate transition time prior to the applicable effective date of any changes, taking into account the timing necessary for the manufacture, marketing, training, and distribution of the specific water-efficient product, building, landscape, process, or service category being addressed; and

''(6) not later than December 31, 2018, consider for review and revision any WaterSense specification adopted before January 1, 2012.

''(c) TRANSPARENCY.—The Administrator shall, to the maximum extent practicable and not less than annually, regularly estimate and make available to the public the production and relative market shares and savings of water, energy, and capital costs of water, wastewater, and stormwater attributable to the use of WaterSense-labeled products, buildings, landscapes, facilities, processes, and services.

''(d) DISTINCTION OF AUTHORITIES.—In setting or maintaining specifications for Energy Star pursuant to section 324A, and WaterSense under this section, the Secretary and Administrator shall coordinate to prevent duplicative or conflicting requirements among the respective programs.

''(e) NO WARRANTY.—A WaterSense label shall not create an express or implied warranty.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. prec. 6201) is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 324A the following:

''Sec. 324B. WaterSense.''.

AMENDMENT NO. 3203

(Purpose: To provide for a study of waivers of certain cost-sharing requirements of the Department of Energy)

At the end of subtitle E of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 44___. STUDY OF WAIVERS OF CERTAIN COST-SHARING REQUIREMENTS.

Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall—

(1) complete a study on the ability of, and any actions before the date of enactment of this Act by, the Secretary to waive the cost-sharing requirement under section 988 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16352); and

(2) based on the results of the study under paragraph (1), make recommendations to Congress for the issuance of, and factors that should be considered with respect to, waivers of the cost-sharing requirement by the Secretary.

AMENDMENT NO. 3309, AS MODIFIED

(Purpose: To provide for activities relating to the centennial of the National Park System)

At the end of subtitle E of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 44_____. NATIONAL PARK CENTENNIAL.

(a) NATIONAL PARK CENTENNIAL CHALLENGE FUND.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 1049 of title 54, United States Code (as amended by section 5001(a)), is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 104909. National Park Centennial Challenge Fund

''(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to establish a fund in the Treasury—

''(1) to finance signature projects and programs to enhance the National Park System as the centennial of the National Park System approaches in 2016; and

''(2) to prepare the System for another century of conservation, preservation, and enjoyment.

''(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) CHALLENGE FUND.—The term 'Challenge Fund' means the National Park Centennial Challenge Fund established by subsection (c)(1).

''(2) QUALIFIED DONATION.—The term 'qualified donation' means a cash donation or the pledge of a cash donation guaranteed by an irrevocable letter of credit to the Service that the Secretary certifies is to be used for a signature project or program.

''(3) SIGNATURE PROJECT OR PROGRAM.—The term 'signature project or program' means any project or program identified by the Secretary as a project or program that would further the purposes of the System or any System unit.

''(c) NATIONAL PARK CENTENNIAL CHALLENGE FUND.—

''(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Treasury of the United States a fund, to be known as the 'National Park Centennial Challenge Fund'.

''(2) DEPOSITS.—The Challenge Fund shall consist of—

''(A) qualified donations that are transferred from the Service donation account, in accordance with subsection (e)(1); and

''(B) not more than $17,500,000, to be appropriated from the general fund of the Treasury, in accordance with subsection (e)(2).

''(3) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts in the Challenge Fund shall—

''(A) be available to the Secretary for signature projects and programs under this title, without further appropriation; and

''(B) remain available until expended.

''(d) SIGNATURE PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS.—

''(1) DEVELOPMENT OF LIST.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall develop a list of signature projects and programs eligible for funding from the Challenge Fund.

''(2) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations and Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committees on Appropriations and Natural Resources of the House of Representatives the list developed under paragraph (1).

''(3) UPDATES.—Subject to the notice requirements under paragraph (2), the Secretary may add any signature project or program to the list developed under paragraph (1).

''(e) DONATIONS AND MATCHING FEDERAL FUNDS.—

''(1) QUALIFIED DONATIONS.—The Secretary may transfer any qualified donations to the Challenge Fund.

''(2) MATCHING AMOUNT.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Challenge Fund for each fiscal year through fiscal year 2020 an amount equal to the amount of qualified donations received for the fiscal year.

''(3) SOLICITATION.—Nothing in this section expands any authority of the Secretary, the Service, or any employee of the Service to receive or solicit donations.

''(f) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary shall provide with the submission of the budget of the President to Congress for each fiscal year a report on the status and funding of the signature projects and programs.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections affected for title 54, United States Code (as amended by section 5001(b)), is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 104908 the following:

''§104909. National Park Centennial Challenge Fund.''.

(b) SECOND CENTURY ENDOWMENT FOR THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 1011 of title 54, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 101121. Second Century Endowment for the National Park System

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The National Park Foundation shall establish an endowment, to be known as the 'Second Century Endowment for the National Park System' (referred to in this section as the 'Endowment').

''(b) CAMPAIGN.—To further the mission of the Service, the National Park Foundation may undertake a campaign to fund the Endowment through gifts, devises, or bequests, in accordance with section 101113.

''(c) USE OF PROCEEDS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—On request of the Secretary, the National Park Foundation shall expend proceeds from the Endowment in accordance with projects and programs in furtherance of the mission of the Service, as identified by the Secretary.

''(2) MANAGEMENT.—The National Park Foundation shall manage the Endowment in a manner that ensures that annual expenditures as a percentage of the principal are consistent with Internal Revenue Service guidelines for endowments maintained for charitable purposes.

''(d) INVESTMENTS.—The National Park Foundation shall—

''(1) maintain the Endowment in an interest-bearing account; and

''(2) invest Endowment proceeds with the purpose of supporting and enriching the System in perpetuity.

''(e) REPORT.—Each year, the National Park Foundation shall make publicly available information on the amounts deposited into, and expended from, the Endowment.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections affected for title 54, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 101120 the following:

''§101121. Second Century Endowment for the National Park System.''.

(c) NATIONAL PARK SERVICE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY PROTECTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 1049 of title 54, United States Code (as amended by subsection (a)(1)), is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 104910. Intellectual property

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) SERVICE EMBLEM.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'Service emblem' means any word, phrase, insignia, logo, logotype, trademark, service mark, symbol, design, graphic, image, color, badge, uniform, or any combination of emblems used to identify the Service or a component of the System.

''(B) INCLUSIONS.—The term 'Service emblem' includes—

''(i) the Service name;

''(ii) an official System unit name;

''(iii) any other name used to identify a Service component or program; and

''(iv) the Arrowhead symbol.

''(2) SERVICE UNIFORM.—The term 'Service uniform' means any combination of apparel, accessories, or emblems, any distinctive clothing or other items of dress, or a representation of dress—

''(A) that is worn during the performance of official duties; and

''(B) that identifies the wearer as a Service employee.

''(b) PROHIBITED ACTS.—No person shall, without the written permission of the Secretary—

''(1) use any Service emblem or uniform, or any word, term, name, symbol or device or any combination of emblems to suggest any colorable likeness of the Service emblem or Service uniform in connection with goods or services in commerce if the use is likely to cause confusion, or to deceive the public into believing that the emblem or uniform is from or connected with the Service;

''(2) use any Service emblem or Service uniform or any word, term, name, symbol, device, or any combination of emblems or uniforms to suggest any likeness of the Service emblem or Service uniform in connection with goods or services in commerce in a manner reasonably calculated to convey the impression to the public that the goods or services are approved, endorsed, or authorized by the Service;

''(3) use in commerce any word, term, name, symbol, device or any combination of words, terms, names, symbols, or devices to suggest any likeness of the Service emblem or Service uniform in a manner that is reasonably calculated to convey the impression that the wearer of the item of apparel is acting pursuant to the legal authority of the Service; or

''(4) knowingly make any false statement for the purpose of obtaining permission to use any Service emblem or Service uniform.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections affected for title 54, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 104908 (as added by subsection (a)(2)) the following:

''§104910. Intellectual property.''.

(d) NATIONAL PARK SERVICE EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Division A of subtitle I of title 54, United States Code, is amended by inserting after chapter 1007 the following:

''CHAPTER 1008—EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION

''CHAPTER 1008—EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION

''Sec.

''100801. Definitions.

''100802. Interpretation and education authority.

''100803. Interpretation and education evaluation and quality improvement.

''100804. Improved utilization of partners and volunteers in interpretation and education.

''§ 100801. Definitions

''In this chapter:

''(1) EDUCATION.—The term 'education' means enhancing public awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the resources of the System through learner-centered, place-based materials, programs, and activities that achieve specific learning objectives as identified in a curriculum.

''(2) INTERPRETATION.—The term 'interpretation' means—

''(A) providing opportunities for people to form intellectual and emotional connections to gain awareness, appreciation, and understanding of the resources of the System; and

''(B) the professional career field of Service employees, volunteers, and partners who interpret the resources of the System.

''(3) RELATED AREA.—The term 'related area' means—

''(A) a component of the National Trails System;

''(B) a National Heritage Area; and

''(C) an affiliated area administered in connection with the System.

''§ 100802. Interpretation and education authority

''The Secretary shall ensure that management of System units and related areas is enhanced by the availability and utilization of a broad program of the highest quality interpretation and education.

''§ 100803. Interpretation and education evaluation and quality improvement

''The Secretary may undertake a program of regular evaluation of interpretation and education programs to ensure that the programs—

''(1) adjust to the ways in which people learn and engage with the natural world and shared heritage as embodied in the System;

''(2) reflect different cultural backgrounds, ages, education, gender, abilities, ethnicity, and needs;

''(3) demonstrate innovative approaches to management and appropriately incorporate emerging learning and communications technology; and

''(4) reflect current scientific and academic research, content, methods, and audience analysis.

''§ 100804. Improved utilization of partners and volunteers in interpretation and education

''The Secretary may—

''(1) coordinate with System unit partners and volunteers in the delivery of quality programs and services to supplement the programs and services provided by the Service as part of a Long-Range Interpretive Plan for a System unit;

''(2) support interpretive partners by providing opportunities to participate in interpretive training; and

''(3) collaborate with other Federal and non-Federal public or private agencies, organizations, or institutions for the purposes of developing, promoting, and making available educational opportunities related to resources of the System and programs.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of chapters for division A of subtitle I of title 54, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to chapter 1007 the following:

''1008. Education and Interpretation 100801''.

(e) PUBLIC LAND CORPS AMENDMENTS.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—Section 203(10)(A) of the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C. 1722(10)(A)) is amended by striking ''25'' and inserting ''30''.

(2) PARTICIPANTS.—Section 204(b) of the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C. 1723(b)) is amended in the first sentence by striking ''25'' and inserting ''30''.

(3) HIRING.—Section 207(c)(2) of the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C., 1726(c)(2)) is amended by striking ''120 days'' and inserting ''2 years''.

(f) NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION.—Subchapter II of chapter 1011 of title 54, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in section 101112—

(A) by striking subsection (a) and inserting the following:

''(a) MEMBERSHIP.—The National Park Foundation shall consist of a Board having as members at least 6 private citizens of the United States appointed by the Secretary, with the Secretary and the Director serving as ex officio members of the Board.''; and

(B) by striking subsection (c) and inserting the following:

''(c) CHAIRMAN.—

''(1) SELECTION.—The Board shall select a Chairman of the Board from among the members of the Board.

''(2) TERM.—The Chairman of the Board shall serve for a 2-year term.''; and

(2) in section 101113(a)—

AMENDMENT NO. 3229

(Purpose: To establish a program to reduce the potential impacts of solar energy facilities on certain species)

At the end of subtitle E of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 44___. PROGRAM TO REDUCE THE POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF SOLAR ENERGY FACILITIES ON CERTAIN SPECIES.

In carrying out a program of the Department relating to solar energy or the conduct of solar energy projects using funds provided by the Department, the Secretary shall establish a program to undertake research that—

(1) identifies baseline avian populations and mortality; and

(2) quantifies the impacts of solar energy projects on birds, as compared to other threats to birds.

AMENDMENT NO. 3251

(Purpose: To modify the calculation of fuel economy for gaseous fuel dual fueled automobiles)

On page 150, between lines 14 and 15, insert the following:

SEC. 131__. GASEOUS FUEL DUAL FUELED AUTOMOBILES.

Section 32905 of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking subsection (d) and inserting the following:

''(d) GASEOUS FUEL DUAL FUELED AUTOMOBILES.—

''(1) MODEL YEARS 1993 THROUGH 2016.—For any model of gaseous fuel dual fueled automobile manufactured by a manufacturer in model years 1993 through 2016, the Administrator shall measure the fuel economy for that model by dividing 1.0 by the sum of—

''(A) .5 divided by the fuel economy measured under section 32904(c) of this title when operating the model on gasoline or diesel fuel; and

''(B) .5 divided by the fuel economy measured under subsection (c) of this section when operating the model on gaseous fuel.

''(2) SUBSEQUENT MODEL YEARS.—For any model of gaseous fuel dual fueled automobile manufactured by a manufacturer in model year 2017 or any subsequent model year, the Administrator shall calculate fuel economy in accordance with section 600.510-12 (c)(2)(vii) of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment of this paragraph) if the vehicle qualifies under section 32901(c).''.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on these amendments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate on these amendments, the question is on agreeing to the amendments en bloc.

The amendments (Nos. 3276; 3302, as modified; 3055; 3050; 3237; 3308; 3286, as modified; 3075; 3168; 3292, as modified; 3155; 3270; 3313, as modified; 3214; 3266; 3310; 3317; 3265, as modified; 3012; 3290; 3004; 3233, as modified; 3239; 3221; 3203; 3309, as modified; 3229; 3251; and 2963) were agreed to en bloc.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, we are back on the floor with the Energy Policy Modernization Act—an act that many of us have spent a considerable amount of time not only here on the floor discussing but, prior to its arrival on the floor of the Senate, working through a process that, quite honestly, I am very pleased to be able to report on.

As we have just heard, with the voice vote that we just took en bloc, we have accepted and adopted 29 additional amendments to this broad, bipartisan, and, as some would suggest, long-stalled Energy bill. We have been working on this now on the floor for more than 2 months. It actually first came to the floor on January 27 of this year. But we have seen patience, a little bit of persistence, and a truly good-faith negotiation. Last week we were able to clear the last of the objections to this bill and to define a path forward.

Again, we just reached unanimous consent on these 29 additional amendments. There will be eight rollcall votes this afternoon and then votes on cloture and final passage, and, hopefully, today we will see the last day of debate on our Energy bill.

Since we have been away from EPMA for so long, I wanted to start my comments this afternoon by reminding colleagues of the process we have followed and of the many good provisions we have incorporated within the bill that make it worthy of the Senate's support.

It began with a pretty simple and straightforward recognition; that is, that it was time—it was actually well past time—to update and reform our Nation's energy policies. The last time the Congress passed a major Energy bill was in December of 2007. So it has been almost a decade's worth of changes in technologies and markets taking place across the country.

Our energy space has changed, but what hasn't changed are the policies. The policies that we see are increasingly outdated and detached from the opportunities we need to advance good energy policy in this country.

So what did we do? We set out to write a bill. Our Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2016 is the result of more than a year of hard work by those of us who serve on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. It is the result of multiple listening sessions, multiple legislative hearings, bipartisan negotiations, and then a multiday markup that we held last July. At the end of that markup, we were able to approve a bill by a strong bipartisan margin—18 to 4.

The reason the bill passed out of committee with such strong bipartisan support was not just because of our commitment to a good process—and it was very clear that it was a good process throughout—but we matched that good process with a commitment, an equal commitment, to good policy. We worked together across the aisle to include good ideas from Members on both sides of the aisle, from Members on the committee, and Members off the committee. Some of the things we agreed to include are going to speak to the input we received.

Senator BARRASSO has led an effort that will streamline LNG exports. He was joined by 17 other Members. That is incorporated in our bill.

We agreed to include a major efficiency bill that the occupant of the Chair, the Senator from Ohio, together with the Senator from New Hampshire, have spearheaded for years. That bill was supported by 13 other Members and is incorporated as part of this overall Energy Policy Modernization Act.

We agreed to improve our mineral security. This is something I have been leading, along with Senators HELLER and CRAPO and RISCH.

We worked to promote the use of hydropower—a renewable, emission-free resource that is favored by just about everybody in this Chamber.

We agreed to streamline permitting for natural gas pipelines. This was an effort that was led by the Senator from West Virginia, Mrs. CAPITO.

We agreed to a new oil and gas permitting pilot program. This was one of several ideas that the Senator from North Dakota, Mr. HOEVEN, helped advance.

We have worked to improve our Nation's cyber security, based on legislation that was advanced by the Senator from New Mexico, Mr. HEINRICH, as well as Senator RISCH from Idaho.

We also made innovation a key priority to promote the development of promising technologies.

As part of that, we agreed to reauthorize some of the energy-related provisions that were contained in the America COMPETES Act, which was led by Senator ALEXANDER from Tennessee.

We also agreed to reauthorize the coal R&D program at the Department of Energy. This was, again, based on another bipartisan proposal that was led by both Senators from West Virginia, Senators CAPITO and MANCHIN, as well as the Senator from Ohio who is occupying the Chair now, Senator PORTMAN.

What we came away with was a substantive, timely, and bipartisan measure that has a very real chance of being the first major Energy bill signed into law in well over 8 years.

So this is important, for a host of different reasons.

Moving forward with this act will help America produce more energy. It will help Americans save more money. It will help ensure that energy can be transported from where it is produced to where it is needed. It will strengthen our status as the best innovator in the world, and it will bring us just one step closer to becoming a global energy superpower. It will do all of this without raising taxes, without imposing new mandates, and without adding to the Federal deficit.

That was our starting point here on the Senate floor back in January. When we came to the floor with the Energy bill, I think those of us on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee thought it was a pretty strong bill, but we have made it better. We kept building on it. Since the debate began, we have voted on a total of 38 amendments. We have accepted 32 of them, and we have added even more good ideas from even more Members to an already very bipartisan package. Right now, the Energy Policy Modernization Act includes priorities from 62 Members of the Senate. In other words, more than three-fifths of the Members of this body have contributed something to this overall bill, and that number will rise throughout the day as we process additional amendments.

One amendment I am particularly pleased with is the resources title that I have worked on and written with Senator CANTWELL. We have agreed to a package of 30 lands and water bills which will address a wide range of issues in Western States. That package also includes the bipartisan sportsmen's provisions that we have been working to pass in this body for at least three Congresses. This is a measure that will ensure that our public lands are open, unless closed for a legitimate reason, to require agencies to enhance opportunities for our sportsmen on public lands and more. I want to recognize my colleague from New Mexico who has helped us with this endeavor in making sure the sportsmen's package was included as this bill moved forward.

It is true we were a little bit delayed in reaching the point where we are today as we are processing these final amendments, but I thank the Senate and the majority leader for sticking with us on this. At one point in time, it was suggested that we were going to

have to pull a rabbit out of a hat in order to get this bill back on the floor with a consent process that would allow us to finish. Well, the rabbit has come out of the hat. Some might suggest it was a little bit battered, but, nonetheless, nobody gave up on this bill.

I acknowledge Senator CANTWELL and her staff for working with us every step of the way. We knew we had a path forward. We worked tirelessly to find it because we know this is a bill worth passing.

Over the next couple of hours, Members will have an opportunity to deliver their final comments on the Energy bill, and after that we will move to these eight stacked rollcall votes, followed by votes on cloture, and then, hopefully, on final passage.

I am pleased to be able to say we will have wrapped up our work on this bill and send it over to the House of Representatives—again, hopefully, by the time we go home tonight.

I thank the Senate for working with us to get to this point, and I would encourage Members on both sides of the aisle to recognize the good work and the good ideas that are included within this bill. And when the time comes, I encourage every Member to vote yes on a broad bipartisan, good energy bill.

Mr. President, I recognize my colleague Senator CANTWELL, the ranking member on the Energy Committee and a fabulous partner throughout this effort. I would like to thank her for all she has done to get us to this point as well.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I rise to thank Chairman MURKOWSKI for her leadership on the Energy bill. She and I have been working on this for almost a year now, and today we are at a point where we think we will see the final product of this legislation in the next 24 hours move out of the Senate and over to the House of Representatives. So it is a good day. We are very thankful that all the hard work she and her team and our side on the minority have put in will result in successfully getting a bill to the President's desk.

I acknowledge our colleagues in the Senate have addressed something like 40 different priority pieces of legislation. We have added, as the chairman has said, 60 different amendments during the floor process. We have had important compromises on clean energy technology, energy efficiency, and infrastructure with truly bipartisan support. We need to pass this bill, and that is why we have been persistent.

It has been since 2007 that we passed an energy bill, led by Senator Jeff Bingaman and Senator Pete Domenici, that laid down a lot of fundamental things in the renewable energy markets and clean energy investment, but the landscape has changed greatly since 2007. Since then, because of those efforts, the United States has more than quadrupled the wind power than what we had before. It has more than tripled than what we had. Solar photovoltaic installations are up nearly by 15 times. The number of LED lights has grown more than 90 times.

From 2007 to 2014, our national energy use also fell 2.4 percent while the GDP grew 8 percent. This represents a very significant point in energy productivity; that is, we have continued to produce cleaner sources of energy and helped diversify our own energy portfolio. Yet our economy and GDP still grew. It is important because these policies that are in this bill are continuing to move forward on energy efficiency, clean energy, renewables, and new technology.

I thank everybody who has been cooperative in this process. Clearly, we could have had a my-way-or-the-highway approach that was taken on the Shaheen-Portman legislation. I know my colleague is leaving the floor, but Senator PORTMAN and Senator SHAHEEN played a large role in past discussions, but the chairwoman didn't take that approach. She said: Let's all work together. In a spirit of compromise, let's pass legislation that our colleagues want to see. And of course, the U.S. Department of Energy published the Quadrennial Energy Review last year, which said that we are at an energy crossroads. And we looked at what our Nation needed to do at this crossroad, to make investments in modernizing our 21st century energy portfolio. Energy is the lifeblood of our economy. If we put good energy policy in place, businesses and consumers get more affordable, cleaner, and more renewable energy.

This bill takes important steps on research and development of clean energy technologies to help us integrate these new, clean energy technologies that are not already in the marketplace, and gaining a foothold on new clean energy technologies in marine, hydrokinetic and geothermal. I thank our colleague Senator WYDEN for his leadership on many of these issues.

The bill also takes important steps in advanced grid technology to help us with new integration of our renewable resources. It authorizes $2 billion for technology demonstration grants to make sure that we are continuing the development of a microgrid deployment. I know from the chairman of the committee it is something very important to Alaska and the chairman, as they have a huge territory and lots to cover. So, making sure that microgrid development gets the technical support and assistance is critical.

The bill includes an initiative to accelerate the RD&D of energy storage, a technology that many witnesses before our committee have labeled as the game-changer—and I believe it is the game-changer. As a hydro State that gets more than 70 percent of our electricity from inexpensive renewable sources, like hydro. So making sure we can store some of that energy is a game-changer for the electricity grid.

Just as important, this bill makes a major investment in cyber security. We are talking about technologies that are key to making sure we protect our grid, making it more resilient, basically making it more robust so we can continue to improve it and face less risk in the future.

We have many opportunities in this Energy bill to continue to promote the advanced fuels and energy information that are going to allow us to continue to diversify our energy resources. We also want to make sure we are understanding how the United States can maintains its competitiveness in a clean energy economy. For example, the global smart grid economy is expected to grow by $400 billion in the next 5 years. It is pretty basic. Anytime you can save on the supply you already have, it is a wise investment. Many people want to invest in making their electricity and the use of their current energy supply smarter. I like the smart building provisions of this bill. Smart building will end up using sensors to better direct and maintain the energy flow in buildings. Why is this so important? It is important because about 40 percent of our energy use in the U.S. comes from buildings today. The Department of Energy believes we can reduce the cost of energy in our buildings by about 20 percent. I don't think there is a person in the Senate who hasn't walked into a room and felt like the thermostat just wasn't right. Whatever it said, the room seemed to be the opposite. That is why we want buildings to have smarter technology, more sophisticated technology, so we can save energy and help our businesses be more competitive.

Energy efficiency in the Chinese market is expected to be more than $1.5 trillion by 2035. So continuing our leadership, this bill will help us grow jobs and grow industries in the United States. Energy efficiency and building standards have also lowered costs. A 20-percent cut of energy use in buildings would save $80 billion each year in energy bills. That is something that would give any U.S. manufacturer a competitive advantage. Investing in smart building makes sense. I am pleased that while investing in this we are also helping our manufacturers.

We just had a hearing with the manufacturing industry in the Energy Committee. They told us they were literally bringing overseas jobs home to the United States because we are continuing to invest in the right advanced manufacturing technologies so they will continue to be competitive. I speak now of what is happening with aerospace manufacturing in composite lightweight materials. The research we did allowed us to continue to be proficient in that area and have more jobs brought back to the United States.

This bill invests in smart manufacturing. It would enhance fuel efficiency opportunities for advanced truck fleets. I thank Senators STABENOW,

PETERS, and ALEXANDER for their work on that provision. Heavy-duty trucks move 70 percent of our freight and use 20 percent of the fuel consumed in the United States. This sector can continue to use the advancements in these technologies to continue their competitive advantage.

This legislation also focuses on workforce training issues. We know we need more jobs as the energy profile continues to change. The good news is these are high-paying jobs. In my State, the average salary for a utility worker is 57 percent higher than the average salary of all other industries in the State. Our bill establishes a competitive workforce grant, a job training program through community colleges, and helps with registered apprentice programs so we can get the workforce of tomorrow that the Secretary of Energy says we need. His report says we need 1.5 million new workers in the energy industry. Let's go about making sure we get that.

Lastly, I want to mention the Land and Water Conservation Fund, a program that was actually authored by Senator ''Scoop'' Jackson from Washington and he remains the longest-serving chairman of the Senate Energy Committee. The Land and Water Conservation Fund was a fully functional and effective program for 50 years, until Congress allowed its authority to lapse last fall. This bill would make sure that never happens again by making it permanent.

I thank the chairman for her leadership because she helped us craft a compromise on making the Land and Water Conservation Fund permanent, to get the right focus on how the program works and to continue to make sure we are making investments in outdoor recreation.

This Land and Water Conservation Fund helps support more than 200,000 jobs in the State of Washington and a nearly $20 billion economy. When we talk about the various amendments we are going to be talking about today, I want to make sure Members understand that a lot of good work in the committee went into the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

We will also be voting on a lot of public lands amendments later. I want to bring up one, the Yakima River Basin bill, which we passed out of committee on a bipartisan vote. It's a holistic approach to dealing with water management. I hope it becomes a model for the rest of the country.

I also thank Secretary Moniz and his staff and Secretary Jewell and her staff for all the work that was done in the committee on both the lands package and on the energy provisions. I know the chairwoman probably discussed the issue of natural gas exports and Secretary Moniz provided us language for how the agency is working that we put into the bill.

I again thank my two colleagues who are on the floor, Senator SHAHEEN and Senator PORTMAN. Certainly Senator SHAHEEN has been dogged in her enthusiastic support for not just energy efficiency policy, working with Senator PORTMAN, but when she left the committee, I don't think she really left the committee. She just pretended, so that she was somehow still connected to our efforts. I thank her for that and also Senator PORTMAN. I think we have taken the good work of these individuals and probably had almost 30 different energy efficiency proposals in this base legislation bill that we have incorporated and now are able to move forward on. I also thank my colleague Senator HEINRICH, who has several provisions in this bill and several that will be voted on shortly in the lands package.

These individuals, along with those I just mentioned, members of the committee, provided such great leadership for us in putting this final bill before the Members of the Senate. I hope our colleagues will give it enthusiastic support. It represents a lot of discussion. It is not the perfect bill that the chairwoman would have written nor the exact bill I would have written.

But it is a compromise on the modernization of energy that this country needs to move toward a safer, more secure, cleaner energy force and a skilled workforce to go with delivering it.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. MURKOWSKI). The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I want to start by commending the Presiding Officer and Senator CANTWELL for getting this bill to the floor. They say the third time is the charm. I think this may be the fourth or the fifth time. But I will say that I marvel, Senator CANTWELL and Senator MURKOWSKI, at your patience and your persistence.

You have never lost sight of the goal, which is to actually move legislation that will help us create jobs, make our economy more efficient, as Senator CANTWELL has said, and improve our energy policies at a time when we are desperate to be able to address some of the new changes we see in our economy and in our energy situation in particular. So thank you for your persistence.

I also want to commend you and thank you for including as title I of this legislation the energy efficiency legislation, the Portman-Shaheen energy efficiency legislation that we just talked about.

Senator SHAHEEN is here on the floor with me. I hope she will talk about this bill in a second. This is something we worked on a long time—I think over 5 years now. It is an opportunity for us as a body to actually move forward with sensible legislation that makes our Federal Government more efficient and our factories more efficient, as Senator CANTWELL has talked about.

It improves our ability to create jobs and to be able to be more energy independent. It is the kind of win-win legislation that we do too seldom around here. It is an opportunity for us today to send a strong message to the House that we would like to move broad energy efficiency legislation. Hopefully, we can get it to the President's desk for signature and move it ahead.

There are two parts of the Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act. That is our legislation that has already been passed by this Chamber. Those two parts have been signed by the President. They are at work now.

I will say that already they are helping to allow individuals to use less energy and, therefore, have more savings. That lets companies to be more efficient, to create more jobs, and to reduce emissions. Now it is time to pass this remaining part of the legislation, the main part of the legislation which includes bipartisan reforms that we are taking up today.

It is about time we get these across the finish line. The priority I have had here in the Senate has been on jobs and wages. That is exactly what this legislation does. It is really a jobs bill, among other things. According to a recent study of our legislation, the Portman-Shaheen bill, by 2030 it will help create nearly 200,000 new jobs and help the economy by saving consumers about $16.7 billion in reduced energy costs.

So this is legislation about energy, but it is also about our economy and jobs. By the way, when we started this legislation, it was the Shaheen-Portman legislation. It has remained a totally bipartisan—even nonpartisan—effort.

Our workers in Ohio and in the States represented in this Chamber are competing with countries all over the world. If you think about it, a lot of these companies that are in other places, strictly in Europe and Japan, are very energy efficient. That gives them an advantage. It makes it harder for us to be able to add jobs here to be able to compete because their costs are lower and their profits are up.

So part of this legislation is strongly supported by the manufacturers in this country because they know that, by making our plants more energy efficient, we are going to give our workers in Ohio and around the country and our companies a competitive advantage. So that is one thing that is very important about this legislation. This will help us to be able to compete in a global economy.

It also creates more jobs to have more supply of energy. So it is not just that we are being more efficient, which is very good, but I will say that in this legislation we are also encouraging more production, including energy infrastructure that the chairman talked about earlier. So my view is very simple. We should be producing more and using less. That combination really works for our economy.

Over the last 7 years on the ''produce more'' side, we have been in the midst really of an energy production renaissance. This is because of new advances

in technology. It has dramatically changed the productivity and output of American energy companies.

I am talking about everything. I am talking about solar and wind. I am talking about hydro. I am certainly talking about natural gas with fracking. I am also talking about oil and coal. We have become the world super power in energy—the world super power in energy. This is good for our country. This is good for all of us as consumers. With lower energy costs now, it is good for the competitiveness of our economy. But it is also a change. So the underlying legislation here—the broad legislation—is very important because our economy and our energy situation are very different than they were the last time we reformed energy laws.

That is why we need this broader legislation in my view. It does have some needed changes, including bringing our permitting process up to speed, our regulations up to the times, and, again, dealing with some of the other issues with regard to our energy sector, which has been talked about this afternoon.

Just as it makes sense to produce more, it makes sense to use less, to eliminate some of the waste in our energy system, to make it more efficient. Production and efficiency are totally complementary. By improving energy efficiency again, our jobs bill here will actually create more economic growth and create more opportunities for Ohioans.

The Portman-Shaheen bill will also strengthen our national security. Why do I say that? Well, it makes us more energy independent. That is critical. We are already doing this through some means, but if we can get this legislation passed, we will be doing it through better energy efficiency as well. The bill helps clean our environment. By some estimates, passing Portman-Shaheen will have an impact on our carbon emissions, the equivalent to taking 20 million cars off the road over the next 15 years.

So it does have an impact in terms of dealing with the emissions issue. I am a really strong supporter of finding solutions that actually help the environment, help the economy, and help create jobs. Well, this is that sweet spot here. This legislation is a classic example. Our bill also provides a model for how to ensure that we can do it without a lot of new job-destroying mandates or regulations. There are no mandates in this legislation. There are lots of incentives for the private sector, but we try to make the Federal Government, in this legislation, a better partner, rather than a better task master. Again, I think that is the sweet spot.

One thing it does is it makes the Federal Government practice what it preaches. So it says to the Federal Government: You are the largest energy user in the world. You are far from efficient. Can't we do a better job in the Federal Government by having the Federal Government lead by example? It does this at the State and local level by updating building codes for government building, providing grants for retrofitting hospitals, youth centers, and faith-based organizations with energy efficiency improvements.

It would get rid of some of the duplicative green building programs that are at the Department of Energy, to make sure those are working better, are more consolidated. It establishes a Federal smart building program to conduct research and development on smart building technology, which was talked about by Senator CANTWELL a moment ago. There is a huge opportunity here because 40 percent of our energy use is in our buildings.

It would codify in statute that Federal agencies must reduce their energy intensity 2.5 percent per year over the next decade. So it codifies some of what is already in place as that goes forward. As I have said, this bill does not impose new burdens on Americans, rather it creates incentives and helps small and medium-sized manufacturers to access smart manufacturing technology by establishing rebates for upgrading electric motors and transformers, by funding career field training for students receiving a certificate for installing energy efficient building technologies, one of the skills gaps we have right now in our economy that need to be closed for us to take advantage of these new energy efficiency technologies.

Rather than the Federal Government telling companies what to do under this bill, the Federal Government helps them to become more efficient. It is not just American companies. Portman-Shaheen would help everyone. Particularly, it would help low-income Americans be able to retrofit their homes to be more energy efficient, which will save them money on their energy bills.

With the middle-class squeeze that is out there, what we see right now is wages that are not just flat, but they have declined on average over the last several years. Expenses are up, including health care expenses and including, in many cases, energy expenses, including in my home State of Ohio, where we have more and more pressure on our electricity costs. This will help in terms of dealing with that middle-class squeeze. For people just trying to get by, a low energy bill can be a real relief, and a few dollars at the end of each month can then be used for a needed expenditure, for savings, maybe for investment in a kid's college education or for retirement.

Finally, our bill does reauthorize the Weatherization Assistance Program, which establishes building training and assessment centers at institutions of higher education around the country, which is also very important toward this efficiency of buildings.

The Portman-Shaheen legislation is now supported by more than 260 associations, businesses, and advocacy groups, from the National Association of Manufacturers to the Sierra Club, from the Alliance to Save Energy to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. These are some strange bedfellows, I will tell you. You normally don't see these groups coming together to support legislation on the floor of the Senate. But I think it shows that this is a consensus win for taxpayers, for workers, and for the environment.

I was really pleased to work with Senator SHAHEEN, Ranking Member CANTWELL, and Leader MCCONNELL to offer a bipartisan amendment to this broader bill that is supposed to clarify a Department of Energy efficiency standard related to external power supply drivers.

The existing standards are overly broad. Again, this is another amendment we are going to be offering today, and another case where we are able to bring all parties to the table and negotiate a compromise fix to an urgent problem. I am hopeful that will soon be adopted, and it will provide an effective, bipartisan solution.

Again, I want to thank Senator SHAHEEN for her persistence and her patience with regard to our energy efficiency bill and for being a great partner from the start. This is not the precise bill that she would have written or that I would have written, but it is one that finds that common ground, that consensus to be able to move our country forward with regard to energy efficiency.

I also want to mention an amendment I offered with Senator CANTWELL and Chairman MURKOWSKI to this broader legislation that is beneficial to our environment and will help the National Park Service, and this is the centennial legislation. As some of you know, 2016 is a big year for the parks. This is the park's centennial, the 100th year. In fact, this week is National Park Week. What better time is there for us to be adopting this amendment? The National Parks Service turns 100 years old on August 25. We want to make sure that the National Parks Service is well positioned for its next century.

In Ohio, 2.6 million people visit our 13 national parks sites every year. So you might not think of Ohio as being a big national park State. It is. We are blessed to have these sites that preserve and protect the national beauty of our State. We are grateful for the National Parks Service and for their custodianship and their stewardship of treasures like the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, one of the top 10 parks in the country in terms of visitation, and also of about 4,000 or so Ohio sites on the National Register of Historic Places.

Our amendment would officially set up two funds to help the National Park Service be more effective going forward to help them have more funds to able to address some of the challenges they face and to start, particularly, to address the backlog of projects that need to be completed.

But first it would officially authorize the National Park Centennial Challenge Fund, which is already leveraged with about 25 million bucks in appropriated dollars to an additional $45 million in private sector money—matching funds—to finance signature projects and programs of the National Park System. I think this is part of our answer to our national park shortfall and to the backlog, particularly the maintenance backlog at the parks; that is, to get more private sector interest. It is out there. This is a vehicle for that to happen.

The second would be a nonprofit second century endowment fund at National Park Foundation to reduce the $10 billion in National Park Service projects. This would present another opportunity to leverage the willingness of the private sector to help address this backlog that the National Park Service faces. It is a win-win for the taxpayer and for all those who enjoy our national parks and all of our treasures.

Finally, it creates a new National Park Service education program to help further the educational mission of our parks. The parks are being well attended right now. Attendance is up. People are excited about the parks. It is a great time for us to pass this centennial legislation. I know there is comparable legislation on the House side. I am sure we can get this to the President—to his desk for signature. We can help to ensure that our parks, for the next 100 years, continue to grow and continue to provide this incredible experience for all of our constituents.

This amendment is another example of where we have come together in a bipartisan basis to do this. I want to thank again Senator CANTWELL for her work on this and Senator MURKOWSKI for putting it in this legislation. Finally, I am really pleased that we were able to include the Land and Conservation Fund's permanency in this legislation and also the sportsmen's bill in this legislation, to expand and ensure access to public lands for hunting and fishing.

The bottom line is that I encourage everybody to vote for this bill, Republicans and Democrats alike. This is a good bill. It is a bill that will drive infrastructure investments in my State of Ohio and around the country. It will protect the grid from cyber and physical attacks. It will allow more exports of liquefied natural gas, which is good for our economy.

It will make our Federal Government more efficient. It will make our economy more efficient. It creates jobs. It helps clean up the environment. It helps modernize our government. To me, that constitutes a victory for all of us. I congratulate Senator CANTWELL and Senator MURKOWSKI for getting this to the floor. I look forward to its passage later on today.

I yield back my time, and I hope my colleague from New Hampshire will have the opportunity to speak.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I am thrilled to join my partner in efficiency, Senator PORTMAN, in addressing the energy efficiency provisions of the Energy Policy Modernization Act.

Before I get to those, I congratulate Chair MURKOWSKI and Ranking Member CANTWELL for everything they have done to move this Energy bill forward. At a time when I think most of us thought this Energy bill was gone for this Congress—again, for the third time—they have been able to rally to bring people together to get consensus to move a bill that not only deals with the energy efficiency provisions that Senator PORTMAN and I have championed but also improves a broad array of energy policies for this country, and it would permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund. I congratulate them on giving us yet a third opportunity—hopefully—to vote on this bill and to finally be able to pass it. As Senator PORTMAN said, the third time is a charm, hopefully. For 5 years, he and I have worked to advance the Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act, or what was known initially as Shaheen-Portman, which has now become Portman-Shaheen in this Congress. Many of the provisions in that original legislation are in this Energy Policy Modernization Act. While over the last 5 years we have been able to get some of the original provisions in the legislation through, the fact is, most of the significant provisions are in this current bill. I thank Senator PORTMAN for being such a great partner on energy efficiency and for helping to advance this legislation in a way that gives us another chance to hopefully vote successfully on the bill.

I have been a huge fan of energy efficiency since my years as Governor of New Hampshire because I believe that energy efficiency is the cheapest, fastest way to reduce our energy use. Energy savings techniques and technologies reduce carbon pollution. They lead to substantial energy savings that allow for businesses to expand, for us to create jobs, and for our economy to grow.

In a Congress that is too often divided along partisan lines on so many issues, energy efficiency is one priority that can bring us together on a bipartisan, bicameral basis because energy efficiency is beneficial to everyone, regardless of what part of the country they live in and regardless of their energy source. We can all benefit from energy efficiency. And those are the provisions that are in this legislation.

I will try not to repeat too much of what has already been said by Senator PORTMAN, Senator MURKOWSKI, and Senator CANTWELL about the bill, but I did want to go through a couple of the energy efficiency provisions that are in the legislation because it reduces the barriers to efficiency in a number of ways.

First, in buildings, it would strengthen outdated, voluntary national model building codes to make new homes and commercial buildings, which account for more than 40 percent of U.S. energy consumption. These provisions are especially important in this legislation because much of the savings in efficiency come from these national model building code provisions. Again, as Senator PORTMAN has said, these are not done through mandates, they are done through incentives, through our encouraging States to adopt these model building codes.

The energy efficiency provisions also deal with industrial efficiency. They assist the industrial manufacturing sector, which consumes more energy than any other sector of the U.S. economy. They help that sector implement efficient production technologies and would encourage the private sector to develop innovative energy-efficient technologies for industrial applications, to invest in a workforce that is trained to deploy energy efficiency practices to manufactures.

Finally, the other major section of the efficiency provisions from Portman-Shaheen deals with the Federal Government. We encourage the Federal Government—which is the Nation's largest energy consumer—to adopt more efficient building standards, to adopt smart metering technology, and to look at our data centers and see how we can reduce costs and energy use. Through doing that, not only can we save energy, but we can save taxpayers millions of dollars.

Just the energy efficiency provisions from Portman-Shaheen in the legislation would create nearly 200,000 jobs by 2030—a significant job creator in the bill. It would reduce carbon emissions by the equivalent of taking over 20 million cars off the road, and it would save consumers over $16 billion a year. There are significant benefits to this energy efficiency.

Again, as Senator PORTMAN has said, these are provisions that have brought together a very diverse group of stakeholders, everyone from the American Chemistry Council, to the National Wildlife Federation, as Senator PORTMAN said, the NRDC, the National Association of Manufacturers, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. This is a broad group of trade associations, labor organizations, and environmental groups who have come together because energy efficiency is something on which we can all agree.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a number of letters that have been sent by many of these organizations.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

JANUARY 20, 2016.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate, Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.
Hon. HARRY REID,
Democratic Leader, U.S. Senate, Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER MCCONNELL AND DEMOCRATIC LEADER REID: We are writing to express our priorities for energy efficiency provisions in S. 2012, the Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2015. As you know, S. 2012 was approved by the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources (ENR) with strong bipartisan support on July 30, 2015, under the leadership of Chairwoman Lisa Murkowski and Ranking Member Maria Cantwell. We encourage the Senate to take up S. 2012 with the following priorities in mind to help maintain bipartisan support and pass a bill that can be enacted into law.

First, S. 2012 should preserve and strengthen the role of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) in supporting and propagating updated building energy codes at the state and local level. In terms of energy and cost savings, as explained in more detail in the enclosed analysis prepared by the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE), U.S. homeowners and businesses stand to realize tremendous gains from state and local adoption of current building energy codes. U.S. DOE's role in code adoption is critical and S. 2012 (as reported) would lead to even greater savings over time. We support the building energy codes language currently included in S. 2012 and encourage in the strongest terms its inclusion in any comprehensive energy legislation considered by the Senate.

Second, we encourage the Senate to adopt provisions that would permit and encourage the inclusion of energy efficiency in the residential mortgage underwriting process. These provisions were first articulated in the Sensible Accounting to Value Energy (SAVE) Act, first introduced by Senators Johnny Isakson and Michael Bennett, and currently included in legislation that was also favorably reported by the Senate ENR Committee with strong bipartisan support. The SAVE Act would allow the commonsense consideration of energy efficiency during mortgage underwriting, which would help homeowners realize the true value of home improvements that improve comfort and generate savings. We would support an amendment to add the SAVE Act provisions to S. 2012.

Third, we urge the Senate to approve an amendment that would replace the current provisions relating to residential furnace standards in S. 2012 with language that matches Sec. 3123 of H.R. 8, the North American Energy Security and Infrastructure Act of 2015, which was approved by the House of Representatives on December 3, 2015. Unfortunately, at the last minute, apparently due to the time-crunch that typically accompanies a committee business meeting, language was added to S. 2012 that did not reflect a consensus reached by stakeholders. We would support an amendment to replace the current non-consensus furnace standard language in S. 2012 with the House-adopted consensus language that was developed over time and is broadly supported by stakeholders.

And fourth, we also support the retention of reauthorizations of the Weatherization Assistance Program and the State Energy Program in S. 2012. These provisions are critical for low-income Americans in all parts of the country and generate benefits across all sectors of the economy.

Energy efficiency is an energy resource—available to all homeowners and businesses—that is essential to our country's energy independence. More than half of the energy used today to power our economy is wasted, which represents an enormous opportunity for achieving savings and extracting gains in the energy productivity of our economy. The Senate now has an opportunity to pass comprehensive legislation, which currently enjoys strong bipartisan support, that would improve the energy efficiency of homes and commercial buildings in every town, city, county, and state; help consumers and businesses manage their energy consumption and realize returns on their investments; and generate meaningful savings for all Americans.

Thank you for your consideration.

Alliance to Save Energy, American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy, ASHRAE, Association of Energy Engineers, Big Ass Solutions, Efficiency First, Energy Future Coalition, Environmental and Energy Study Institute, Home Performance Coalition, Institute for Market Transformation, International Association of Lighting Designers, International Copper Association, Ltd., Large Public Power Council, National Association of Energy Service Companies, North American Insulation Manufacturers Association, National Association of State Energy Officials, Sacramento Municipal Utility District, Schneider Electric, Seattle City Light, The Stella Group, Ltd., U.S. Green Building Council.

NAIOP, COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION,
Herndon, VA, January 27, 2016.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. HARRY REID,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Re support for ''The Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2015'' (S. 2012).

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER MCCONNELL AND MINORITY LEADER REID: On behalf of NAIOP, the Commercial Real Estate Development Association, I write to express our strong support for ''The Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2015'' that passed the Energy and Natural Resources Committee with a bipartisan vote.

NAIOP is the leading organization for developers, owners, investors and related professionals in office, industrial, retail and mixed-use real estate, and comprises 18,000 members and 48 local chapters throughout the United States.

Specifically, we support the language that was drafted by Senators Rob Portman (R–OH) and Jeanne Shaheen (D–NH) and included in the energy efficiency title for buildings in the bill. We have worked with staff for a number of years on this issue, and we commend Senators Portman and Shaheen for facilitating the numerous discussions that took place with a variety of stakeholders. The latest version of this bill reflects a broad compromise on a host of efficiency measures that has increased support for this bipartisan legislation.

In order to create responsible building codes, economic feasibility and initial costs need to be considered with a realistic payback to the developer in order for energy efficiency gains to be viable. This legislation ensures that the Department of Energy will consider the recoupment of investment costs when developing efficiency targets, and allows for comment on those targets through a formal rulemaking.

We are thankful for the opportunity to represent the interests of the commercial real estate development industry throughout this process and feel strongly that this legislative approach is the best way for the federal government to promote energy efficiency in the built environment.

I respectfully urge you and your colleagues to pass this important legislation.

Sincerely,

THOMAS J. BISACQUINO,
President and CEO, NAIOP.

JANUARY 27, 2016.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. HARRY REID,
Democratic Leader, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR LEADERS MCCONNELL AND REID: We the undersigned businesses and trade associations are writing to express our strong support for the policies included in Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2015 (S. 2012) that promote energy efficiency in industrial, commercial, and residential applications and urge full Senate consideration early this year.

We support low to no-cost, no-mandate bills that advance energy efficiency, while preserving the critical role of government oversight. American taxpayers save money on their energy bills and businesses thrive when we reduce regulatory burdens, increase transparency, and focus on the federal government as a first mover. We believe that the energy efficiency provisions in S. 2012 will have a positive impact on the U.S. economy.

Our businesses, along with many trade associations, companies and advocacy organizations, have long supported common sense energy efficiency legislation, such as those sponsored over the last two Congresses by Senators Portman and Shaheen. We commend Chairman Murkowski and Senator Cantwell for including these provisions in S. 2012. We believe that the energy efficiency title of S. 2012, which passed out of Committee on an 18–4 vote, is a win-win approach that will reduce energy consumption, advance the adoption of new technologies, produce energy savings for businesses and families, and encourage private-sector job creation creating a stronger and more durable American economy.

Some of the sections we are most enthusiastic about include the federal energy related provisions and the building codes section, which was developed through a bipartisan, transparent process and does not include state mandates. We urge lawmakers to retain the current language supporting strong, updated model building energy codes. Several of the provisions we support have also been introduced as stand-alone legislation such as S. 869, the All-of-the-Above Federal Building Energy Conservation Act of 2015; S. 1046, the Smart Building Acceleration Act; S. 1054, the Smart Manufacturing Leadership Act; and S. 858, the Energy Savings Through Public Private Partnership Act. We would further ask that you include S. 1038, the Energy Star Program Integrity Act and the SAVE Act, which was included in The Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act (S. 720) reported out by the Energy and Natural Resources Committee last year, and is a voluntary means to improve residential energy efficiency and thereby save homeowners money.

We urge you to bring S. 2012 to the Senate for a vote early this year. It includes pragmatic, reasonable energy policies. Energy efficiency policies that enjoy strong bipartisan support, do not rely on an outlay of taxpayer

dollars, and do not impose mandates on consumers deserve prompt consideration by Congress.

Sincerely,

A.O. Smith Corporation, ABB Inc., Accella Performance Materials, American Chemistry Council, BASF, Big Ass Solutions, Bosch Group, Composite Lumber Manufacturers Association, Copper Development Association, Covestro, LLC, Danfoss, Dow Chemical Company, Extruded Polystyrene Foam Association, Federal Performance Contracting Coalition, Honeywell, Ingersoll Rand, Johnson Controls, Inc., National Association of Manufacturers, National Electrical Manufacturers Association, North American Insulation Manufacturers Association, Owens Corning, PPG Industries, Quadrant Urethane Technologies Corp., Roof Coatings Manufacturers Association, Schneider Electric, Siemens Corporation, Society for Maintenance and Reliability Professionals, SPI: The Plastics Industry Trade Association, The Brick Industry Association, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, United Technologies, Whirlpool Corporation.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. In closing, in a little while this afternoon, we will have a series of votes on amendments to the Energy Policy Modernization Act, and we will have a final vote for passage of the bill. I believe and it is certainly my hope that the broad package will pass. I think it has been far too long since Congress passed a comprehensive energy bill. It is time for us to work together to pass this important piece of legislation to improve our Nation's energy policies and to help grow our economy.

I believe there is support in the other Chamber, in the House, to take up this energy package and hopefully to pass it this year because it will improve our economy, it will improve our national security, and it will improve our environment. This is legislation we should all get behind.

Again, I thank my colleague Senator PORTMAN and applaud Senators CANTWELL and MURKOWSKI for all of the work they have done to bring this legislation to the floor.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. HEINRICH. Madam President, I rise today to speak about this bipartisan energy package we are going to be voting on today. Last year my colleagues and I on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee worked together to pass a package that received incredibly strong and bipartisan support at a time when that is hard to come by.

I think it is important to start my comments today by simply thanking the chair and ranking member of the Energy Committee, Senators MURKOWSKI and CANTWELL. As Senator PORTMAN mentioned, they showed incredible leadership and also incredible patience. That patience and persistence on behalf of all of us is now paying off.

My home State of New Mexico occupies a very central and interesting place in nearly every facet of our Nation's energy industry, including uranium enrichment, oil and gas production, refining, wind and solar energy, as well as the research and development of new energy technologies—technologies of the future that come out of our National Laboratories and our research universities. That is why I have been working so hard in the Senate to position New Mexico and our Nation to take maximum advantage of new, clean energy sources and innovative technologies and transmission, while intelligently utilizing our reserves of traditional fuels as well.

This package will be the first comprehensive Energy bill to pass the Senate since 2007. I would like to think that it shows that we can look for areas where both parties can work together even if we don't completely agree and, probably most importantly, when we don't completely agree and still move our national priorities and our energy policy forward.

This package also includes permanent reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund. LWCF is one of America's most successful conservation programs. It has preserved our outdoor heritage, protected clean air and precious supplies of drinking water, and supported jobs across this entire Nation. Permanent reauthorization of LWCF is a major victory for conservation. I will continue to fight to fully fund LWCF so that we can make strong and smart investments in our public lands.

I wish to particularly focus my remarks today on the Bipartisan Sportsmen's Act, which is a key part of this bill. The Sportsmen's Act has been a long time in the making. I am very proud to lead this bipartisan effort with the Energy and Natural Resources chair, LISA MURKOWSKI of Alaska. After attempts stalled on the sportsmen's bills in recent years, the Energy and Natural Resources Committee worked hard to find areas of agreement. We didn't allow controversial amendments from either side of the aisle to derail these efforts.

Hunting and fishing are an integral part of our American heritage. Without our public lands, that tradition would be lost to many westerners. Our public lands belong to all of the American people.

Like many New Mexicans, some of my favorite memories with my family are from camping, fishing, hiking, and hunting in New Mexico's national forests and on our Bureau of Land Management land. I will always remember taking my son Carter on his first backcountry elk hunting trip in the Carson National Forest. The bull elk that we brought home fed our family for a year, but that experience of backpacking in the high country, sleeping on the ground, and hearing the elk bugle around us will feed his imagination for his entire life. I look forward to having that same sort of experience with his younger brother, Micah.

These traditions—hunting, hiking, camping, and fishing—are among the pillars of western culture and a thriving outdoor industry and recreation economy.

This bipartisan package of sportsmen's bills includes a broad array of measures to enhance opportunities for hunters, anglers, and outdoor recreational enthusiasts of all stripes. It improves access to those public lands, and it reauthorizes critical conservation programs. These programs include the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, or NAWCA, which provides grants to organizations, State and local governments, and private landowners for the acquisition, restoration, and enhancement of critical wetlands for migratory birds—a program that every duck hunter and birder in the United States can agree on; and the National Fish Habitat Conservation Program, which encourages partnerships among public agencies, tribes, sportsmen, private landowners, and other stakeholders to promote fish conservation.

It reauthorizes the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act to direct revenue from the sale of public land to the acquisition of high-priority conservation land from willing sellers to expand fish and wildlife habitat and public recreational opportunities.

Further, this bipartisan package will help boost the outdoor recreation economy writ large. Nationally, according to the Outdoor Industry Association, more than 140 million Americans make their living or make outdoor recreation a priority in their daily lives. When they do that, they end up spending $646 billion on outdoor recreation, resulting in quality jobs for another 6.1 million Americans.

In New Mexico—a small State with just 2 million people—outdoor recreation generates more than $6 billion a year. It provides 68,000 jobs and $1.7 billion in wages and salaries.

A survey done recently by New Mexico Game and Fish found that sportsmen alone spend more than $613 million a year in the State annually. That is an incredible contribution to our local economy. This boost to our economy is felt by small business owners, and it is felt by outfitter guides, hotels, restaurants, and the entire local community, especially in rural areas where we need it most.

Yet, for far too many hunters and anglers, it gets harder and harder each year to find a quiet fishing hole to fish for trout or a secluded meadow to chase elk. As sportsmen face more and more locked gates and more ''no trespassing'' signs, it is more important than ever that we keep our public lands open and welcoming to hunters and anglers. I have heard from sportsmen who have found roads on BLM lands closed to public access without notice. I myself have experienced the frustration of running into a locked gate on roads that used to be open and even maintained by public agencies.

As opportunities for hunting and fishing shrink, we could lose the next generation of hunters and anglers who will fund tens of billions dollars in conservation and restoration through things such as purchasing Duck Stamps, paying the taxes on ammunition, tackle, and motorboat fuel—all of which are dedicated directly to the conservation of fish and wildlife.

This bipartisan sportsmen's package will go a long way toward solving many of these problems—many of the problems that hunters and anglers face in accessing and using our Nation's incredible public lands. I am particularly pleased that the package includes my legislation, the HUNT Act, which requires public land agencies such as the Forest Service and BLM to identify high-priority, landlocked public lands under their management that currently lack legal public access.

Landlocked public lands are technically open to the public but are sometimes literally impossible to reach unless you own a helicopter because there are no public trails, no public roads leading to them. Under the HUNT Act, Federal agencies such as the BLM and the Forest Service are required to work with States, tribes, and willing private landowners to provide public access to those landlocked areas that have a significant potential for hunting, fishing, and other recreational uses.

A study by the Center for Western Priorities estimated that at least half a million acres of public lands in New Mexico are currently landlocked with difficult legal public access. The HUNT Act is the first dedicated effort to reopen these lands to their owners. Public lands such as the Gila Wilderness, Valles Caldera National Preserve, and the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument are some of the most special places to hunt and fish on the planet. These are the places that make New Mexico so enchanting and make our country so special.

I am incredibly excited to see that this natural resources amendment also includes the establishment of two new wilderness areas within the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument northwest of Taos, NM. New Mexicans have a deep connection to the outdoors and benefit from the recreation, wildlife, water, and tourism opportunities that wilderness areas provide.

For many years now, an incredibly broad coalition of northern New Mexicans has worked to conserve the Rio San Antonio and Cerro del Yuta, or Ute Mountain, areas. What is even more special about Ute Mountain is, while today it is managed by the Bureau of Land Management, this is actually a place that the Land and Water Conservation Fund helped put in the public trust. I have no doubt that future generations will be grateful for the many years of work and support that not only make these two new wilderness areas possible but make access to special places like this possible.

These two roadless areas provide important security habitats for elk, mule deer, black bears, golden eagles, and even American pronghorn. I want to say a special thanks to the local community—people who have worked for decades to put this proposal together—as well as to Senator TOM UDALL, my colleague from New Mexico, and former Senator Jeff Bingaman, for their incredible leadership as well.

Designating these two new wilderness areas completes a national example of community-driven, landscape-scale conservation that will preserve the culture, the natural resources, and the economy of this incredibly stunning piece of New Mexico.

I am proud to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle today to make sure we are making the best use of our energy and natural resources. I am hopeful that, thanks to our vote today, our kids and our grandkids will be catching trout and chasing mule deer on our Nation's incredible public lands for many years to come.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation. This was many years in the making. It was difficult. It required an enormous amount of compromise to get here, but it is an accomplishment worthy of that effort, and I urge my colleagues to vote aye.

Madam President, I also wish to discuss an important component addressed in this bipartisan energy package: critical minerals retrieval from electronics and technological waste.

I am proud of the work accomplished in the Energy and Natural Resources Committee and what we have achieved at this point to move this bill forward. I would like to thank Senator MURKOWSKI, along with Senator WYDEN, for taking a lead on these issues and getting support for rare earth mineral recycling adopted into the legislation.

This piece of the legislation provides an important solution—recycling—to reducing electronics waste while ensuring our Nation has the rare earth minerals to meet demand for new technologies. While the average American may not have this issue on their radar, it addresses two major problems.

First, electronics waste is an international issue that is only growing in magnitude as consumers obtain the latest devices—from smartphones to automobiles. The United Nations reported last year that 90 percent of the world's supply of electronic waste is illegally traded and dumped, imperiling lives and the environment. And more unfortunately, the United States generates 3.4 million tons of waste each year.

Second, rare earth minerals are crucial components of almost all of the latest consumer technologies, such as hybrid cars, flat panel televisions, and wind turbines. In 2014, the United States imported at least 50 percent of 43 different minerals. The overwhelming majority of the rare earth reserves and production are located in China. Should a supply disruption occur in China, it will be our manufacturers, consumers, and everyone who depends on the latest technologies for their livelihoods who will suffer the consequences.

Section 3307 of the pending legislation directs the Secretary of Energy to establish a program with Federal agencies, National Laboratories, producers, academic institutions, and other concerned stakeholders aimed at promoting efficient production, use, and recycling of critical minerals. Section 3308 directs the Secretary of Energy to put together a comprehensive analysis on rare earth mineral supply and demand over multiple years, and section 3309 establishes an assessment for the education and training of our workforces in manufacturing, development, and recycling of rare earth minerals. Higher education institutions would be able to apply for competitive grants to help assist in this important critical mineral program work.

By providing support for electronics recycling, we are taking necessary steps to provide economic security, while remediating an international economic and environmental problem.

It is important that bipartisanship does not stop with the Energy Policy Modernization Act, but that we continue to support and incorporate technological development, create job opportunities for our workers, and make our world a better one for future generations.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

AMENDMENT NO. 3787 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2953

(Purpose: To provide for the establishment of free market enterprise zones in order to help facilitate the creation of new jobs, entrepreneurial opportunities, enhanced and renewed educational opportunities, and increased community involvement in bankrupt or economically distressed areas.)

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 3787.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment by number.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. PAUL] proposes an amendment numbered 3787 to amendment No. 2953.

Mr. PAUL. 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 April 13, 2016, under ''Text of Amendments.'')

Mr. PAUL. Madam President, I rise today to offer the largest, most sweeping anti-poverty legislation since LBJ began the War on Poverty. This legislation, if passed, would return $100 billion to areas of poverty and high unemployment in our country—areas that have been devastated by chronic unemployment and poverty. Communities like Eastern Kentucky that have been devastated by the President's war on coal would be rescued. Communities

like Flint, MI, where the water is unsafe to drink, would be restored. Communities like Ferguson, the South Side of Chicago, and the West End of Louisville would be given a chance to find the American dream if this legislation is passed.

My legislation is not a gift or a grant; my legislation simply allows $100 billion to remain in the hands of those who earned it. My legislation will provide incentive for businesses and capital to return to areas overwhelmed by chronic poverty and unemployment.

We are just past the 50-year mark on the War on Poverty. Sadly, 50 years later, we are still fighting that war, and every one of our States still has areas of high unemployment and poverty.

I think it is time we try something different: an approach that harnesses the ingenuity and the hard work of individuals, families, and businesses in our most afflicted communities; an approach that invites new investment to these communities; an approach that is free from government bailouts and bureaucrats picking winners and losers; an approach that provides hope and opportunity.

Economic freedom zones will be the largest anti-poverty program since the War on Poverty. Economic freedom zones are areas of reduced taxes and reduced regulations that increase incentives for business to come into these poor communities. This is about much more than a government stimulus or a handout. This legislation will empower communities by leveraging the human capital, natural resources, and business investment opportunities that already exist.

Reducing taxes in economically distressed areas is a stimulus that will work because the money is returned to businesses and individuals who have already proved they can succeed. This isn't government picking whom to give the money to; this is returning the money to those who have earned it and trying to get those businesses to expand.

Cities and counties will be designated as ''economic freedom zones'' if local unemployment is 50 percent above the national average or if poverty is 30 percent above the national average. Localities that are bankrupt—such as Detroit or Flint—or are in danger of bankruptcy are also eligible in order to attract new investment and economic activity that will help shore up the local finances without the need for a bailout. By slashing the Federal tax rate to 5 percent for a 10-year period, we can finally incentivize more businesses to locate in our struggling communities and provide more jobs and opportunities.

My plan leaves the hard-earned dollars of those of the community right there in the community. Instead of sending your money to Washington and begging to get some back, we leave it in your community to stimulate job production and economic growth in your community. It doesn't come to Washington, where politicians often pick the winners and losers; it stays with the community, where the consumers decide who succeeds.

Economic freedom zones will work where Big Government has failed because the money will remain in the hands of people whom local consumers have voted most able to run a business. Whereas big government programs often send money to people who are unable to run a business, who have no proven track record—think of Solyndra; we gave $500 million to people who didn't have a good business plan—economic freedom zones return the money to businesses and the individuals who have already proved they can run a successful business.

The President's big government stimulus plan was funded by debt. It didn't work because government always fails to identify profitable uses for capital, whereas returning capital to those who originally earned it will provide a stimulus that is exponentially bigger.

In the eastern part of Kentucky, this legislation would provide over half a billion dollars each year in much needed capital. In West Louisville, this legislation would provide an annual infusion of over $200 million. More importantly, this legislation will provide hope and opportunity where very little optimism currently exists.

For Detroit, it would mean that an extra $368 million stays in Detroit, in the hands of the families who earned it, and it will be spent locally. Businesses that have demonstrated success will be able to hire new employees. Businesses that move to the area and hire employees will be able to take advantage of these low tax rates and will be welcomed and encouraged to come to the community by the attraction of these low tax rates.

Flint—a city you see in the news every day—which is struggling even to keep clean water, will see an immediate cash infusion of $124 million if my bill were to pass. As business returns to Flint, as the local economy begins to grow, so too will the ability of local government to finance their infrastructure. This legislation will help the city's economy recover and its families have more of their own money to spend on their own needs. We skip the middleman. Don't send the money to Washington. If you want to help poor communities in our country, leave the money there. Skip the middleman; don't send to it Washington.

Economic freedom zones will mean an extra $452 million a year left in Baltimore and $1.5 billion left in Chicago. These economic effects will be real and will be felt immediately. Economic freedom zones will also provide other reforms that set the stage for medium- and long-term growth. We will lift some of the most anti-growth regulatory burdens. We will allow Federal permitting for construction projects. We will allow this permitting process to be streamlined so we can rebuild our cities.

Regulations that artificially drive up labor costs so public projects cost 20 percent, 30 percent more than private projects—we will eliminate these rules to allow your tax dollars to go further. We will also encourage foreign investment to bring jobs back to these chronic areas of poverty and unemployment. Outside investment into local education and social services will be encouraged. To set the stage for continuous growth and opportunity for the next generation, educational reforms will allow parents to move their children out of failing schools and into the school of their choice.

The War on Poverty has been going on for over 50 years, and it often seems as though poverty is winning. They say the definition of insanity is trying the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result. Big government programs have not cured poverty. In fact, some would argue they have made it worse. Isn't it time we tried something different?

Today the Senate will have a chance to try something different. Today the Senate will have an opportunity to begin the rebuilding of America. I urge my colleagues to vote for economic freedom zones.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I rise to voice my support for the passage of the Energy Policy Modernization Act. I am pleased the Senate is considering and on the verge of passing legislation to update our Nation's energy policy. I thank Chairwoman MURKOWSKI, Ranking Member CANTWELL, and their staffs for their hard work in getting this bill to the floor of the Senate.

The Energy Policy Modernization Act is a good bill, but it is not a perfect bill. It is a compromised piece of legislation, and it does contain provisions I do not support, such as expediting the export of liquid natural gas, which I am concerned could raise domestic energy prices and harm steelworkers in northern Minnesota, but there are also a number of important provisions I do support.

Congress has not passed a comprehensive energy bill since 2007, and a lot has changed in the energy sector since then. I believe comprehensive energy legislation needs to promote innovation, deploy clean energy technology, reduce greenhouse gases, and create good-paying jobs. The energy efficiency title of this bill will help produce electricity use, save consumers money, and increase our competitiveness through commonsense measures such as updating building codes. The bill permanently reauthorizes the Land and Water Conservation Fund to ensure that we preserve our natural resources for generations to come. It also invests billions of dollars in science and innovation through the

reauthorization of ARPA-E and the DOE Office of Science. These are the types of investments we will need to transform our energy system, an energy system that has been powered by dirty fossil fuels but is increasingly powered by clean, renewable technologies.

This bill also includes a provision I authored with Ranking Member CANTWELL to invest $50 million per year in energy storage research and development. Energy storage will pay a crucial role in helping unlock substantial new renewable energy resources. As you know, the Sun shines during the day and the wind blows more at night. Balancing these intermittent resources can be a challenge for energy providers, and this is where I see storage playing a critical role in ensuring that our electricity generation meets our demand. While storage technology has been around for a long time, we need the next generation of technologies for cost-effective implementation at the grid scale. This investment will spur innovation at universities and in the private sector to help get us where we need to be.

Investing in energy storage will also position the United States to lead in exporting these technologies to power-hungry countries around the world. Take India, for example. India's goal is to deploy 100 gigawatts of new solar power by 2022—a truly impressive target. As India and other countries build economies based on renewable energy, they will need storage technologies to turn intermittent solar energy into baseload power. I want America to develop and manufacture these storage technologies which will create jobs and lower emissions at the same time.

Energy storage also has the benefit of making our grid more resilient. According to the Department of Energy's 2015 Quadrennial Energy Review, weather was responsible for half of the reported grid outages between 2011 and 2014 when customers went without power, and with the climate changing, it is essential we minimize the impact of weather-related grid outages on American households and businesses. Additional storage capacity will do just that—improving resilience to all types of grid disruption and allowing us to keep the lights on.

I also worked on a provision in this bill to reauthorize the DOE Office of Indian Energy. This office provides education, training, technical assistance, and grants to American Indian tribes and Alaska Native villages that are looking to develop energy projects. Since 2002, this office has provided $50 million for almost 200 renewable energy and energy-efficiency projects in Indian Country. We want to build on this momentum and continue this successful program. I am pleased we have extended the authorization of this office for another 10 years.

This Friday more than 100 nations will come together in New York to sign the Paris Agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and combat climate change. While commitments to reducing emissions are important, they must be followed by real action to reduce our carbon footprint. The Energy bill we are debating takes an important step forward in doing just that, but of course we cannot stop here. Climate change is an existential threat to our planet and future generations. As a country, we must continue to expand clean energy and reduce greenhouse gases. I hope we can continue to build on the bipartisan work we did with this bill to do just that.

I thank the Presiding Officer and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

AMENDMENT NO. 3312 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2953

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, first I wish to thank and congratulate Chairman LISA MURKOWSKI and Ranking Member MARIA CANTWELL for all their hard work and leadership on this Energy bill. They have done a very good job of getting this bill to the floor, and we now find ourselves in the position to offer amendments, which I am here to do. I think all of us are very happy to be able to be moving this legislation along and amending it.

My amendment is a very simple study amendment. It directs the Secretary of the Treasury to study and submit a report to Congress on potential clean energy victory bonds. This amendment is pro-clean energy. It changes no rules, it does not mandate any actual bonds, and being a study it does not score or impact the budget.

Citizens across this country want to see a cleaner energy future. They are doing their part to conserve energy, purchase cleaner energy, and invest in clean energy mutual funds. They are doing this on a voluntary basis. It is having a big impact and pushing clean energy technologies forward in a rather dramatic way, but we also understand our energy challenges are broad and require large-scale investments by many investors.

We can harness and keep it voluntary without any cost to taxpayers through clean energy victory bonds. The Federal Government is our Nation's largest energy consumer, with more than 350,000 buildings and 600,000 road vehicles. Think about your own electricity bill that you pay each month and the gas you buy at the pump. The U.S. Government has to pay such bills as well to the tune of over $20 billion each year. Most of that, about two-thirds, is for petroleum.

The Federal Government wants to cut its bills too. We invest in clean energy through energy efficiency upgrades and through power purchase agreements for cleaner energy and stable, predictable energy prices. The government has a choice about these options just as private citizens do. Private citizens can choose the types of energy they purchase for their homes and their businesses, and many opt for wind power, solar power, or other clean energy sources, or they install energy-efficient windows and appliances. Many tell me they want to help our government make these choices as well. Clean energy victory bonds could help us move in that direction. By purchasing a Treasury bond specifically devoted to clean energy, Americans can help the government supplement its energy purchases with energy efficiency upgrades and clean energy decisions. These investments could provide additional support to existing Federal financing programs already available to States for energy efficiency upgrades and clean energy. What is exciting about this option is that smart investments can help pay for themselves and bring a return on investment to people who purchase these bonds. That is why we think it is so important to study this option. It is a simple financial instrument that is a win for people saving money and a win for reducing the government's energy bill and it is all on a voluntary basis.

During the First and Second World Wars, our country faced threats we had never faced before. We rose to the challenge and gave it everything we had. Everyone contributed, and for many that included investing in victory bonds. They helped pay for the cost of the war—$185 billion. That would be over $2 trillion today. Folks lined up to buy those bonds. That is the spirit of the American people—to pull together. It was true then and it is still true today.

We face a very different challenge today. Our energy challenges are seen on multiple fronts, from the impacts to our environment to our global and international struggles based on our dependence on foreign oil. Citizens want to unite and contribute. They want investments in homegrown American clean energy. Many cannot afford to buy solar panels for their own homes or invest $1,000 minimums to buy clean energy mutual funds, but many can afford $25 for a clean energy victory bond.

This amendment asks the Secretary of the Treasury to help inform Congress on the feasibility and structure of developing such a tool. It has broad support from groups such as the American Sustainable Business Council, Green America, the American Wind Energy Association, Ceres, the Union of Concerned Scientists, and many other groups. It has broad support out there.

Mr. President, I ask to call up my amendment No. 3312 and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment by number.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New Mexico [Mr. UDALL] proposes an amendment numbered 3312 to amendment No. 2953.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require the Secretary of the Treasury to develop a plan for issuance of Clean Energy Victory Bonds)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. CLEAN ENERGY VICTORY BONDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than July 1, 2016, the Secretary of the Treasury, in coordination with the Secretary of Energy and the Secretary of Defense, shall submit a report to Congress that provides recommendations for the establishment, issuance, and promotion of Clean Energy Victory Bonds by the Department of the Treasury (referred to in this section as the ''Clean Energy Victory Bonds Program'').

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—For purposes of subsection (a), the Clean Energy Victory Bonds Program shall be designed to—

(1) ensure that any available proceeds from the issuance of Clean Energy Victory Bonds are used to finance clean energy projects (as defined in subsection (c)) at the Federal, State, and local level, which may include—

(A) providing additional support to existing Federal financing programs available to States for energy efficiency upgrades and clean energy deployment, and

(B) providing funding for clean energy investments by the Department of Defense and other Federal agencies,

(2) provide for payment of interest to persons holding Clean Energy Victory Bonds through such methods as are determined appropriate by the Secretary of the Treasury, including amounts—

(A) recaptured from savings achieved through reduced energy spending by entities receiving any funding or financial assistance described in paragraph (1), and

(B) collected as interest on loans financed or guaranteed under the Clean Energy Victory Bonds Program,

(3) issue bonds in denominations of not less than $25 or such amount as is determined appropriate by the Secretary of the Treasury to make them generally accessible to the public, and

(4) collect not more than $50,000,000,000 in revenue from the issuance of Clean Energy Victory Bonds for purposes of financing clean energy projects described in paragraph (1).

(c) CLEAN ENERGY PROJECT.—The term ''clean energy project'' means a project which provides—

(1) performance-based energy efficiency improvements, or

(2) clean energy improvements, including—

(A) electricity generated from solar, wind, geothermal, hydropower, and hydrokinetic energy sources,

(B) fuel cells using non-fossil fuel sources,

(C) advanced batteries,

(D) next generation biofuels from non-food feedstocks, and

(E) electric vehicle infrastructure.

Mr. UDALL. I thank the Presiding Officer and will yield the floor. I know Senators Bennet and Isakson are here. They are both great leaders when it comes to clean energy and working on this legislation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, what is the pending business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Udall amendment No. 3312.

AMENDMENT NO. 3202 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2953

(Purpose: To improve the accuracy of mortgage underwriting used by the Federal Housing Administration by ensuring that energy costs are included in the underwriting process, to reduce the amount of energy consumed by homes, to facilitate the creation of energy efficiency retrofit and construction jobs, and for other purposes.)

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask to call up the Isakson-Bennet amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment by number.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Georgia [Mr. ISAKSON] proposes an amendment numbered 3202 to amendment No. 2953.

(The amendment is printed in the RECORD of February 2, 2016, under ''Text of Amendments.'')

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I am delighted to rise in favor of the Isakson-Bennet amendment, the SAVE Act, and glad to acknowledge my hard work with MICHAEL BENNET, who has been a great partner in this effort.

I particularly want to acknowledge the patience of Senators Cantwell and Murkowski in allowing this bill and amendment to come forward. They have exemplified the type of patience that is necessary to do legislative work and do it well.

Very simply, this bill allows the Federal Housing Administration, in the underwriting of a mortgage loan for a family applying for that loan, to consider in the value of the appraisal, the enhanced over-minimum standards that are put in for insulation and the enhanced over-minimum standard savings that come to the consumer from those energy standards being put in. So the borrower gets credit as if it is income from the savings that comes from putting in the insulation for the higher standards. The value of the property is enhanced in order for the borrower to be able to pay for the enhancements, and they are permanent. It is a win-win-win proposition.

Why are we doing this? It already worked in the United States. It worked in the 1980s when the savings and loan industry made most of the mortgage loans. In Georgia, we had a program called Good Sense Housing. If you put in enhanced energy savings, you were given credit toward qualification on your loan. When we put them in, we had better thermal windowpanes, better results, and less consumption.

This a good amendment that allows consumers to get what they want and allows Americans to enjoy more energy-efficient housing.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I wish to thank the Senator from Georgia for his tireless work on this bill. We have been at it now for 3 years, and here we are on the floor close to passing it. There is not a Senator in this body who possesses the knowledge that Senator ISAKSON does about real estate and how it works in the United States. It has been a real privilege to work with him on the bill.

I also wish to thank the chairwoman and the ranking member of the committee for their fine work on this bill.

It is time to enact this commonsense bill, the SAFE Act, as it is called. It is supported by groups all across the political spectrum, including the Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, the Sierra Club, and the Natural Resources Defense Council.

Our amendment, as Senator ISAKSON said, would allow for a home's energy efficiency to be considered when a borrower applies for a loan. So when you apply for a mortgage, you can request an energy audit, and if you have a loan backed by the Federal Housing Administration, the energy efficiency of your new home and your future energy bills will be taken into account by your mortgage lender. Why is that important? Well, today, even though homeowners spend more money on energy than they do on taxes or buying home insurance, energy costs are not taken into account. And when they are taken into account, as a consequence of this bill, the savings derived from that energy efficiency can then be applied to paying your mortgage.

I want to be clear—and Senator ISAKSON said this—this amendment is not a mandate. It simply sets up a voluntary program.

It will create thousands of jobs in manufacturing and construction. By 2040, the estimates are that it will save consumers $1.2 billion in energy costs and save enough energy to power 100,000 homes every year.

I have heard from builders all across Colorado who support this amendment—people like Gene Myers, CEO and founder of Thrive Home Builders in Denver. He has built more than 1,000 energy-efficient homes, but he understands that we won't fully attain the benefits of efficiency in the market until we properly value it.

For these reasons, a large and diverse coalition supports this amendment.

I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense amendment to improve energy efficiency, save money, and create American jobs.

Mr. President, I yield to the Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I thank Senator BENNET for his support, and I urge each Member of the Senate today to vote favorably for the SAVE Act and favorably for the end legislation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. 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. DAINES. 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. DAINES. Mr. President, today we will take steps to secure our Montana heritage and ''Made in Montana'' jobs. We will stand up for the Montana way of life.

Today we will pass a bill that for the first time would permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation

Fund, an important piece of legislation ensuring that Montanans have access to public lands.

As a fifth generation Montanan and avid sportsman, I recognize how valuable public lands are and the importance of ensuring access for generations to come. In fact, during the summer recesses, when many Senators are traveling around the world, there is no better place that I like to be than the back country of Montana, like I was last summer with my wife, my son, and our dog Ruby in the Beartooth Wilderness. In Montana and throughout the country, the Land and Water Conservation Fund plays a critical role in achieving the goal of increased access and by helping to preserve and protect Montanans' opportunities to enjoy hunting, fishing, and other outdoor recreation.

LWCF keeps lands, like family ranches, in the family and working. It keeps forests in productive use through the Forest Legacy Program, such as in the Haskill Basin, where my good friend Chuck Roady of Stoltze Land and Lumber works. Today will be a victory for them—like Eric Grove of Great Divide Cyclery in Helena, MT, who has built his mountain bike business around the South Hills Trail System outside of Helena, facilitated by LWCF.

There are many other small businesses like Eric's in Montana that depend on our thriving outdoor economy.

This bill will also streamline the permitting for the export of liquefied natural gas, allowing more American energy to power the world.

Montana is the fifth largest producer of hydropower in the Nation, and we have 23 hydroelectric dams. This bill strengthens our Nation's hydropower development by defining hydro as a renewable fuel. Only in Washington, DC, would hydro not be defined as a renewable source of energy. I am glad to see we will get that cleared up with this bill today. This is great news for Montana, and it is well overdue.

This energy bill will establish a pilot project to streamline drilling permits if less than 25 percent of the minerals within the spacing unit are Federal minerals. That is of particular importance to Montana, given the patchwork of land and mineral ownership in the Bakken.

This bill will improve Federal permitting of critical and strategic mineral production, which supports thousands of good-paying Montana jobs and is essential to our national security and international competitiveness. The absence of just one critical mineral or metal could disrupt entire technologies, entire industries, and create a ripple effect throughout our entire economy.

For example, Stillwater mines in Montana is one of the only sources of palladium and platinum in the world. Currently, the United States has one of the longest and most arduous permitting processes for critical minerals in the world. This bill helps address those concerns.

Metal and nonmetal mining also has directly created more than 16,000 good-paying Montana jobs. In fact, mining overall helps support more than 22,000 jobs across Montana.

In Montana, energy supports thousands of good-paying jobs for union workers, for tribal members. Access to our State's one-of-a-kind public lands is critical to our State's tourism economy and our way of life. We in Montana say we work, but we also like to play, striking the right balance towards responsible natural resource development as well as protecting our public lands.

With today's passage of the energy bill, we will help unleash Montana's and our country's energy potential and uphold our country's commitment to conservation.

I urge adoption of the bill and commend Chairman MURKOWSKI for her leadership.

Thank you, 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. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DAINES). Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3210 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2953

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 3210 and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment by number.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Oklahoma [Mr. LANKFORD] proposes an amendment numbered 3210 to amendment No. 2953.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To add provisions relating to acquisition of Federal land under the Land and Water Conservation Fund)

On page 426, after line 23, add the following:

(e) CERTAIN LAND ACQUISITION REQUIREMENTS.—Section 200306 of title 54, United States Code (as amended by subsection (d)), is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(e) NON-ROAD DEFERRED MAINTENANCE BACKLOG.—If the non-road deferred maintenance backlog on Federal land is greater than $1,000,000,000, acquisitions of land under this section may not exceed the level of deferred maintenance backlog funding.

''(f) MAINTENANCE NEEDS.—In making an acquisition of land under this section, funds appropriated for the acquisition shall include any funds necessary to address maintenance needs at the time of acquisition on the acquired land.

''(g) CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL OF CERTAIN LAND ACQUISITIONS.—For any acquisition of land under this section for which the cost of the land is greater than $50,000 per acre—

''(1) before acquiring the land, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that describes the land proposed to be acquired; and

''(2) no acquisition may be made unless the proposed acquisition is—

''(A) reported to Congress in accordance with paragraph (1); and

''(B) approved by the enactment of a bill or joint resolution.''.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, there are a lot of good things in this bill that we are discussing. There are a lot of good amendments that have been brought to the floor.

There has been an awful lot of conversation over the past year about a program called the Land and Water Conservation Fund. It is a straightforward program that has been around for a long time. It takes money from revenue from offshore oil drilling and it uses that money to purchase land, usually next to a national park or in other areas, and that becomes Federal land.

The problem is that over the decades we have continued to accumulate more money in the Land and Water Conservation Fund and we have continued to accumulate more land onto the Federal roll but we are not taking care of what we have.

The issue with this particular version of the Land and Water Conservation Fund is that it is not a short-term extension the way it has always been in the past; it is a permanent program put in place—permanent meaning there are no changes. So permanently we put in a structure that continues to purchase Federal lands without maintaining those lands. We all know it. We all see it.

Year after year, everyone has said we should add more to maintenance, but year after year we just buy more land using the Land and Water Conservation Fund and never use other budget funds for maintenance because, quite frankly, there are a lot of other vital Federal issues that need to be paid for.

The simple solution to this is to take the money from the Land and Water Conservation Fund and make sure that one simple thing is done: that when we purchase land, we also maintain that land with that funding. We also take care of the backlog.

This amendment is very straightforward: We use 50 percent to purchase land and 50 percent to maintain the land until we at least get down to a $1 billion backlog, and then we can reconsider. A $1 billion backlog is the goal. In some ways, this has become controversial. I can't believe it would be controversial to say: Let's try to work our Nation down to only a $1 billion backlog in our maintenance for all our Federal facilities.

We have record attendance at our national parks. They are beautiful national treasures, but if we can't maintain them, then we reinforce what is already true: that the Federal Government is the largest landowner, largest land controller, and the worst landowner in the country. Federal lands are maintained the least of any other large holder of land. Let's fix it.

This doesn't take away the Land and Water Conservation Fund; this makes sure we take care of what we have. When we purchase land and bring it in, we make sure we also set aside money to fix it. Frankly, it is straightforward.

Today my daughter turns 16 years old. She will at some point get a used car. I am sure it will be a doozy—we are thinking somewhere around a 1978 Volvo. Nice and tough. Indestructible. At some point she will end up with a used car, but the requirement is that she has to be a part of the purchase of it. When we buy that car, we will not use everything in our savings account, nor will we allow her to use all of her savings account. She has to have enough money to be able to put gas in it and maintain it when it breaks down because it is a car and it will break down. This change in the Land and Water Conservation Fund is as simple as that. Whenever we put new land in the inventory, we make sure we have money set aside to make sure we can actually take care of it. Why have a car if you can't put gas in it? Why continue to add land year after year if we are not going to maintain it? That is not good stewardship of our resources; that is bad stewardship of our resources.

This amendment says that before we make this program permanent, let's fix the structure of this program to make sure we are also watching out for the program long term as well.

One other quick note. Some of the land that has been purchased has been purchased for very high amounts, such as $1-million-per-acre types of amounts. This amendment puts a simple block in it that says: Before there is a purchase of land for more than $50,000 an acre, run that through Congress to make sure someone has had a second look at that. It is a straightforward provision to make sure the Federal taxpayer is not paying more than they should per acre for land in the Federal inventory.

I would urge the adoption of this amendment. This doesn't kill the program; it enhances the program. It allows us to take better care of our Federal land and to engage with that.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, before we go to the votes that have been scheduled on this bill, I wanted to take a few more minutes. I mentioned some of our colleagues from the Energy Committee and some of their contributions, but I wanted to mention a couple of other provisions that are in this underlying bill and to thank our colleagues for their hard work, Senator WYDEN particularly for his focus on renewable energy technologies, such as marine and hydrokinetic and geothermal. These are important provisions because they are going to help us gain a foothold in very important areas of this development. I thank him for his contribution.

I mentioned energy storage earlier, and in committee our colleagues dealt with this a lot, but Senators FRANKEN, HEINRICH, HIRONO, and KING all made significant contributions on the modernization of the grid and grid storage, as my colleague from Alaska knows, on how to plan for microgrid activity—and Senator HIRONO, because she has a very unique State that she represents, Hawaii. Having an integration of those activities into the grid is very important. I thank them for their contributions on making our electricity grid more distributed and integrating in some of the renewable energies and making sure that our grid has the flexibility to do that.

Senator KING has certainly worked hard to ensure that distributed generation gets a fair shake in the marketplace and to make sure that consumers are treated fairly. This is a subject our committee will continue to work on. I am sure we are going to hear about it. For those individual homeowners who are making investments in solar energy, we want to make sure they are not unfairly treated by their own utilities in how that solar development plays out. They don't want to be overcharged for the development of solar, if they want to put solar on their homes. They are willing to be part of the solution; they don't want to be the funder of the whole solution. I think Senator KING is rightly concerned about how distributed generation gets a fair shake.

I thank Senator FRANKEN. He was out here on the floor, and he was a key proponent of the Department of Energy science and investment in the areas of energy storage and generation, and he has been a very strong voice on why storage is so important. And as I mentioned, Washington being a hydro State and having a variety of renewable energies, having storage capability is very important for us in the Pacific Northwest.

Senator FRANKEN is also a very strong voice in how energy programs are going to work in the tribal areas of our country. I thank him for that.

I also thank Senator MANCHIN for working with Senator HEINRICH and Senator MURKOWSKI on the bipartisan sportsmen's package that is included in this bill, which is something that the Senate—well, let's just say that we had a lot of discussion about the sportsmen's bill over many Congresses, so the fact that we are actually passing a comprehensive sportsmen's package is a great testament to the work of our committee and the work of the Senate in a bipartisan fashion.

I thank Senator WARREN for her focus on transparency in energy commodity markets and ensuring that consumers' interests are there, particularly when it comes to global natural gas markets, and making sure we are well informed about what is happening in the marketplace. These are all important because we want to have enough transparency that the consumers and the government know what is happening and that we never run into the kind of situation we did before with the manipulation of markets because of very tight markets and people taking advantage of that.

I appreciate all of the committee members on our side of the aisle and their contributions, and I certainly appreciate working on these issues with the chair of the committee and many members.

I thank Senator STABENOW and Senator PETERS. I know we tried for many weeks to work on a solution to the Flint issue. The chair, Senator MURKOWSKI, was very efficient in trying to marshal the discussions on her side of the aisle about how to get a resolution to this issue. I thank her for that. I know our colleagues, Senators STABENOW and PETERS, will continue to work on finding solutions to this, so I thank them for that, and I thank them for their leadership on manufacturing and vehicle technology as well.

Again, I know we are going to start voting, but I can't emphasize enough how much material is in the underlying bill, the amendments we cleared earlier by voice vote, and the amendments we are going to vote on. This is a lot of work, and I want to again thank the staff for continuing to process a lot of ideas about energy policies, land conservation policies, and workforce and energy issues for the future because all of these are vital policies for us—modernizing our energy infrastructure and making sure we continue to protect consumers and businesses and making sure we are going to be competitive in the future.

I again thank the chair for her leadership on this issue and look forward to processing the rest of these amendments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, as my colleague on the committee pointed out, many individuals have made great effort and have made very positive contributions toward where we are today with this Energy bill. I wanted to note very quickly some of the groups who have weighed in throughout the process as we have sought input in different sectors across the energy space and really across the broader economy for some of the ideas in efficiency, supply, infrastructure, and accountability. When we look at the list of those organizations from around the country in different areas, I have a seven-page, single-spaced list in very small type of those who have weighed in in support of the measures we have in front of us today. From my State, it is everyone from the Department of Natural Resources, to the Alaska Power Association, the Bristol Bay Native Corporation, the Cordova Electric Co-op, and a whole bunch more.

At the national level, we have support from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the American Chemistry Council, the National Electric Manufacturers Association, the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers—and I am picking randomly.

We have support from labor groups—North America's Building Trades Union, the United Auto Workers, the

United Brotherhood of Carpenters—who all weighed in with support for ideas that are included.

We have a huge coalition—from the Alliance to Save Energy, to Seattle City Light—that have focused on the work we have done with efficiency.

When we think about those who are focused on keeping the lights on, keeping fuel affordable, those who produce the materials that make modern life possible, groups such as the National Hydropower Association, the American Petroleum Institute, the National Mining Association, the American Exploration & Mining Association, the Business Council for Sustainable Energy, the American Public Power Association, and Edison Electric Institute—there is a long list of those who have weighed in in support. It is all over the board—the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council, the American Society of Interior Designers, the Nebraska Public Power District. The list is comprehensive and notable.

I want to be clear, not all in these groups agree with all aspects of the bill that we have in front of us. Those who support our work to streamline LNG exports might not necessarily be supportive of what we are trying to do to clean up the United States Code. But I think it is fair to say that to craft a bill that 100 percent of everybody likes is just not going to happen.

What we have in front of us today and what the Senate will now commence voting on is a bipartisan product that has gone through an extraordinary process in the past year, has been collaboratively built, and is an effort to modernize our energy policies in a smart way that uses common sense. It is not the government telling us what we shall do; it is doing it for the right reasons.

With that, Mr. President, we have come to the end of our 2 hours of debate, so we will commence with our series of rollcall votes that have previously been agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3234, AS MODIFIED, TO AMENDMENT NO. 2953

Mr. President, at this time, I call up my amendment No. 3234.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment by number.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Alaska [Ms. MURKOWSKI] proposes an amendment numbered 3234, as modified, to amendment No. 2953.

The amendment, as modified, is as follows:

(Purpose: To add certain provisions relating to natural resources)

At the end, add the following:

TITLE VI—NATURAL RESOURCES

Subtitle A—Land Conveyances and Related Matters

SEC. 6001. ARAPAHO NATIONAL FOREST BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The boundary of the Arapaho National Forest in the State of Colorado is adjusted to incorporate the approximately 92.95 acres of land generally depicted as ''The Wedge'' on the map entitled ''Arapaho National Forest Boundary Adjustment'' and dated November 6, 2013, and described as lots three, four, eight, and nine of section 13, Township 4 North, Range 76 West, Sixth Principal Meridian, Colorado. A lot described in this subsection may be included in the boundary adjustment only after the Secretary of Agriculture obtains written permission for such action from the lot owner or owners.

(b) BOWEN GULCH PROTECTION AREA.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall include all Federal land within the boundary described in subsection (a) in the Bowen Gulch Protection Area established under section 6 of the Colorado Wilderness Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C. 539j).

(c) LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND.—For purposes of section 200306(a)(2)(B)(i) of title 54, United States Code, the boundaries of the Arapaho National Forest, as modified under subsection (a), shall be considered to be the boundaries of the Arapaho National Forest as in existence on January 1, 1965.

(d) PUBLIC MOTORIZED USE.—Nothing in this section opens privately owned lands within the boundary described in subsection (a) to public motorized use.

(e) ACCESS TO NON-FEDERAL LANDS.—Notwithstanding the provisions of section 6(f) of the Colorado Wilderness Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C. 539j(f)) regarding motorized travel, the owners of any non-Federal lands within the boundary described in subsection (a) who historically have accessed their lands through lands now or hereafter owned by the United States within the boundary described in subsection (a) shall have the continued right of motorized access to their lands across the existing roadway.

SEC. 6002. LAND CONVEYANCE, ELKHORN RANCH AND WHITE RIVER NATIONAL FOREST, COLORADO.

(a) LAND CONVEYANCE REQUIRED.—Consistent with the purpose of the Act of March 3, 1909 (43 U.S.C. 772), all right, title, and interest of the United States (subject to subsection (b)) in and to a parcel of land consisting of approximately 148 acres as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Elkhorn Ranch Land Parcel–White River National Forest'' and dated March 2015 shall be conveyed by patent to the Gordman-Leverich Partnership, a Colorado Limited Liability Partnership (in this section referred to as ''GLP'').

(b) EXISTING RIGHTS.—The conveyance under subsection (a)—

(1) is subject to the valid existing rights of the lessee of Federal oil and gas lease COC–75070 and any other valid existing rights; and

(2) shall reserve to the United States the right to collect rent and royalty payments on the lease referred to in paragraph (1) for the duration of the lease.

(c) EXISTING BOUNDARIES.—The conveyance under subsection (a) does not modify the exterior boundary of the White River National Forest or the boundaries of Sections 18 and 19 of Township 7 South, Range 93 West, Sixth Principal Meridian, Colorado, as such boundaries are in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) TIME FOR CONVEYANCE; PAYMENT OF COSTS.—The conveyance directed under subsection (a) shall be completed not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act. The conveyance shall be without consideration, except that all costs incurred by the Secretary of the Interior relating to any survey, platting, legal description, or other activities carried out to prepare and issue the patent shall be paid by GLP to the Secretary prior to the land conveyance.

SEC. 6003. LAND EXCHANGE IN CRAGS, COLORADO.

(a) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this section are—

(1) to authorize, direct, expedite, and facilitate the land exchange set forth herein; and

(2) to promote enhanced public outdoor recreational and natural resource conservation opportunities in the Pike National Forest near Pikes Peak, Colorado, via acquisition of the non-Federal land and trail easement.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) BHI.—The term ''BHI'' means Broadmoor Hotel, Inc., a Colorado corporation.

(2) FEDERAL LAND.—The term ''Federal land'' means all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to approximately 83 acres of land within the Pike National Forest, El Paso County, Colorado, together with a non-exclusive perpetual access easement to BHI to and from such land on Forest Service Road 371, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Proposed Crags Land Exchange–Federal Parcel–Emerald Valley Ranch'', dated March 2015.

(3) NON-FEDERAL LAND.—The term ''non-Federal land'' means the land and trail easement to be conveyed to the Secretary by BHI in the exchange and is—

(A) approximately 320 acres of land within the Pike National Forest, Teller County, Colorado, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Proposed Crags Land Exchange–Non-Federal Parcel–Crags Property'', dated March 2015; and

(B) a permanent trail easement for the Barr Trail in El Paso County, Colorado, as generally depicted on the map entitled ''Proposed Crags Land Exchange–Barr Trail Easement to United States'', dated March 2015, and which shall be considered as a voluntary donation to the United States by BHI for all purposes of law.

(4) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Agriculture, unless otherwise specified.

(c) LAND EXCHANGE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If BHI offers to convey to the Secretary all right, title, and interest of BHI in and to the non-Federal land, the Secretary shall accept the offer and simultaneously convey to BHI the Federal land.

(2) LAND TITLE.—Title to the non-Federal land conveyed and donated to the Secretary under this section shall be acceptable to the Secretary and shall conform to the title approval standards of the Attorney General of the United States applicable to land acquisitions by the Federal Government.

(3) PERPETUAL ACCESS EASEMENT TO BHI.—The nonexclusive perpetual access easement to be granted to BHI as shown on the map referred to in subsection (b)(2) shall allow—

(A) BHI to fully maintain, at BHI's expense, and use Forest Service Road 371 from its junction with Forest Service Road 368 in accordance with historic use and maintenance patterns by BHI; and

(B) full and continued public and administrative access and use of FSR 371 in accordance with the existing Forest Service travel management plan, or as such plan may be revised by the Secretary.

(4) ROUTE AND CONDITION OF ROAD.—BHI and the Secretary may mutually agree to improve, relocate, reconstruct, or otherwise alter the route and condition of all or portions of such road as the Secretary, in close consultation with BHI, may determine advisable.

(5) EXCHANGE COSTS.—BHI shall pay for all land survey, appraisal, and other costs to the Secretary as may be necessary to process and consummate the exchange directed by this section, including reimbursement to the Secretary, if the Secretary so requests, for staff time spent in such processing and consummation.

(d) EQUAL VALUE EXCHANGE AND APPRAISALS.—

(1) APPRAISALS.—The values of the lands to be exchanged under this section shall be determined by the Secretary through appraisals performed in accordance with—

(A) the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions;

(B) the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice;

(C) appraisal instructions issued by the Secretary; and

(D) shall be performed by an appraiser mutually agreed to by the Secretary and BHI.

(2) EQUAL VALUE EXCHANGE.—The values of the Federal and non-Federal land parcels exchanged shall be equal, or if they are not equal, shall be equalized as follows:

(A) SURPLUS OF FEDERAL LAND VALUE.—If the final appraised value of the Federal land exceeds the final appraised value of the non-Federal land parcel identified in subsection (b)(3)(A), BHI shall make a cash equalization payment to the United States as necessary to achieve equal value, including, if necessary, an amount in excess of that authorized pursuant to section 206(b) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1716(b)).

(B) USE OF FUNDS.—Any cash equalization moneys received by the Secretary under subparagraph (A) shall be—

(i) deposited in the fund established under Public Law 90–171 (commonly known as the ''Sisk Act''; 16 U.S.C. 484a); and

(ii) made available to the Secretary for the acquisition of land or interests in land in Region 2 of the Forest Service.

(C) SURPLUS OF NON-FEDERAL LAND VALUE.—If the final appraised value of the non-Federal land parcel identified in subsection (b)(3)(A) exceeds the final appraised value of the Federal land, the United States shall not make a cash equalization payment to BHI, and surplus value of the non-Federal land shall be considered a donation by BHI to the United States for all purposes of law.

(3) APPRAISAL EXCLUSIONS.—

(A) SPECIAL USE PERMIT.—The appraised value of the Federal land parcel shall not reflect any increase or diminution in value due to the special use permit existing on the date of the enactment of this Act to BHI on the parcel and improvements thereunder.

(B) BARR TRAIL EASEMENT.—The Barr Trail easement donation identified in subsection (b)(3)(B) shall not be appraised for purposes of this section.

(e) MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS.—

(1) WITHDRAWAL PROVISIONS.—

(A) WITHDRAWAL.—Lands acquired by the Secretary under this section shall, without further action by the Secretary, be permanently withdrawn from all forms of appropriation and disposal under the public land laws (including the mining and mineral leasing laws) and the Geothermal Steam Act of 1930 (30 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.).

(B) WITHDRAWAL REVOCATION.—Any public land order that withdraws the Federal land from appropriation or disposal under a public land law shall be revoked to the extent necessary to permit disposal of the Federal land parcel to BHI.

(C) WITHDRAWAL OF FEDERAL LAND.—All Federal land authorized to be exchanged under this section, if not already withdrawn or segregated from appropriation or disposal under the public lands laws upon enactment of this Act, is hereby so withdrawn, subject to valid existing rights, until the date of conveyance of the Federal land to BHI.

(2) POSTEXCHANGE LAND MANAGEMENT.—Land acquired by the Secretary under this section shall become part of the Pike-San Isabel National Forest and be managed in accordance with the laws, rules, and regulations applicable to the National Forest System.

(3) EXCHANGE TIMETABLE.—It is the intent of Congress that the land exchange directed by this section be consummated no later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(4) MAPS, ESTIMATES, AND DESCRIPTIONS.—

(A) MINOR ERRORS.—The Secretary and BHI may by mutual agreement make minor boundary adjustments to the Federal and non-Federal lands involved in the exchange, and may correct any minor errors in any map, acreage estimate, or description of any land to be exchanged.

(B) CONFLICT.—If there is a conflict between a map, an acreage estimate, or a description of land under this section, the map shall control unless the Secretary and BHI mutually agree otherwise.

(C) AVAILABILITY.—Upon enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall file and make available for public inspection in the headquarters of the Pike-San Isabel National Forest a copy of all maps referred to in this section.

SEC. 6004. CERRO DEL YUTA AND RÍO SAN ANTONIO WILDERNESS AREAS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) MAP.—The term ''map'' means the map entitled ''Río Grande del Norte National Monument Proposed Wilderness Areas'' and dated July 28, 2015.

(2) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

(3) WILDERNESS AREA.—The term ''wilderness area'' means a wilderness area designated by subsection (b)(1).

(b) DESIGNATION OF CERRO DEL YUTA AND RÍO SAN ANTONIO WILDERNESS AREAS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.), the following areas in the Río Grande del Norte National Monument are designated as wilderness and as components of the National Wilderness Preservation System:

(A) CERRO DEL YUTA WILDERNESS.—Certain land administered by the Bureau of Land Management in Taos County, New Mexico, comprising approximately 13,420 acres as generally depicted on the map, which shall be known as the ''Cerro del Yuta Wilderness''.

(B) RÍO SAN ANTONIO WILDERNESS.—Certain land administered by the Bureau of Land Management in Río Arriba County, New Mexico, comprising approximately 8,120 acres, as generally depicted on the map, which shall be known as the ''Río San Antonio Wilderness''.

(2) MANAGEMENT OF WILDERNESS AREAS.—Subject to valid existing rights, the wilderness areas shall be administered in accordance with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.) and this section, except that with respect to the wilderness areas designated by this subsection—

(A) any reference to the effective date of the Wilderness Act shall be considered to be a reference to the date of enactment of this Act; and

(B) any reference in the Wilderness Act to the Secretary of Agriculture shall be considered to be a reference to the Secretary.

(3) INCORPORATION OF ACQUIRED LAND AND INTERESTS IN LAND.—Any land or interest in land within the boundary of the wilderness areas that is acquired by the United States shall—

(A) become part of the wilderness area in which the land is located; and

(B) be managed in accordance with—

(i) the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.);

(ii) this section; and

(iii) any other applicable laws.

(4) GRAZING.—Grazing of livestock in the wilderness areas, where established before the date of enactment of this Act, shall be administered in accordance with—

(A) section 4(d)(4) of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1133(d)(4)); and

(B) the guidelines set forth in appendix A of the Report of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs to accompany H.R. 2570 of the 101st Congress (H. Rept. 101–405).

(5) BUFFER ZONES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this section creates a protective perimeter or buffer zone around the wilderness areas.

(B) ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE WILDERNESS AREAS.—The fact that an activity or use on land outside a wilderness area can be seen or heard within the wilderness area shall not preclude the activity or use outside the boundary of the wilderness area.

(6) RELEASE OF WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS.—Congress finds that, for purposes of section 603(c) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1782(c)), the public land within the San Antonio Wilderness Study Area not designated as wilderness by this subsection—

(A) has been adequately studied for wilderness designation;

(B) is no longer subject to section 603(c) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1782(c)); and

(C) shall be managed in accordance with this section.

(7) MAPS AND LEGAL DESCRIPTIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall file the map and legal descriptions of the wilderness areas with—

(i) the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate; and

(ii) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives.

(B) FORCE OF LAW.—The map and legal descriptions filed under subparagraph (A) shall have the same force and effect as if included in this section, except that the Secretary may correct errors in the legal description and map.

(C) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The map and legal descriptions filed under subparagraph (A) shall be on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the Bureau of Land Management.

(8) NATIONAL LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION SYSTEM.—The wilderness areas shall be administered as components of the National Landscape Conservation System.

(9) FISH AND WILDLIFE.—Nothing in this section affects the jurisdiction of the State of New Mexico with respect to fish and wildlife located on public land in the State.

(10) WITHDRAWALS.—Subject to valid existing rights, any Federal land within the wilderness areas designated by paragraph (1), including any land or interest in land that is acquired by the United States after the date of enactment of this Act, is withdrawn from—

(A) entry, appropriation, or disposal under the public land laws;

(B) location, entry, and patent under the mining laws; and

(C) operation of the mineral leasing, mineral materials, and geothermal leasing laws.

(11) TREATY RIGHTS.—Nothing in this section enlarges, diminishes, or otherwise modifies any treaty rights.

SEC. 6005. CLARIFICATION RELATING TO A CERTAIN LAND DESCRIPTION UNDER THE NORTHERN ARIZONA LAND EXCHANGE AND VERDE RIVER BASIN PARTNERSHIP ACT OF 2005.

Section 104(a)(5) of the Northern Arizona Land Exchange and Verde River Basin Partnership Act of 2005 (Public Law 109–110; 119 Stat. 2356) is amended by inserting before the period at the end '', which, notwithstanding section 102(a)(4)(B), includes the N½, NE¼, SW¼, SW¼, the N½, N½, SE¼, SW¼, and

the N½, N½, SW¼, SE¼, sec. 34, T. 22 N., R. 2 E., Gila and Salt River Meridian, Coconino County, comprising approximately 25 acres''.

SEC. 6006. COOPER SPUR LAND EXCHANGE CLARIFICATION AMENDMENTS.

Section 1206(a) of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (Public Law 111–11; 123 Stat. 1018) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in subparagraph (C), by striking ''120 acres'' and inserting ''107 acres''; and

(B) in subparagraph (E)(ii), by inserting ''improvements,'' after ''buildings,''; and

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in subparagraph (D)—

(i) in clause (i), by striking ''As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary and Mt. Hood Meadows shall select'' and inserting ''Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of the Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2016, the Secretary and Mt. Hood Meadows shall jointly select'';

(ii) in clause (ii), in the matter preceding subclause (I), by striking ''An appraisal under clause (i) shall'' and inserting ''Except as provided under clause (iii), an appraisal under clause (i) shall assign a separate value to each tax lot to allow for the equalization of values and''; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

''(iii) FINAL APPRAISED VALUE.—

''(I) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subclause (II), after the final appraised value of the Federal land and the non-Federal land are determined and approved by the Secretary, the Secretary shall not be required to reappraise or update the final appraised value for a period of up to 3 years, beginning on the date of the approval by the Secretary of the final appraised value.

''(II) EXCEPTION.—Subclause (I) shall not apply if the condition of either the Federal land or the non-Federal land referred to in subclause (I) is significantly and substantially altered by fire, windstorm, or other events.

''(iv) PUBLIC REVIEW.—Before completing the land exchange under this Act, the Secretary shall make available for public review the complete appraisals of the land to be exchanged.''; and

(B) by striking subparagraph (G) and inserting the following:

''(G) REQUIRED CONVEYANCE CONDITIONS.—Prior to the exchange of the Federal and non-Federal land—

''(i) the Secretary and Mt. Hood Meadows may mutually agree for the Secretary to reserve a conservation easement to protect the identified wetland in accordance with applicable law, subject to the requirements that—

''(I) the conservation easement shall be consistent with the terms of the September 30, 2015, mediation between the Secretary and Mt. Hood Meadows; and

''(II) in order to take effect, the conservation easement shall be finalized not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of the Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2016; and

''(ii) the Secretary shall reserve a 24-foot-wide nonexclusive trail easement at the existing trail locations on the Federal land that retains for the United States existing rights to construct, reconstruct, maintain, and permit nonmotorized use by the public of existing trails subject to the right of the owner of the Federal land—

''(I) to cross the trails with roads, utilities, and infrastructure facilities; and

''(II) to improve or relocate the trails to accommodate development of the Federal land.

''(H) EQUALIZATION OF VALUES.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), in addition to or in lieu of monetary compensation, a lesser area of Federal land or non-Federal land may be conveyed if necessary to equalize appraised values of the exchange properties, without limitation, consistent with the requirements of this Act and subject to the approval of the Secretary and Mt. Hood Meadows.

''(ii) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN COMPENSATION OR CONVEYANCES AS DONATION.—If, after payment of compensation or adjustment of land area subject to exchange under this Act, the amount by which the appraised value of the land and other property conveyed by Mt. Hood Meadows under subparagraph (A) exceeds the appraised value of the land conveyed by the Secretary under subparagraph (A) shall be considered a donation by Mt. Hood Meadows to the United States.''.

SEC. 6007. EXPEDITED ACCESS TO CERTAIN FEDERAL LAND.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ELIGIBLE.—The term ''eligible'', with respect to an organization or individual, means that the organization or individual, respectively, is—

(A) acting in a not-for-profit capacity; and

(B) composed entirely of members who, at the time of the good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission, have attained the age of majority under the law of the State where the mission takes place.

(2) GOOD SAMARITAN SEARCH-AND-RECOVERY MISSION.—The term ''good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission'' means a search conducted by an eligible organization or individual for 1 or more missing individuals believed to be deceased at the time that the search is initiated.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture, as applicable.

(b) PROCESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each Secretary shall develop and implement a process to expedite access to Federal land under the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary for eligible organizations and individuals to request access to Federal land to conduct good Samaritan search-and-recovery missions.

(2) INCLUSIONS.—The process developed and implemented under this subsection shall include provisions to clarify that—

(A) an eligible organization or individual granted access under this section—

(i) shall be acting for private purposes; and

(ii) shall not be considered to be a Federal volunteer;

(B) an eligible organization or individual conducting a good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission under this section shall not be considered to be a volunteer under section 102301(c) of title 54, United States Code;

(C) chapter 171 of title 28, United States Code (commonly known as the ''Federal Tort Claims Act''), shall not apply to an eligible organization or individual carrying out a privately requested good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission under this section; and

(D) chapter 81 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the ''Federal Employees Compensation Act''), shall not apply to an eligible organization or individual conducting a good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission under this section, and the conduct of the good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission shall not constitute civilian employment.

(c) RELEASE OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FROM LIABILITY.—The Secretary shall not require an eligible organization or individual to have liability insurance as a condition of accessing Federal land under this section, if the eligible organization or individual—

(1) acknowledges and consents, in writing, to the provisions described in subparagraphs (A) through (D) of subsection (b)(2); and

(2) signs a waiver releasing the Federal Government from all liability relating to the access granted under this section and agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the United States from any claims or lawsuits arising from any conduct by the eligible organization or individual on Federal land.

(d) APPROVAL AND DENIAL OF REQUESTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall notify an eligible organization or individual of the approval or denial of a request by the eligible organization or individual to carry out a good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission under this section by not later than 48 hours after the request is made.

(2) DENIALS.—If the Secretary denies a request from an eligible organization or individual to carry out a good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission under this section, the Secretary shall notify the eligible organization or individual of—

(A) the reason for the denial of the request; and

(B) any actions that the eligible organization or individual can take to meet the requirements for the request to be approved.

(e) PARTNERSHIPS.—Each Secretary shall develop search-and-recovery-focused partnerships with search-and-recovery organizations—

(1) to coordinate good Samaritan search-and-recovery missions on Federal land under the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary; and

(2) to expedite and accelerate good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission efforts for missing individuals on Federal land under the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary.

(f) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretaries shall submit to Congress a joint report describing—

(1) plans to develop partnerships described in subsection (e)(1); and

(2) efforts carried out to expedite and accelerate good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission efforts for missing individuals on Federal land under the administrative jurisdiction of each Secretary pursuant to subsection (e)(2).

SEC. 6008. BLACK HILLS NATIONAL CEMETERY BOUNDARY MODIFICATION.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) CEMETERY.—The term ''Cemetery'' means the Black Hills National Cemetery in Sturgis, South Dakota.

(2) FEDERAL LAND.—The term ''Federal land'' means the approximately 200 acres of Bureau of Land Management land adjacent to the Cemetery, generally depicted as ''Proposed National Cemetery Expansion'' on the map entitled ''Proposed Expansion of Black Hills National Cemetery-South Dakota'' and dated September 28, 2015.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

(b) TRANSFER AND WITHDRAWAL OF BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT LAND FOR CEMETERY USE.—

(1) TRANSFER OF ADMINISTRATIVE JURISDICTION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to valid existing rights, administrative jurisdiction over the Federal land is transferred from the Secretary to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for use as a national cemetery in accordance with chapter 24 of title 38, United States Code.

(B) LEGAL DESCRIPTIONS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall publish in the Federal Register a notice containing a legal description of the Federal land.

(ii) EFFECT.—A legal description published under clause (i) shall have the same force and effect as if included in this section, except that the Secretary may correct any clerical and typographical errors in the legal description.

(iii) AVAILABILITY.—Copies of the legal description published under clause (i) shall be available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of—

(I) the Bureau of Land Management; and

(II) the National Cemetery Administration.

(iv) COSTS.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall reimburse the Secretary for the costs incurred by the Secretary in carrying out this subparagraph, including the costs of any surveys and other reasonable costs.

(2) WITHDRAWAL.—Subject to valid existing rights, for any period during which the Federal land is under the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Federal land—

(A) is withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the public land laws, including the mining laws, the mineral leasing laws, and the geothermal leasing laws; and

(B) shall be treated as property as defined under section 102(9) of title 40, United States Code.

(3) BOUNDARY MODIFICATION.—The boundary of the Cemetery is modified to include the Federal land.

(4) MODIFICATION OF PUBLIC LAND ORDER.—Public Land Order 2112, dated June 6, 1960 (25 Fed. Reg. 5243), is modified to exclude the Federal land.

(c) SUBSEQUENT TRANSFER OF ADMINISTRATIVE JURISDICTION.—

(1) NOTICE.—On a determination by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs that all or a portion of the Federal land is not being used for purposes of the Cemetery, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall notify the Secretary of the determination.

(2) TRANSFER OF ADMINISTRATIVE JURISDICTION.—Subject to paragraphs (3) and (4), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall transfer to the Secretary administrative jurisdiction over the Federal land subject to a notice under paragraph (1).

(3) DECONTAMINATON.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall be responsible for the costs of any decontamination of the Federal land subject to a notice under paragraph (1) that the Secretary determines to be necessary for the Federal land to be restored to public land status.

(4) RESTORATION TO PUBLIC LAND STATUS.—The Federal land subject to a notice under paragraph (1) shall only be restored to public land status on—

(A) acceptance by the Secretary of the Federal land subject to the notice; and

(B) a determination by the Secretary that the Federal land subject to the notice is suitable for—

(i) restoration to public land status; and

(ii) the operation of 1 or more of the public land laws with respect to the Federal land.

(5) ORDER.—If the Secretary accepts the Federal land under paragraph (4)(A) and makes a determination of suitability under paragraph (4)(B), the Secretary may—

(A) open the accepted Federal land to operation of 1 or more of the public land laws; and

(B) issue an order to carry out the opening authorized under subparagraph (A).

Subtitle B—National Park Management, Studies, and Related Matters

SEC. 6101. REFUND OF FUNDS USED BY STATES TO OPERATE NATIONAL PARKS DURING SHUTDOWN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the National Park Service shall refund to each State all funds of the State that were used to reopen and temporarily operate a unit of the National Park System during the period in October 2013 in which there was a lapse in appropriations for the unit.

(b) FUNDING.—Funds of the National Park Service that are appropriated after the date of enactment of this Act shall be used to carry out this section.

SEC. 6102. LOWER FARMINGTON AND SALMON BROOK RECREATIONAL RIVERS.

(a) DESIGNATION.—Section 3(a) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1274(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(213) LOWER FARMINGTON RIVER AND SALMON BROOK, CONNECTICUT.—Segments of the main stem and its tributary, Salmon Brook, totaling approximately 62 miles, to be administered by the Secretary of the Interior as follows:

''(A) The approximately 27.2-mile segment of the Farmington River beginning 0.2 miles below the tailrace of the Lower Collinsville Dam and extending to the site of the Spoonville Dam in Bloomfield and East Granby as a recreational river.

''(B) The approximately 8.1-mile segment of the Farmington River extending from 0.5 miles below the Rainbow Dam to the confluence with the Connecticut River in Windsor as a recreational river.

''(C) The approximately 2.4-mile segment of the main stem of Salmon Brook extending from the confluence of the East and West Branches to the confluence with the Farmington River as a recreational river.

''(D) The approximately 12.6-mile segment of the West Branch of Salmon Brook extending from its headwaters in Hartland, Connecticut to its confluence with the East Branch of Salmon Brook as a recreational river.

''(E) The approximately 11.4-mile segment of the East Branch of Salmon Brook extending from the Massachusetts-Connecticut State line to the confluence with the West Branch of Salmon Brook as a recreational river.''.

(b) MANAGEMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The river segments designated by subsection (a) shall be managed in accordance with the management plan and such amendments to the management plan as the Secretary determines are consistent with this section. The management plan shall be deemed to satisfy the requirements for a comprehensive management plan pursuant to section 3(d) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1274(d)).

(2) COMMITTEE.—The Secretary shall coordinate the management responsibilities of the Secretary under this section with the Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook Wild and Scenic Committee, as specified in the management plan.

(3) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In order to provide for the long-term protection, preservation, and enhancement of the river segment designated by subsection (a), the Secretary is authorized to enter into cooperative agreements pursuant to sections 10(e) and 11(b)(1) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act with—

(i) the State of Connecticut;

(ii) the towns of Avon, Bloomfield, Burlington, East Granby, Farmington, Granby, Hartland, Simsbury, and Windsor in Connecticut; and

(iii) appropriate local planning and environmental organizations.

(B) CONSISTENCY.—All cooperative agreements provided for under this section shall be consistent with the management plan and may include provisions for financial or other assistance from the United States.

(4) LAND MANAGEMENT.—

(A) ZONING ORDINANCES.—For the purposes of the segments designated in subsection (a), the zoning ordinances adopted by the towns in Avon, Bloomfield, Burlington, East Granby, Farmington, Granby, Hartland, Simsbury, and Windsor in Connecticut, including provisions for conservation of floodplains, wetlands and watercourses associated with the segments, shall be deemed to satisfy the standards and requirements of section 6(c) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1277(c)).

(B) ACQUISITION OF LAND.—The provisions of section 6(c) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1277(c)) that prohibit Federal acquisition of lands by condemnation shall apply to the segments designated in subsection (a). The authority of the Secretary to acquire lands for the purposes of the segments designated in subsection (a) shall be limited to acquisition by donation or acquisition with the consent of the owner of the lands, and shall be subject to the additional criteria set forth in the management plan.

(5) RAINBOW DAM.—The designation made by subsection (a) shall not be construed to—

(A) prohibit, pre-empt, or abridge the potential future licensing of the Rainbow Dam and Reservoir (including any and all aspects of its facilities, operations and transmission lines) by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission as a federally licensed hydroelectric generation project under the Federal Power Act, provided that the Commission may, in the discretion of the Commission and consistent with this section, establish such reasonable terms and conditions in a hydropower license for Rainbow Dam as are necessary to reduce impacts identified by the Secretary as invading or unreasonably diminishing the scenic, recreational, and fish and wildlife values of the segments designated by subsection (a); or

(B) affect the operation of, or impose any flow or release requirements on, the unlicensed hydroelectric facility at Rainbow Dam and Reservoir.

(6) RELATION TO NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM.—Notwithstanding section 10(c) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1281(c)), the Lower Farmington River shall not be administered as part of the National Park System or be subject to regulations which govern the National Park System.

(c) FARMINGTON RIVER, CONNECTICUT, DESIGNATION REVISION.—Section 3(a)(156) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1274(a)) is amended in the first sentence—

(1) by striking ''14-mile'' and inserting ''15.1-mile''; and

(2) by striking ''to the downstream end of the New Hartford-Canton, Connecticut town line'' and inserting ''to the confluence with the Nepaug River''.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—For the purposes of this section:

(1) MANAGEMENT PLAN.—The term ''management plan'' means the management plan prepared by the Salmon Brook Wild and Scenic Study Committee entitled the ''Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook Management Plan'' and dated June 2011.

(2) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 6103. SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY OF PRESIDENT STREET STATION.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

(2) STUDY AREA.—The term ''study area'' means the President Street Station, a railroad terminal in Baltimore, Maryland, the history of which is tied to the growth of the railroad industry in the 19th century, the Civil War, the Underground Railroad, and the immigrant influx of the early 20th century.

(b) SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY.—

(1) STUDY.—The Secretary shall conduct a special resource study of the study area.

(2) CONTENTS.—In conducting the study under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall—

(A) evaluate the national significance of the study area;

(B) determine the suitability and feasibility of designating the study area as a unit of the National Park System;

(C) consider other alternatives for preservation, protection, and interpretation of the study area by the Federal Government, State or local government entities, or private and nonprofit organizations;

(D) consult with interested Federal agencies, State or local governmental entities, private and nonprofit organizations, or any other interested individuals; and

(E) identify cost estimates for any Federal acquisition, development, interpretation, operation, and maintenance associated with the alternatives.

(3) APPLICABLE LAW.—The study required under paragraph (1) shall be conducted in accordance with section 100507 of title 54, United States Code.

(4) REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after the date on which funds are first made available for the study under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report that describes—

(A) the results of the study; and

(B) any conclusions and recommendations of the Secretary.

SEC. 6104. SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY OF THURGOOD MARSHALL'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

(2) STUDY AREA.—The term ''study area'' means—

(A) P.S. 103, the public school located in West Baltimore, Maryland, which Thurgood Marshall attended as a youth; and

(B) any other resources in the neighborhood surrounding P.S. 103 that relate to the early life of Thurgood Marshall.

(b) SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY.—

(1) STUDY.—The Secretary shall conduct a special resource study of the study area.

(2) CONTENTS.—In conducting the study under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall—

(A) evaluate the national significance of the study area;

(B) determine the suitability and feasibility of designating the study area as a unit of the National Park System;

(C) consider other alternatives for preservation, protection, and interpretation of the study area by the Federal Government, State or local government entities, or private and nonprofit organizations;

(D) consult with interested Federal agencies, State or local governmental entities, private and nonprofit organizations, or any other interested individuals; and

(E) identify cost estimates for any Federal acquisition, development, interpretation, operation, and maintenance associated with the alternatives.

(3) APPLICABLE LAW.—The study required under paragraph (1) shall be conducted in accordance with section 100507 of title 54, United States Code.

(4) REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after the date on which funds are first made available to carry out the study under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report that describes—

(A) the results of the study; and

(B) any conclusions and recommendations of the Secretary.

SEC. 6105. SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY OF JAMES K. POLK PRESIDENTIAL HOME.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Interior (referred to in this section as the ''Secretary'') shall conduct a special resource study of the site of the James K. Polk Home in Columbia, Tennessee, and adjacent property (referred to in this section as the ''site'').

(b) CRITERIA.—The Secretary shall conduct the study under subsection (a) in accordance with section 100507 of title 54, United States Code.

(c) CONTENTS.—In conducting the study under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(1) evaluate the national significance of the site;

(2) determine the suitability and feasibility of designating the site as a unit of the National Park System;

(3) include cost estimates for any necessary acquisition, development, operation, and maintenance of the site;

(4) consult with interested Federal, State, or local governmental entities, private and nonprofit organizations, or other interested individuals; and

(5) identify alternatives for the management, administration, and protection of the site.

(d) REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after the date on which funds are made available to carry out the study under subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report that describes—

(1) the findings and conclusions of the study; and

(2) any recommendations of the Secretary.

SEC. 6106. NORTH COUNTRY NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL ROUTE ADJUSTMENT.

(a) ROUTE ADJUSTMENT.—Section 5(a)(8) of the National Trails System Act (16 U.S.C. 1244(a)(8)) is amended in the first sentence—

(1) by striking ''thirty two hundred miles, extending from eastern New York State'' and inserting ''4,600 miles, extending from the Appalachian Trail in Vermont''; and

(2) by striking ''Proposed North Country Trail'' and all that follows through ''June 1975.'' and inserting '''North Country National Scenic Trail, Authorized Route' dated February 2014, and numbered 649/116870.''.

(b) NO CONDEMNATION.—Section 5(a)(8) of the National Trails System Act (16 U.S.C. 1244(a)(8)) is amended by adding at the end the following: ''No land or interest in land outside of the exterior boundary of any Federally administered area may be acquired by the Federal Government for the trail by condemnation.''.

SEC. 6107. DESIGNATION OF JAY S. HAMMOND WILDERNESS AREA.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The approximately 2,600,000 acres of National Wilderness Preservation System land located within the Lake Clark National Park and Preserve designated by section 201(e)(7)(a) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 410hh(e)(7)(a)) shall be known and designated as the ''Jay S. Hammond Wilderness Area''.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the wilderness area referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''Jay S. Hammond Wilderness Area''.

SEC. 6108. ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION.

Section 304101(a) of title 54, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (8), (9), (10), and (11) as paragraphs (9), (10), (11), and (12), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (7) the following:

''(8) The General Chairman of the National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers.''.

SEC. 6109. ESTABLISHMENT OF A VISITOR SERVICES FACILITY ON THE ARLINGTON RIDGE TRACT.

(a) DEFINITION OF ARLINGTON RIDGE TRACT.—In this section, the term ''Arlington Ridge tract'' means the parcel of Federal land located in Arlington County, Virginia, known as the ''Nevius Tract'' and transferred to the Department of the Interior in 1953, that is bounded generally by—

(1) Arlington Boulevard (United States Route 50) to the north;

(2) Jefferson Davis Highway (Virginia Route 110) to the east;

(3) Marshall Drive to the south; and

(4) North Meade Street to the west.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF VISITOR SERVICES FACILITY.—Notwithstanding section 2863(g) of the Military Construction Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002 (Public Law 107–107; 115 Stat. 1332), the Secretary of the Interior may construct a structure for visitor services to include a public restroom facility on the Arlington Ridge tract in the area of the United States Marine Corps War Memorial.

Subtitle C—Sportsmen's Access and Land Management Issues

PART I—NATIONAL POLICY

SEC. 6201. CONGRESSIONAL DECLARATION OF NATIONAL POLICY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Congress declares that it is the policy of the United States that Federal departments and agencies, in accordance with the missions of the departments and agencies, Executive Orders 12962 and 13443 (60 Fed. Reg. 30769 (June 7, 1995); 72 Fed. Reg. 46537 (August 16, 2007)), and applicable law, shall—

(1) facilitate the expansion and enhancement of hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting opportunities on Federal land, in consultation with the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council, the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council, State and tribal fish and wildlife agencies, and the public;

(2) conserve and enhance aquatic systems and the management of game species and the habitat of those species on Federal land, including through hunting and fishing, in a manner that respects—

(A) State management authority over wildlife resources; and

(B) private property rights; and

(3) consider hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting opportunities as part of all Federal plans for land, resource, and travel management.

(b) EXCLUSION.—In this subtitle, the term ''fishing'' does not include commercial fishing in which fish are harvested, either in whole or in part, that are intended to enter commerce through sale.

PART II—SPORTSMEN'S ACCESS TO FEDERAL LAND

SEC. 6211. DEFINITIONS.

In this part:

(1) FEDERAL LAND.—The term ''Federal land'' means—

(A) any land in the National Forest System (as defined in section 11(a) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1609(a))) that is administered by the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service; and

(B) public lands (as defined in section 103 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1702)), the surface of which is administered by the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the Bureau of Land Management.

(2) SECRETARY CONCERNED.—The term ''Secretary concerned'' means—

(A) the Secretary of Agriculture, with respect to land described in paragraph (1)(A); and

(B) the Secretary of the Interior, with respect to land described in paragraph (1)(B).

SEC. 6212. FEDERAL LAND OPEN TO HUNTING, FISHING, AND RECREATIONAL SHOOTING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), Federal land shall be open to hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting, in accordance with applicable law, unless the Secretary concerned closes an area in accordance with section 6213.

(b) EFFECT OF PART.—Nothing in this part opens to hunting, fishing, or recreational shooting any land that is not open to those activities as of the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 6213. CLOSURE OF FEDERAL LAND TO HUNTING, FISHING, AND RECREATIONAL SHOOTING.

(a) AUTHORIZATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2) and in accordance with section 302(b) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1732(b)), the Secretary concerned may designate any area on Federal land in which, and establish any period during which, for reasons of public safety, administration, or compliance with applicable laws, no hunting, fishing, or recreational shooting shall be permitted.

(2) REQUIREMENT.—In making a designation under paragraph (1), the Secretary concerned shall designate the smallest area for the least amount of time that is required for public safety, administration, or compliance with applicable laws.

(b) CLOSURE PROCEDURES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except in an emergency, before permanently or temporarily closing any Federal land to hunting, fishing, or recreational shooting, the Secretary concerned shall—

(A) consult with State fish and wildlife agencies; and

(B) provide public notice and opportunity for comment under paragraph (2).

(2) PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Public notice and comment shall include—

(i) a notice of intent—

(I) published in advance of the public comment period for the closure—

(aa) in the Federal Register;

(bb) on the website of the applicable Federal agency;

(cc) on the website of the Federal land unit, if available; and

(dd) in at least 1 local newspaper;

(II) made available in advance of the public comment period to local offices, chapters, and affiliate organizations in the vicinity of the closure that are signatories to the memorandum of understanding entitled ''Federal Lands Hunting, Fishing, and Shooting Sports Roundtable Memorandum of Understanding''; and

(III) that describes—

(aa) the proposed closure; and

(bb) the justification for the proposed closure, including an explanation of the reasons and necessity for the decision to close the area to hunting, fishing, or recreational shooting; and

(ii) an opportunity for public comment for a period of—

(I) not less than 60 days for a permanent closure; or

(II) not less than 30 days for a temporary closure.

(B) FINAL DECISION.—In a final decision to permanently or temporarily close an area to hunting, fishing, or recreation shooting, the Secretary concerned shall—

(i) respond in a reasoned manner to the comments received;

(ii) explain how the Secretary concerned resolved any significant issues raised by the comments; and

(iii) show how the resolution led to the closure.

(c) TEMPORARY CLOSURES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A temporary closure under this section may not exceed a period of 180 days.

(2) RENEWAL.—Except in an emergency, a temporary closure for the same area of land closed to the same activities—

(A) may not be renewed more than 3 times after the first temporary closure; and

(B) must be subject to a separate notice and comment procedure in accordance with subsection (b)(2).

(3) EFFECT OF TEMPORARY CLOSURE.—Any Federal land that is temporarily closed to hunting, fishing, or recreational shooting under this section shall not become permanently closed to that activity without a separate public notice and opportunity to comment in accordance with subsection (b)(2).

(d) REPORTING.—On an annual basis, the Secretaries concerned shall—

(1) publish on a public website a list of all areas of Federal land temporarily or permanently subject to a closure under this section; and

(2) submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources and the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives a report that identifies—

(A) a list of each area of Federal land temporarily or permanently subject to a closure;

(B) the acreage of each closure; and

(C) a survey of—

(i) the aggregate areas and acreage closed under this section in each State; and

(ii) the percentage of Federal land in each State closed under this section with respect to hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting.

(e) APPLICATION.—This section shall not apply if the closure is—

(1) less than 14 days in duration; and

(2) covered by a special use permit.

SEC. 6214. SHOOTING RANGES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), the Secretary concerned may, in accordance with this section and other applicable law, lease or permit the use of Federal land for a shooting range.

(b) EXCEPTION.—The Secretary concerned shall not lease or permit the use of Federal land for a shooting range, within—

(1) a component of the National Landscape Conservation System;

(2) a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System;

(3) any area that is—

(A) designated as a wilderness study area;

(B) administratively classified as—

(i) wilderness-eligible; or

(ii) wilderness-suitable; or

(C) a primitive or semiprimitive area;

(4) a national monument, national volcanic monument, or national scenic area; or

(5) a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System (including areas designated for study for potential addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System).

SEC. 6215. FEDERAL ACTION TRANSPARENCY.

(a) MODIFICATION OF EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE PROVISIONS.—

(1) AGENCY PROCEEDINGS.—Section 504 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in subsection (c)(1), by striking '', United States Code'';

(B) by redesignating subsection (f) as subsection (i); and

(C) by striking subsection (e) and inserting the following:

''(e)(1) Not later than March 31 of the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of the Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2016, and every fiscal year thereafter, the Chairman of the Administrative Conference of the United States, after consultation with the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration, shall submit to Congress and make publicly available online a report on the amount of fees and other expenses awarded during the preceding fiscal year under this section.

''(2) Each report under paragraph (1) shall describe the number, nature, and amount of the awards, the claims involved in the controversy, and any other relevant information that may aid Congress in evaluating the scope and impact of such awards.

''(3)(A) Each report under paragraph (1) shall account for all payments of fees and other expenses awarded under this section that are made pursuant to a settlement agreement, regardless of whether the settlement agreement is sealed or otherwise subject to a nondisclosure provision.

''(B) The disclosure of fees and other expenses required under subparagraph (A) shall not affect any other information that is subject to a nondisclosure provision in a settlement agreement.

''(f) As soon as practicable, and in any event not later than the date on which the first report under subsection (e)(1) is required to be submitted, the Chairman of the Administrative Conference of the United States shall create and maintain online a searchable database containing, with respect to each award of fees and other expenses under this section made on or after the date of enactment of the Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2016, the following information:

''(1) The case name and number of the adversary adjudication, if available, hyperlinked to the case, if available.

''(2) The name of the agency involved in the adversary adjudication.

''(3) A description of the claims in the adversary adjudication.

''(4) The name of each party to whom the award was made as such party is identified in the order or other court document making the award.

''(5) The amount of the award.

''(6) The basis for the finding that the position of the agency concerned was not substantially justified.

''(g) The online searchable database described in subsection (f) may not reveal any information the disclosure of which is prohibited by law or a court order.

''(h) The head of each agency shall provide to the Chairman of the Administrative Conference of the United States in a timely manner all information requested by the Chairman to comply with the requirements of subsections (e), (f), and (g).''.

(2) COURT CASES.—Section 2412(d) of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(5)(A) Not later than March 31 of the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of the Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2016, and every fiscal year thereafter, the Chairman of the Administrative Conference of the United States shall submit to Congress and make publicly available online a report on the amount of fees and other expenses awarded during the preceding fiscal year pursuant to this subsection.

''(B) Each report under subparagraph (A) shall describe the number, nature, and amount of the awards, the claims involved in the controversy, and any other relevant information that may aid Congress in evaluating the scope and impact of such awards.

''(C)(i) Each report under subparagraph (A) shall account for all payments of fees and other expenses awarded under this subsection that are made pursuant to a settlement agreement, regardless of whether the settlement agreement is sealed or otherwise subject to a nondisclosure provision.

''(ii) The disclosure of fees and other expenses required under clause (i) shall not affect any other information that is subject to a nondisclosure provision in a settlement agreement.

''(D) The Chairman of the Administrative Conference of the United States shall include and clearly identify in each annual report under subparagraph (A), for each case in which an award of fees and other expenses is included in the report—

''(i) any amounts paid under section 1304 of title 31 for a judgment in the case;

''(ii) the amount of the award of fees and other expenses; and

''(iii) the statute under which the plaintiff filed suit.

''(6) As soon as practicable, and in any event not later than the date on which the first report under paragraph (5)(A) is required to be submitted, the Chairman of the Administrative Conference of the United States shall create and maintain online a searchable database containing, with respect to each award of fees and other expenses under this subsection made on or after the date of enactment of the Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2016, the following information:

''(A) The case name and number, hyperlinked to the case, if available.

''(B) The name of the agency involved in the case.

''(C) The name of each party to whom the award was made as such party is identified in the order or other court document making the award.

''(D) A description of the claims in the case.

''(E) The amount of the award.

''(F) The basis for the finding that the position of the agency concerned was not substantially justified.

''(7) The online searchable database described in paragraph (6) may not reveal any information the disclosure of which is prohibited by law or a court order.

''(8) The head of each agency (including the Attorney General of the United States) shall provide to the Chairman of the Administrative Conference of the United States in a timely manner all information requested by the Chairman to comply with the requirements of paragraphs (5), (6), and (7).''.

(3) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 2412 of title 28, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in subsection (d)(3), by striking ''United States Code,''; and

(B) in subsection (e)—

(i) by striking ''of section 2412 of title 28, United States Code,'' and inserting ''of this section''; and

(ii) by striking ''of such title'' and inserting ''of this title''.

(b) JUDGMENT FUND TRANSPARENCY.—Section 1304 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(d) Beginning not later than the date that is 60 days after the date of enactment of the Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2016, and unless the disclosure of such information is otherwise prohibited by law or a court order, the Secretary of the Treasury shall make available to the public on a website, as soon as practicable, but not later than 30 days after the date on which a payment under this section is tendered, the following information with regard to that payment:

''(1) The name of the specific agency or entity whose actions gave rise to the claim or judgment.

''(2) The name of the plaintiff or claimant.

''(3) The name of counsel for the plaintiff or claimant.

''(4) The amount paid representing principal liability, and any amounts paid representing any ancillary liability, including attorney fees, costs, and interest.

''(5) A brief description of the facts that gave rise to the claim.

''(6) The name of the agency that submitted the claim.''.

PART III—FILMING ON FEDERAL LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY LAND

SEC. 6221. COMMERCIAL FILMING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1 of Public Law 106–206 (16 U.S.C. 4601–6d) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (a) through (f) as subsections (b) through (g), respectively;

(2) by inserting before subsection (b) (as so redesignated) the following:

''(a) DEFINITION OF SECRETARY.—The term 'Secretary' means the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture, as applicable, with respect to land under the respective jurisdiction of the Secretary.'';

(3) in subsection (b) (as so redesignated)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the first sentence, by striking ''of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture (hereafter individually referred to as the 'Secretary' with respect to land (except land in a System unit as defined in section 100102 of title 54, United States Code) under their respective jurisdictions)''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by inserting '', except in the case of film crews of 3 or fewer individuals'' before the period at the end; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(3) FEE SCHEDULE.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2016, to enhance consistency in the management of Federal land, the Secretaries shall publish a single joint land use fee schedule for commercial filming and still photography.'';

(4) in subsection (c) (as so redesignated), in the second sentence, by striking ''subsection (a)'' and inserting ''subsection (b)'';

(5) in subsection (d) (as so redesignated), in the heading, by inserting ''Commercial'' before ''Still'';

(6) in paragraph (1) of subsection (f) (as so redesignated), by inserting ''in accordance with the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (16 U.S.C. 6801 et seq.),'' after ''without further appropriation,'';

(7) in subsection (g) (as so redesignated)—

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

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—The Secretary shall not consider subject matter or content as a criterion for issuing or denying a permit under this Act.''; and

(8) by adding at the end the following:

''(h) EXEMPTION FROM COMMERCIAL FILMING OR STILL PHOTOGRAPHY PERMITS AND FEES.—The Secretary shall not require persons holding commercial use authorizations or special recreation permits to obtain an additional permit or pay a fee for commercial filming or still photography under this Act if the filming or photography conducted is—

''(1) incidental to the permitted activity that is the subject of the commercial use authorization or special recreation permit; and

''(2) the holder of the commercial use authorization or special recreation permit is an individual or small business concern (within the meaning of section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632)).

''(i) EXCEPTION FROM CERTAIN FEES.—Commercial filming or commercial still photography shall be exempt from fees under this Act, but not from recovery of costs under subsection (c), if the activity—

''(1) is conducted by an entity that is a small business concern (within the meaning of section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632));

''(2) is conducted by a crew of not more than 3 individuals; and

''(3) uses only a camera and tripod.

''(j) APPLICABILITY TO NEWS GATHERING ACTIVITIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—News gathering shall not be considered a commercial activity.

''(2) INCLUDED ACTIVITIES.—In this subsection, the term 'news gathering' includes, at a minimum, the gathering, recording, and filming of news and information related to news in any medium.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Chapter 1009 of title 54, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking section 100905; and

(2) in the table of sections for chapter 1009 of title 54, United States Code, by striking the item relating to section 100905.

PART IV—BOWS, WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT, AND ACCESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR RECREATION, HUNTING, AND FISHING

SEC. 6231. BOWS IN PARKS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 1049 of title 54, United States Code (as amended by section 5001(a)), is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 104909. Bows in parks

''(a) DEFINITION OF NOT READY FOR IMMEDIATE USE.—The term 'not ready for immediate use' means—

''(1) a bow or crossbow, the arrows of which are secured or stowed in a quiver or other arrow transport case; and

''(2) with respect to a crossbow, uncocked.

''(b) VEHICULAR TRANSPORTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Director shall not promulgate or enforce any regulation that prohibits an individual from transporting bows and crossbows that are not ready for immediate use across any System unit in the vehicle of the individual if—

''(1) the individual is not otherwise prohibited by law from possessing the bows and crossbows;

''(2) the bows or crossbows that are not ready for immediate use remain inside the vehicle of the individual throughout the period during which the bows or crossbows are transported across System land; and

''(3) the possession of the bows and crossbows is in compliance with the law of the State in which the System unit is located.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 1049 of title 54, United States Code (as amended by section 5001(b)), is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 104908 the following:

''104909. Bows in parks.''.

SEC. 6232. WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT IN PARKS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 1049 of title 54, United States Code (as amended by section 6231(a)), is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 104910. WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT IN PARKS.

''(a) USE OF QUALIFIED VOLUNTEERS.—If the Secretary determines it is necessary to reduce the size of a wildlife population on System land in accordance with applicable law (including regulations), the Secretary may use qualified volunteers to assist in carrying out wildlife management on System land.

''(b) REQUIREMENTS FOR QUALIFIED VOLUNTEERS.—Qualified volunteers providing assistance under subsection (a) shall be subject to—

''(1) any training requirements or qualifications established by the Secretary; and

''(2) any other terms and conditions that the Secretary may require.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 1049 of title 54 (as amended by section 6231(b)), United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 104909 the following:

''104910. Wildlife management in parks.''.

SEC. 6233. IDENTIFYING OPPORTUNITIES FOR RECREATION, HUNTING, AND FISHING ON FEDERAL LAND.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means—

(A) the Secretary of the Interior, with respect to land administered by—

(i) the Director of the National Park Service;

(ii) the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service; and

(iii) the Director of the Bureau of Land Management; and

(B) the Secretary of Agriculture, with respect to land administered by the Chief of the Forest Service.

(2) STATE OR REGIONAL OFFICE.—The term ''State or regional office'' means—

(A) a State office of the Bureau of Land Management; or

(B) a regional office of—

(i) the National Park Service;

(ii) the United States Fish and Wildlife Service; or

(iii) the Forest Service.

(3) TRAVEL MANAGEMENT PLAN.—The term ''travel management plan'' means a plan for the management of travel—

(A) with respect to land under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service, on park roads and designated routes under section 4.10 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations);

(B) with respect to land under the jurisdiction of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, on the land under a comprehensive conservation plan prepared under section 4(e) of the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 668dd(e));

(C) with respect to land under the jurisdiction of the Forest Service, on National Forest System land under part 212 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations); and

(D) with respect to land under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, under a resource management plan developed under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).

(b) PRIORITY LISTS REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, annually during the 10-year period beginning on the date on which the first priority list is completed, and every 5 years after the end of the 10-year period, the Secretary shall prepare a priority list, to be made publicly available on the website of the applicable Federal agency referred to in subsection (a)(1), which shall identify the location and acreage of land within the jurisdiction of each State or regional office on which the public is allowed, under Federal or State law, to hunt, fish, or use the land for other recreational purposes but—

(A) to which there is no public access or egress; or

(B) to which public access or egress to the legal boundaries of the land is significantly restricted (as determined by the Secretary).

(2) MINIMUM SIZE.—Any land identified under paragraph (1) shall consist of contiguous acreage of at least 640 acres.

(3) CONSIDERATIONS.—In preparing the priority list required under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall consider with respect to the land—

(A) whether access is absent or merely restricted, including the extent of the restriction;

(B) the likelihood of resolving the absence of or restriction to public access;

(C) the potential for recreational use;

(D) any information received from the public or other stakeholders during the nomination process described in paragraph (5); and

(E) any other factor as determined by the Secretary.

(4) ADJACENT LAND STATUS.—For each parcel of land on the priority list, the Secretary shall include in the priority list whether resolving the issue of public access or egress to the land would require acquisition of an easement, right-of-way, or fee title from—

(A) another Federal agency;

(B) a State, local, or tribal government; or

(C) a private landowner.

(5) NOMINATION PROCESS.—In preparing a priority list under this section, the Secretary shall provide an opportunity for members of the public to nominate parcels for inclusion on the priority list.

(c) ACCESS OPTIONS.—With respect to land included on a priority list described in subsection (b), the Secretary shall develop and submit to the Committees on Appropriations and Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committees on Appropriations and Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a report on options for providing access that—

(1) identifies how public access and egress could reasonably be provided to the legal boundaries of the land in a manner that minimizes the impact on wildlife habitat and water quality;

(2) specifies the steps recommended to secure the access and egress, including acquiring an easement, right-of-way, or fee title from a willing owner of any land that abuts the land or the need to coordinate with State land management agencies or other Federal, State, or tribal governments to allow for such access and egress; and

(3) is consistent with the travel management plan in effect on the land.

(d) PROTECTION OF PERSONALLY IDENTIFYING INFORMATION.—In making the priority list and report prepared under subsections (b) and (c) available, the Secretary shall ensure that no personally identifying information is included, such as names or addresses of individuals or entities.

(e) WILLING OWNERS.—For purposes of providing any permits to, or entering into agreements with, a State, local, or tribal government or private landowner with respect to the use of land under the jurisdiction of the government or landowner, the Secretary shall not take into account whether the State, local, or tribal government or private landowner has granted or denied public access or egress to the land.

(f) MEANS OF PUBLIC ACCESS AND EGRESS INCLUDED.—In considering public access and egress under subsections (b) and (c), the Secretary shall consider public access and egress to the legal boundaries of the land described in those subsections, including access and egress—

(1) by motorized or non-motorized vehicles; and

(2) on foot or horseback.

(g) EFFECT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—This section shall have no effect on whether a particular recreational use shall be allowed on the land included in a priority list under this section.

(2) EFFECT OF ALLOWABLE USES ON AGENCY CONSIDERATION.—In preparing the priority list under subsection (b), the Secretary shall only consider recreational uses that are allowed on the land at the time that the priority list is prepared.

PART V—FEDERAL LAND TRANSACTION FACILITATION ACT

SEC. 6241. FEDERAL LAND TRANSACTION FACILITATION ACT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act is amended—

(1) in section 203(2) (43 U.S.C. 2302(2)), by striking ''on the date of enactment of this Act was'' and inserting ''is'';

(2) in section 205 (43 U.S.C. 2304)—

(A) in subsection (a), by striking ''(as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act)''; and

(B) by striking subsection (d);

(3) in section 206 (43 U.S.C. 2305), by striking subsection (f); and

(4) in section 207(b) (43 U.S.C. 2306(b))—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking ''96–568'' and inserting ''96–586''; and

(ii) by striking ''; or'' and inserting a semicolon;

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by inserting ''Public Law 105–263;'' before ''112 Stat.''; and

(ii) by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(3) the White Pine County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act of 2006 (Public Law 109–432; 120 Stat. 3028);

''(4) the Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act of 2004 (Public Law 108–424; 118 Stat. 2403);

''(5) subtitle F of title I of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (16 U.S.C. 1132 note; Public Law 111–11);

''(6) subtitle O of title I of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (16 U.S.C. 460www note, 1132 note; Public Law 111–11);

''(7) section 2601 of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (Public Law 111–11; 123 Stat. 1108); or

''(8) section 2606 of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (Public Law 111–11; 123 Stat. 1121).''.

(b) FUNDS TO TREASURY.—Of the amounts deposited in the Federal Land Disposal Account, there shall be transferred to the general fund of the Treasury $1,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

PART VI—FISH AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

SEC. 6251. AMENDMENTS TO PITTMAN-ROBERTSON WILDLIFE RESTORATION ACT.

(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to facilitate the construction and expansion of public target ranges, including ranges on Federal land managed by the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management.

(b) DEFINITION OF PUBLIC TARGET RANGE.—In this section, the term ''public target range'' means a specific location that—

(1) is identified by a governmental agency for recreational shooting;

(2) is open to the public;

(3) may be supervised; and

(4) may accommodate archery or rifle, pistol, or shotgun shooting.

(c) AMENDMENTS TO PITTMAN-ROBERTSON WILDLIFE RESTORATION ACT.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—Section 2 of the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669a) is amended—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (2) through (8) as paragraphs (3) through (9), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

''(2) the term 'public target range' means a specific location that—

''(A) is identified by a governmental agency for recreational shooting;

''(B) is open to the public;

''(C) may be supervised; and

''(D) may accommodate archery or rifle, pistol, or shotgun shooting;''.

(2) EXPENDITURES FOR MANAGEMENT OF WILDLIFE AREAS AND RESOURCES.—Section 8(b) of the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669g(b)) is amended—

(A) by striking ''(b) Each State'' and inserting the following:

''(b) EXPENDITURES FOR MANAGEMENT OF WILDLIFE AREAS AND RESOURCES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), each State'';

(B) in paragraph (1) (as so designated), by striking ''construction, operation,'' and inserting ''operation'';

(C) in the second sentence, by striking ''The non-Federal share'' and inserting the following:

''(3) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—The non-Federal share'';

(D) in the third sentence, by striking ''The Secretary'' and inserting the following:

''(4) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary''; and

(E) by inserting after paragraph (1) (as designated by subparagraph (A)) the following:

''(2) EXCEPTION.—Notwithstanding the limitation described in paragraph (1), a State may pay up to 90 percent of the cost of acquiring land for, expanding, or constructing a public target range.''.

(3) FIREARM AND BOW HUNTER EDUCATION AND SAFETY PROGRAM GRANTS.—Section 10 of the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669h–1) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a), by adding at the end the following:

''(3) ALLOCATION OF ADDITIONAL AMOUNTS.—Of the amount apportioned to a State for any fiscal year under section 4(b), the State may elect to allocate not more than 10 percent, to be combined with the amount apportioned to the State under paragraph (1) for that fiscal year, for acquiring land for, expanding, or constructing a public target range.'';

(B) by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following:

''(b) COST SHARING.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Federal share of the cost of any activity carried out using a grant under this section shall not exceed 75 percent of the total cost of the activity.

''(2) PUBLIC TARGET RANGE CONSTRUCTION OR EXPANSION.—The Federal share of the cost of acquiring land for, expanding, or constructing a public target range in a State on Federal or non-Federal land pursuant to this section or section 8(b) shall not exceed 90 percent of the cost of the activity.''; and

(C) in subsection (c)(1)—

(i) by striking ''Amounts made'' and inserting the following:

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), amounts made''; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following:

''(B) EXCEPTION.—Amounts provided for acquiring land for, constructing, or expanding a public target range shall remain available for expenditure and obligation during the 5-fiscal-year period beginning on October 1 of the first fiscal year for which the amounts are made available.''.

(d) SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING COOPERATION.—It is the sense of Congress that, consistent with applicable laws (including regulations), the Chief of the Forest Service and the Director of the Bureau of Land Management should cooperate with State and local authorities and other entities to carry out waste removal and other activities on any Federal land used as a public target range to encourage continued use of that land for target practice or marksmanship training.

SEC. 6252. NORTH AMERICAN WETLANDS CONSERVATION ACT.

(a) CONSERVATION INCENTIVES LANDOWNER EDUCATION PROGRAM.—Any acquisition of land (including any interest in land) under the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 4401 et seq.) shall be subject to the notification requirements under section [50___(d)].

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 7(c) of the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 4406(c)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (4), by striking ''and'';

(2) in paragraph (5), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(6) $50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2015 through 2020.''.

SEC. 6253. NATIONAL FISH HABITAT CONSERVATION.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''National Fish Habitat Conservation Through Partnerships Act''.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to encourage partnerships among public agencies and other interested parties to promote fish conservation—

(1) to achieve measurable habitat conservation results through strategic actions of Fish Habitat Partnerships that lead to better fish habitat conditions and increased fishing opportunities by—

(A) improving ecological conditions;

(B) restoring natural processes; or

(C) preventing the decline of intact and healthy systems;

(2) to establish a consensus set of national conservation strategies as a framework to guide future actions and investment by Fish Habitat Partnerships;

(3) to broaden the community of support for fish habitat conservation by—

(A) increasing fishing opportunities;

(B) fostering the participation of local communities, especially young people in local communities, in conservation activities; and

(C) raising public awareness of the role healthy fish habitat play in the quality of life and economic well-being of local communities;

(4) to fill gaps in the National Fish Habitat Assessment and the associated database of the National Fish Habitat Assessment—

(A) to empower strategic conservation actions supported by broadly available scientific information; and

(B) to integrate socioeconomic data in the analysis to improve the lives of humans in a manner consistent with fish habitat conservation goals; and

(5) to communicate to the public and conservation partners—

(A) the conservation outcomes produced collectively by Fish Habitat Partnerships; and

(B) new opportunities and voluntary approaches for conserving fish habitat.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives.

(2) BOARD.—The term ''Board'' means the National Fish Habitat Board established by subsection (d)(1)(A).

(3) DIRECTOR.—The term ''Director'' means the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

(4) EPA ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''EPA Assistant Administrator'' means the Assistant Administrator for Water of the Environmental Protection Agency.

(5) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term ''Indian tribe'' has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

(6) NOAA ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''NOAA Assistant Administrator'' means the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(7) PARTNERSHIP.—The term ''Partnership'' means a self-governed entity designated by the Board as a Fish Habitat Conservation Partnership pursuant to subsection (e)(1) .

(8) REAL PROPERTY INTEREST.—The term ''real property interest'' means an ownership interest in—

(A) land; or

(B) water (including water rights).

(9) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

(10) STATE.—The term ''State'' means each of the several States.

(11) STATE AGENCY.—The term ''State agency'' means—

(A) the fish and wildlife agency of a State; and

(B) any department or division of a department or agency of a State that manages in the public trust the inland or marine fishery resources or sustains the habitat for those fishery resources of the State pursuant to State law or the constitution of the State.

(d) NATIONAL FISH HABITAT BOARD.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(A) FISH HABITAT BOARD.—There is established a board, to be known as the ''National Fish Habitat Board'', whose duties are—

(i) to promote, oversee, and coordinate the implementation of this section;

(ii) to establish national goals and priorities for fish habitat conservation;

(iii) to approve Partnerships; and

(iv) to review and make recommendations regarding fish habitat conservation projects.

(B) MEMBERSHIP.—The Board shall be composed of 25 members, of whom—

(i) 1 shall be a representative of the Department of the Interior;

(ii) 1 shall be a representative of the United States Geological Survey;

(iii) 1 shall be a representative of the Department of Commerce;

(iv) 1 shall be a representative of the Department of Agriculture;

(v) 1 shall be a representative of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies;

(vi) 4 shall be representatives of State agencies, 1 of whom shall be nominated by a regional association of fish and wildlife agencies from each of the Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, and Western regions of the United States;

(vii) 1 shall be a representative of either—

(I) Indian tribes in the State of Alaska; or

(II) Indian tribes in States other than the State of Alaska;

(viii) 1 shall be a representative of either—

(I) the Regional Fishery Management Councils established under section 302 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1852); or

(II) a representative of the Marine Fisheries Commissions, which is composed of—

(aa) the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission;

(bb) the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission; and

(cc) the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission;

(ix) 1 shall be a representative of the Sportfishing and Boating Partnership Council;

(x) 7 shall be representatives selected from each of—

(I) the recreational sportfishing industry;

(II) the commercial fishing industry;

(III) marine recreational anglers;

(IV) freshwater recreational anglers;

(V) habitat conservation organizations; and

(VI) science-based fishery organizations;

(xi) 1 shall be a representative of a national private landowner organization;

(xii) 1 shall be a representative of an agricultural production organization;

(xiii) 1 shall be a representative of local government interests involved in fish habitat restoration;

(xiv) 2 shall be representatives from different sectors of corporate industries, which may include—

(I) natural resource commodity interests, such as petroleum or mineral extraction;

(II) natural resource user industries; and

(III) industries with an interest in fish and fish habitat conservation; and

(xv) 1 shall be a leadership private sector or landowner representative of an active partnership.

(C) COMPENSATION.—A member of the Board shall serve without compensation.

(D) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—A member of the Board may be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for an employee of an agency under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from the home or regular place of business of the member in the performance of the duties of the Board.

(2) APPOINTMENT AND TERMS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, a member of the Board described in any of clauses (vi) through (xiv) of paragraph (1)(B) shall serve for a term of 3 years.

(B) INITIAL BOARD MEMBERSHIP.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The initial Board will consist of representatives as described in clauses (i) through (vi) of paragraph (1)(B).

(ii) REMAINING MEMBERS.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the representatives of the initial Board pursuant to clause (i) shall appoint the remaining members of the Board described in clauses (viii) through (xiv) of paragraph (1)(B).

(iii) TRIBAL REPRESENTATIVES.—Not later than 60 days after the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall provide to the Board a recommendation of not fewer than 3 tribal representatives, from which the Board shall appoint 1 representative pursuant to clause (vii) of paragraph (1)(B).

(C) TRANSITIONAL TERMS.—Of the members described in paragraph (1)(B)(x) initially appointed to the Board—

(i) 2 shall be appointed for a term of 1 year;

(ii) 2 shall be appointed for a term of 2 years; and

(iii) 3 shall be appointed for a term of 3 years.

(D) VACANCIES.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—A vacancy of a member of the Board described in any of clauses (viii) through (xiv) of paragraph (1)(B) shall be filled by an appointment made by the remaining members of the Board.

(ii) TRIBAL REPRESENTATIVES.—Following a vacancy of a member of the Board described in clause (vii) of paragraph (1)(B), the Secretary shall recommend to the Board a list of not fewer than 3 tribal representatives, from which the remaining members of the Board shall appoint a representative to fill the vacancy.

(E) CONTINUATION OF SERVICE.—An individual whose term of service as a member of the Board expires may continue to serve on the Board until a successor is appointed.

(F) REMOVAL.—If a member of the Board described in any of clauses (viii) through (xiv) of paragraph (1)(B) misses 3 consecutive regularly scheduled Board meetings, the members of the Board may—

(i) vote to remove that member; and

(ii) appoint another individual in accordance with subparagraph (D).

(3) CHAIRPERSON.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The representative of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies appointed pursuant to paragraph (1)(B)(v) shall serve as Chairperson of the Board.

(B) TERM.—The Chairperson of the Board shall serve for a term of 3 years.

(4) MEETINGS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall meet—

(i) at the call of the Chairperson; but

(ii) not less frequently than twice each calendar year.

(B) PUBLIC ACCESS.—All meetings of the Board shall be open to the public.

(5) PROCEDURES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall establish procedures to carry out the business of the Board, including—

(i) a requirement that a quorum of the members of the Board be present to transact business;

(ii) a requirement that no recommendations may be adopted by the Board, except by the vote of ⅔ of all members;

(iii) procedures for establishing national goals and priorities for fish habitat conservation for the purposes of this section;

(iv) procedures for designating Partnerships under subsection (e); and

(v) procedures for reviewing, evaluating, and making recommendations regarding fish habitat conservation projects.

(B) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum.

(e) FISH HABITAT PARTNERSHIPS.—

(1) AUTHORITY TO APPROVE.—The Board may approve and designate Fish Habitat Partnerships in accordance with this subsection.

(2) PURPOSES.—The purposes of a Partnership shall be—

(A) to work with other regional habitat conservation programs to promote cooperation and coordination to enhance fish and fish habitats;

(B) to engage local and regional communities to build support for fish habitat conservation;

(C) to involve diverse groups of public and private partners;

(D) to develop collaboratively a strategic vision and achievable implementation plan that is scientifically sound;

(E) to leverage funding from sources that support local and regional partnerships;

(F) to use adaptive management principles, including evaluation of project success and functionality;

(G) to develop appropriate local or regional habitat evaluation and assessment measures and criteria that are compatible with national habitat condition measures; and

(H) to implement local and regional priority projects that improve conditions for fish and fish habitat.

(3) CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL.—An entity seeking to be designated as a Partnership shall—

(A) submit to the Board an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Board may reasonably require; and

(B) demonstrate to the Board that the entity has—

(i) a focus on promoting the health of important fish and fish habitats;

(ii) an ability to coordinate the implementation of priority projects that support the goals and national priorities set by the Board that are within the Partnership boundary;

(iii) a self-governance structure that supports the implementation of strategic priorities for fish habitat;

(iv) the ability to develop local and regional relationships with a broad range of entities to further strategic priorities for fish and fish habitat;

(v) a strategic plan that details required investments for fish habitat conservation that addresses the strategic fish habitat priorities of the Partnership and supports and meets the strategic priorities of the Board;

(vi) the ability to develop and implement fish habitat conservation projects that address strategic priorities of the Partnership and the Board; and

(vii) the ability to develop fish habitat conservation priorities based on sound science and data, the ability to measure the effectiveness of fish habitat projects of the Partnership, and a clear plan as to how Partnership science and data components will be integrated with the overall Board science and data effort.

(4) APPROVAL.—The Board may approve an application for a Partnership submitted under paragraph (3) if the Board determines that the applicant—

(A) identifies representatives to provide support and technical assistance to the Partnership from a diverse group of public and private partners, which may include State or local governments, nonprofit entities, Indian tribes, and private individuals, that are focused on conservation of fish habitats to achieve results across jurisdictional boundaries on public and private land;

(B) is organized to promote the health of important fish species and important fish habitats, including reservoirs, natural lakes, coastal and marine environments, and estuaries;

(C) identifies strategic fish and fish habitat priorities for the Partnership area in the form of geographical focus areas or key stressors or impairments to facilitate strategic planning and decisionmaking;

(D) is able to address issues and priorities on a nationally significant scale;

(E) includes a governance structure that—

(i) reflects the range of all partners; and

(ii) promotes joint strategic planning and decisionmaking by the applicant;

(F) demonstrates completion of, or significant progress toward the development of, a strategic plan to address the decline in fish populations, rather than simply treating symptoms, in accordance with the goals and national priorities established by the Board; and

(G) promotes collaboration in developing a strategic vision and implementation program that is scientifically sound and achievable.

(f) FISH HABITAT CONSERVATION PROJECTS.—

(1) SUBMISSION TO BOARD.—Not later than March 31 of each calendar year, each Partnership shall submit to the Board a list of priority fish habitat conservation projects recommended by the Partnership for annual funding under this section.

(2) RECOMMENDATIONS BY BOARD.—Not later than July 1 of each calendar year, the Board shall submit to the Secretary a priority list of fish habitat conservation projects that includes the description, including estimated costs, of each project that the Board recommends that the Secretary approve and fund under this section for the following fiscal year.

(3) CRITERIA FOR PROJECT SELECTION.—The Board shall select each fish habitat conservation project to be recommended to the Secretary under paragraph (2) after taking into consideration, at a minimum, the following information:

(A) A recommendation of the Partnership that is, or will be, participating actively in implementing the fish habitat conservation project.

(B) The capabilities and experience of project proponents to implement successfully the proposed project.

(C) The extent to which the fish habitat conservation project —

(i) fulfills a local or regional priority that is directly linked to the strategic plan of the Partnership and is consistent with the purpose of this section;

(ii) addresses the national priorities established by the Board;

(iii) is supported by the findings of the Habitat Assessment of the Partnership or

the Board, and aligns or is compatible with other conservation plans;

(iv) identifies appropriate monitoring and evaluation measures and criteria that are compatible with national measures;

(v) provides a well-defined budget linked to deliverables and outcomes;

(vi) leverages other funds to implement the project;

(vii) addresses the causes and processes behind the decline of fish or fish habitats; and

(viii) includes an outreach or education component that includes the local or regional community.

(D) The availability of sufficient non-Federal funds to match Federal contributions for the fish habitat conservation project, as required by paragraph (5);

(E) The extent to which the local or regional fish habitat conservation project—

(i) will increase fish populations in a manner that leads to recreational fishing opportunities for the public;

(ii) will be carried out through a cooperative agreement among Federal, State, and local governments, Indian tribes, and private entities;

(iii) increases public access to land or water for fish and wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities;

(iv) advances the conservation of fish and wildlife species that have been identified by the States as species of greatest conservation need;

(v) where appropriate, advances the conservation of fish and fish habitats under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.) and other relevant Federal law and State wildlife action plans; and

(vi) promotes strong and healthy fish habitats so that desired biological communities are able to persist and adapt.

(F) The substantiality of the character and design of the fish habitat conservation project.

(4) LIMITATIONS.—

(A) REQUIREMENTS FOR EVALUATION.—No fish habitat conservation project may be recommended by the Board under paragraph (2) or provided financial assistance under this section unless the fish habitat conservation project includes an evaluation plan designed using applicable Board guidance—

(i) to appropriately assess the biological, ecological, or other results of the habitat protection, restoration, or enhancement activities carried out using the assistance;

(ii) to reflect appropriate changes to the fish habitat conservation project if the assessment substantiates that the fish habitat conservation project objectives are not being met;

(iii) to identify improvements to existing fish populations, recreational fishing opportunities and the overall economic benefits for the local community of the fish habitat conservation project; and

(iv) to require the submission to the Board of a report describing the findings of the assessment.

(B) ACQUISITION AUTHORITIES.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—A State, local government, or other non-Federal entity is eligible to receive funds for the acquisition of real property from willing sellers under this section if the acquisition ensures 1 of—

(I) public access for compatible fish and wildlife-dependent recreation; or

(II) a scientifically based, direct enhancement to the health of fish and fish populations, as determined by the Board.

(ii) STATE AGENCY APPROVAL.—

(I) IN GENERAL.—All real property interest acquisition projects funded under this section are required to be approved by the State agency in the State in which the project is occurring.

(II) PROHIBITION.—The Board may not recommend, and the Secretary may not provide any funding for, any real property interest acquisition that has not been approved by the State agency.

(iii) ASSESSMENT OF OTHER AUTHORITIES.—The Fish Habitat Partnership shall conduct a project assessment, submitted with the funding request and approved by the Board, to demonstrate all other Federal, State, and local authorities for the acquisition of real property have been exhausted.

(iv) RESTRICTIONS.—A real property interest may not be acquired pursuant to a fish habitat conservation project by a State, local government, or other non-Federal entity, unless—

(I) the owner of the real property authorizes the State, local government, or other non-Federal entity to acquire the real property; and

(II) the Secretary and the Board determine that the State, local government, or other non-Federal entity would benefit from undertaking the management of the real property being acquired because that is in accordance with the goals of a partnership.

(5) NON-FEDERAL CONTRIBUTIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), no fish habitat conservation project may be recommended by the Board under paragraph (2) or provided financial assistance under this section unless at least 50 percent of the cost of the fish habitat conservation project will be funded with non-Federal funds.

(B) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—The non-Federal share of the cost of a fish habitat conservation project—

(i) may not be derived from another Federal grant program; but

(ii) may include in-kind contributions and cash.

(C) SPECIAL RULE FOR INDIAN TRIBES.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A) or any other provision of law, any funds made available to an Indian tribe pursuant to this section may be considered to be non-Federal funds for the purpose of subparagraph (A).

(6) APPROVAL.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of receipt of the recommended priority list of fish habitat conservation projects under paragraph (2), subject to the limitations of paragraph (4), and based, to the maximum extent practicable, on the criteria described in paragraph (3), the Secretary, after consulting with the Secretary of Commerce on marine or estuarine projects, shall approve or reject any fish habitat conservation project recommended by the Board.

(B) FUNDING.—If the Secretary approves a fish habitat conservation project under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall use amounts made available to carry out this section to provide funds to carry out the fish habitat conservation project.

(C) NOTIFICATION.—If the Secretary rejects any fish habitat conservation project recommended by the Board under paragraph (2), not later than 180 days after the date of receipt of the recommendation, the Secretary shall provide to the Board, the appropriate Partnership, and the appropriate congressional committees a written statement of the reasons that the Secretary rejected the fish habitat conservation project.

(g) TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC ASSISTANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director, the NOAA Assistant Administrator, the EPA Assistant Administrator, and the Director of the United States Geological Survey, in coordination with the Forest Service and other appropriate Federal departments and agencies, may provide scientific and technical assistance to the Partnerships, participants in fish habitat conservation projects, and the Board.

(2) INCLUSIONS.—Scientific and technical assistance provided pursuant to paragraph (1) may include—

(A) providing technical and scientific assistance to States, Indian tribes, regions, local communities, and nongovernmental organizations in the development and implementation of Partnerships;

(B) providing technical and scientific assistance to Partnerships for habitat assessment, strategic planning, and prioritization;

(C) supporting the development and implementation of fish habitat conservation projects that are identified as high priorities by Partnerships and the Board;

(D) supporting and providing recommendations regarding the development of science-based monitoring and assessment approaches for implementation through Partnerships;

(E) supporting and providing recommendations for a national fish habitat assessment;

(F) ensuring the availability of experts to assist in conducting scientifically based evaluation and reporting of the results of fish habitat conservation projects; and

(G) providing resources to secure state agency scientific and technical assistance to support Partnerships, participants in fish habitat conservation projects, and the Board.

(h) COORDINATION WITH STATES AND INDIAN TRIBES.—The Secretary shall provide a notice to, and cooperate with, the appropriate State agency or tribal agency, as applicable, of each State and Indian tribe within the boundaries of which an activity is planned to be carried out pursuant to this section, including notification, by not later than 30 days before the date on which the activity is implemented.

(i) INTERAGENCY OPERATIONAL PLAN.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and every 5 years thereafter, the Director, in cooperation with the NOAA Assistant Administrator, the EPA Assistant Administrator, the Director of the United States Geological Survey, and the heads of other appropriate Federal departments and agencies (including at a minimum, those agencies represented on the Board) shall develop an interagency operational plan that describes—

(1) the functional, operational, technical, scientific, and general staff, administrative, and material needs for the implementation of this section; and

(2) any interagency agreements between or among Federal departments and agencies to address those needs.

(j) ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING.—

(1) REPORTING.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act, and every 5 years thereafter, the Board shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report describing the progress of this section.

(B) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include—

(i) an estimate of the number of acres, stream miles, or acre-feet, or other suitable measures of fish habitat, that was maintained or improved by partnerships of Federal, State, or local governments, Indian tribes, or other entities in the United States during the 5-year period ending on the date of submission of the report;

(ii) a description of the public access to fish habitats established or improved during that 5-year period;

(iii) a description of the improved opportunities for public recreational fishing; and

(iv) an assessment of the status of fish habitat conservation projects carried out

with funds provided under this section during that period, disaggregated by year, including—

(I) a description of the fish habitat conservation projects recommended by the Board under subsection (f)(2);

(II) a description of each fish habitat conservation project approved by the Secretary under subsection (f)(6), in order of priority for funding;

(III) a justification for—

(aa) the approval of each fish habitat conservation project; and

(bb) the order of priority for funding of each fish habitat conservation project;

(IV) a justification for any rejection of a fish habitat conservation project recommended by the Board under subsection (f)(2) that was based on a factor other than the criteria described in subsection (f)(3); and

(V) an accounting of expenditures by Federal, State, or local governments, Indian tribes, or other entities to carry out fish habitat conservation projects.

(2) STATUS AND TRENDS REPORT.—Not later than December 31, 2016, and every 5 years thereafter, the Board shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that includes—

(A) a status of all Partnerships approved under this section;

(B) a description of the status of fish habitats in the United States as identified by established Partnerships; and

(C) enhancements or reductions in public access as a result of—

(i) the activities of the Partnerships; or

(ii) any other activities carried out pursuant to this section.

(3) REVISIONS.—Not later than December 31, 2016, and every 5 years thereafter, the Board shall consider revising the goals of the Board, after consideration of each report required by paragraph (2).

(k) EFFECT OF SECTION.—

(1) WATER RIGHTS.—Nothing in this section—

(A) establishes any express or implied reserved water right in the United States for any purpose;

(B) affects any water right in existence on the date of enactment of this Act;

(C) preempts or affects any State water law or interstate compact governing water; or

(D) affects any Federal or State law in existence on the date of enactment of the Act regarding water quality or water quantity.

(2) AUTHORITY TO ACQUIRE WATER RIGHTS OR RIGHTS TO PROPERTY.—Under this section, only a State, local government, or other non-Federal entity may acquire, under State law, water rights or rights to property.

(3) STATE AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this section—

(A) affects the authority, jurisdiction, or responsibility of a State to manage, control, or regulate fish and wildlife under the laws and regulations of the State; or

(B) authorizes the Secretary to control or regulate within a State the fishing or hunting of fish and wildlife.

(4) EFFECT ON INDIAN TRIBES.—Nothing in this section abrogates, abridges, affects, modifies, supersedes, or alters any right of an Indian tribe recognized by treaty or any other means, including—

(A) an agreement between the Indian tribe and the United States;

(B) Federal law (including regulations);

(C) an Executive order; or

(D) a judicial decree.

(5) ADJUDICATION OF WATER RIGHTS.—Nothing in this section diminishes or affects the ability of the Secretary to join an adjudication of rights to the use of water pursuant to subsection (a), (b), or (c) of section 208 of the Department of Justice Appropriation Act, 1953 (43 U.S.C. 666).

(6) DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this section affects the authority, jurisdiction, or responsibility of the Department of Commerce to manage, control, or regulate fish or fish habitats under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.).

(7) EFFECT ON OTHER AUTHORITIES.—

(A) PRIVATE PROPERTY PROTECTION.—Nothing in this section permits the use of funds made available to carry out this section to acquire real property or a real property interest without the written consent of each owner of the real property or real property interest.

(B) MITIGATION.—Nothing in this section permits the use of funds made available to carry out this section for fish and wildlife mitigation purposes under—

(i) the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.);

(ii) the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.);

(iii) the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (Public Law 99–662; 100 Stat. 4082); or

(iv) any other Federal law or court settlement.

(C) CLEAN WATER ACT.—Nothing in this section affects any provision of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.), including any definition in that Act.

(l) NONAPPLICABILITY OF FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to—

(1) the Board; or

(2) any Partnership.

(m) FUNDING.—

(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(A) FISH HABITAT CONSERVATION PROJECTS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary $7,200,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2021 to provide funds for fish habitat conservation projects approved under subsection (f)(6), of which 5 percent shall be made available for each fiscal year for projects carried out by Indian tribes.

(B) ADMINISTRATIVE AND PLANNING EXPENSES.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2021 an amount equal to 5 percent of the amount appropriated for the applicable fiscal year pursuant to subparagraph (A)—

(i) for administrative and planning expenses; and

(ii) to carry out subsection (j).

(C) TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC ASSISTANCE.—There is authorized to be appropriated for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2021 to carry out, and provide technical and scientific assistance under, subsection (g)—

(i) $500,000 to the Secretary for use by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service;

(ii) $500,000 to the NOAA Assistant Administrator for use by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;

(iii) $500,000 to the EPA Assistant Administrator for use by the Environmental Protection Agency; and

(iv) $500,000 to the Secretary for use by the United States Geological Survey.

(2) AGREEMENTS AND GRANTS.—The Secretary may—

(A) on the recommendation of the Board, and notwithstanding sections 6304 and 6305 of title 31, United States Code, and the Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act of 1999 (31 U.S.C. 6101 note; Public Law 106–107), enter into a grant agreement, cooperative agreement, or contract with a Partnership or other entity for a fish habitat conservation project or restoration or enhancement project;

(B) apply for, accept, and use a grant from any individual or entity to carry out the purposes of this section; and

(C) make funds available to any Federal department or agency for use by that department or agency to provide grants for any fish habitat protection project, restoration project, or enhancement project that the Secretary determines to be consistent with this section.

(3) DONATIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may—

(i) enter into an agreement with any organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 that is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of that Code to solicit private donations to carry out the purposes of this section; and

(ii) accept donations of funds, property, and services to carry out the purposes of this section.

(B) TREATMENT.—A donation accepted under this section—

(i) shall be considered to be a gift or bequest to, or otherwise for the use of, the United States; and

(ii) may be—

(I) used directly by the Secretary; or

(II) provided to another Federal department or agency through an interagency agreement.

SEC. 6254. GULF STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION REPORT ON GULF OF MEXICO OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF STATE BOUNDARY EXTENSION.

(a) REPORT ON RESOURCE MANAGEMENT OUTCOMES.—Not later than March 1, 2017, the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committees on Natural Resources and Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report on the economic, conservation and management, and law enforcement impacts of the implementation of section 110 of division B of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (Public Law 114–113).

(b) INFORMATION REQUIRED.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include a detailed accounting of how the implementation of section 110 of division B of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (Public Law 114–113) has affected—

(1) the economies of the States of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas;

(2) the sustained participation of fishing communities;

(3) conservation and management of living resources under all applicable Federal laws;

(4) enforcement of Federal maritime laws; and

(5) the ability of the governments of the States described in paragraph (1) to effectively manage activities pursuant to the fishery management plan for reef fish resources of the Gulf of Mexico.

(c) FUNDING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability of appropriations, the Secretary of Commerce shall make available to the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission $500,000 to carry out the report required under subsection (a).

(2) SUBSEQUENT APPROPRIATIONS.—Amounts made available under paragraph (1) shall be available only to the extent specifically provided for in advance in subsequent appropriations Acts.

SEC. 6255. GAO REPORT ON GULF OF MEXICO OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF STATE BOUNDARY EXTENSION.

(a) REPORT ON RESOURCE MANAGEMENT OUTCOMES.—Not later than March 1, 2017, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the

Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report on the economic, conservation and management, and law enforcement impacts of section 110 of division B of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (Public Law 114–113).

(b) INFORMATION REQUIRED.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include a detailed accounting of how section 110 of division B of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (Public Law 114–113) has affected—

(1) the economies of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas;

(2) the sustained participation of fishing communities;

(3) conservation and management of living resources under all applicable Federal laws;

(4) enforcement of Federal maritime laws; and

(5) the ability of the governments of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas to effectively manage activities pursuant to the fishery management plan for reef fish resources of the Gulf of Mexico.

PART VII—MISCELLANEOUS

SEC. 6261. RESPECT FOR TREATIES AND RIGHTS.

Nothing in this subtitle or the amendments made by this subtitle—

(1) affects or modifies any treaty or other right of any federally recognized Indian tribe; or

(2) modifies any provision of Federal law relating to migratory birds or to endangered or threatened species.

SEC. 6262. NO PRIORITY.

Nothing in this subtitle or the amendments made by this subtitle provides a preference to hunting, fishing, or recreational shooting over any other use of Federal land or water.

Subtitle D—Water Infrastructure and Related Matters

PART I—FONTENELLE RESERVOIR

SEC. 6301. AUTHORITY TO MAKE ENTIRE ACTIVE CAPACITY OF FONTENELLE RESERVOIR AVAILABLE FOR USE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Interior, in cooperation with the State of Wyoming, may amend the Definite Plan Report for the Seedskadee Project authorized under the first section of the Act of April 11, 1956 (commonly known as the ''Colorado River Storage Project Act'') (43 U.S.C. 620), to provide for the study, design, planning, and construction activities that will enable the use of all active storage capacity (as may be defined or limited by legal, hydrologic, structural, engineering, economic, and environmental considerations) of Fontenelle Dam and Reservoir, including the placement of sufficient riprap on the upstream face of Fontenelle Dam to allow the active storage capacity of Fontenelle Reservoir to be used for those purposes for which the Seedskadee Project was authorized.

(b) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Interior may enter into any contract, grant, cooperative agreement, or other agreement that is necessary to carry out subsection (a).

(2) STATE OF WYOMING.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Interior shall enter into a cooperative agreement with the State of Wyoming to work in cooperation and collaboratively with the State of Wyoming for planning, design, related preconstruction activities, and construction of any modification of the Fontenelle Dam under subsection (a).

(B) REQUIREMENTS.—The cooperative agreement under subparagraph (A) shall, at a minimum, specify the responsibilities of the Secretary of the Interior and the State of Wyoming with respect to—

(i) completing the planning and final design of the modification of the Fontenelle Dam under subsection (a);

(ii) any environmental and cultural resource compliance activities required for the modification of the Fontenelle Dam under subsection (a) including compliance with—

(I) the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.);

(II) the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.); and

(III) subdivision 2 of division A of subtitle III of title 54, United States Code; and

(iii) the construction of the modification of the Fontenelle Dam under subsection (a).

(c) FUNDING BY STATE OF WYOMING.—Pursuant to the Act of March 4, 1921 (41 Stat. 1404, chapter 161; 43 U.S.C. 395), and as a condition of providing any additional storage under subsection (a), the State of Wyoming shall provide to the Secretary of the Interior funds for any work carried out under subsection (a).

(d) OTHER CONTRACTING AUTHORITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Interior may enter into contracts with the State of Wyoming, on such terms and conditions as the Secretary of the Interior and the State of Wyoming may agree, for division of any additional active capacity made available under subsection (a).

(2) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—Unless otherwise agreed to by the Secretary of the Interior and the State of Wyoming, a contract entered into under paragraph (1) shall be subject to the terms and conditions of Bureau of Reclamation Contract No. 14–06–400–2474 and Bureau of Reclamation Contract No. 14–06–400–6193.

SEC. 6302. SAVINGS PROVISIONS.

Unless expressly provided in this part, nothing in this part modifies, conflicts with, preempts, or otherwise affects—

(1) the Act of December 31, 1928 (43 U.S.C. 617 et seq.) (commonly known as the ''Boulder Canyon Project Act'');

(2) the Colorado River Compact of 1922, as approved by the Presidential Proclamation of June 25, 1929 (46 Stat. 3000);

(3) the Act of July 19, 1940 (43 U.S.C. 618 et seq.) (commonly known as the ''Boulder Canyon Project Adjustment Act'');

(4) the Treaty between the United States of America and Mexico relating to the utilization of waters of the Colorado and Tijuana Rivers and of the Rio Grande, and supplementary protocol signed November 14, 1944, signed at Washington February 3, 1944 (59 Stat. 1219);

(5) the Upper Colorado River Basin Compact as consented to by the Act of April 6, 1949 (63 Stat. 31);

(6) the Act of April 11, 1956 (commonly known as the ''Colorado River Storage Project Act'') (43 U.S.C. 620 et seq.);

(7) the Colorado River Basin Project Act (Public Law 90–537; 82 Stat. 885); or

(8) any State of Wyoming or other State water law.

PART II—BUREAU OF RECLAMATION TRANSPARENCY

SEC. 6311. DEFINITIONS.

In this part:

(1) ASSET.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''asset'' means any of the following assets that are used to achieve the mission of the Bureau of Reclamation to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the people of the United States:

(i) Capitalized facilities, buildings, structures, project features, power production equipment, recreation facilities, or quarters.

(ii) Capitalized and noncapitalized heavy equipment and other installed equipment.

(B) INCLUSIONS.—The term ''asset'' includes assets described in subparagraph (A) that are considered to be mission critical.

(2) ASSET MANAGEMENT REPORT.—The term ''Asset Management Report'' means—

(A) the annual plan prepared by the Bureau of Reclamation known as the ''Asset Management Plan''; and

(B) any publicly available information relating to the plan described in subparagraph (A) that summarizes the efforts of the Bureau of Reclamation to evaluate and manage infrastructure assets of the Bureau of Reclamation.

(3) MAJOR REPAIR AND REHABILITATION NEED.—The term ''major repair and rehabilitation need'' means major nonrecurring maintenance at a Reclamation facility, including maintenance related to the safety of dams, extraordinary maintenance of dams, deferred major maintenance activities, and all other significant repairs and extraordinary maintenance.

(4) RECLAMATION FACILITY.—The term ''Reclamation facility'' means each of the infrastructure assets that are owned by the Bureau of Reclamation at a Reclamation project.

(5) RECLAMATION PROJECT.—The term ''Reclamation project'' means a project that is owned by the Bureau of Reclamation, including all reserved works and transferred works owned by the Bureau of Reclamation.

(6) RESERVED WORKS.—The term ''reserved works'' means buildings, structures, facilities, or equipment that are owned by the Bureau of Reclamation for which operations and maintenance are performed by employees of the Bureau of Reclamation or through a contract entered into by the Bureau of Reclamation, regardless of the source of funding for the operations and maintenance.

(7) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

(8) TRANSFERRED WORKS.—The term ''transferred works'' means a Reclamation facility at which operations and maintenance of the facility is carried out by a non-Federal entity under the provisions of a formal operations and maintenance transfer contract or other legal agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation.

SEC. 6312. ASSET MANAGEMENT REPORT ENHANCEMENTS FOR RESERVED WORKS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress an Asset Management Report that—

(1) describes the efforts of the Bureau of Reclamation—

(A) to maintain in a reliable manner all reserved works at Reclamation facilities; and

(B) to standardize and streamline data reporting and processes across regions and areas for the purpose of maintaining reserved works at Reclamation facilities; and

(2) expands on the information otherwise provided in an Asset Management Report, in accordance with subsection (b).

(b) INFRASTRUCTURE MAINTENANCE NEEDS ASSESSMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Asset Management Report submitted under subsection (a) shall include—

(A) a detailed assessment of major repair and rehabilitation needs for all reserved works at all Reclamation projects; and

(B) to the extent practicable, an itemized list of major repair and rehabilitation needs of individual Reclamation facilities at each Reclamation project.

(2) INCLUSIONS.—To the extent practicable, the itemized list of major repair and rehabilitation needs under paragraph (1)(B) shall include—

(A) a budget level cost estimate of the appropriations needed to complete each item; and

(B) an assignment of a categorical rating for each item, consistent with paragraph (3).

(3) RATING REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The system for assigning ratings under paragraph (2)(B) shall be—

(i) consistent with existing uniform categorization systems to inform the annual budget process and agency requirements; and

(ii) subject to the guidance and instructions issued under subparagraph (B).

(B) GUIDANCE.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall issue guidance that describes the applicability of the rating system applicable under paragraph (2)(B) to Reclamation facilities.

(4) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—Except as provided in paragraph (5), the Secretary shall make publicly available, including on the Internet, the Asset Management Report required under subsection (a).

(5) CONFIDENTIALITY.—The Secretary may exclude from the public version of the Asset Management Report made available under paragraph (4) any information that the Secretary identifies as sensitive or classified, but shall make available to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a version of the report containing the sensitive or classified information.

(c) UPDATES.—Not later than 2 years after the date on which the Asset Management Report is submitted under subsection (a) and biennially thereafter, the Secretary shall update the Asset Management Report, subject to the requirements of section 6313(b)(2).

(d) CONSULTATION.—To the extent that such consultation would assist the Secretary in preparing the Asset Management Report under subsection (a) and updates to the Asset Management Report under subsection (c), the Secretary shall consult with—

(1) the Secretary of the Army (acting through the Chief of Engineers); and

(2) water and power contractors.

SEC. 6313. ASSET MANAGEMENT REPORT ENHANCEMENTS FOR TRANSFERRED WORKS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall coordinate with the non-Federal entities responsible for the operation and maintenance of transferred works in developing reporting requirements for Asset Management Reports with respect to major repair and rehabilitation needs for transferred works that are similar to the reporting requirements described in section 6312(b).

(b) GUIDANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—After considering input from water and power contractors of the Bureau of Reclamation, the Secretary shall develop and implement a rating system for transferred works that incorporates, to the maximum extent practicable, the rating system for major repair and rehabilitation needs for reserved works developed under section 6312(b)(3).

(2) UPDATES.—The ratings system developed under paragraph (1) shall be included in the updated Asset Management Reports under section 6312(c).

SEC. 6314. OFFSET.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in the case of the project authorized by section 1617 of the Reclamation Projects Authorization and Adjustment Act of 1992 (43 U.S.C. 390h–12c), the maximum amount of the Federal share of the cost of the project under section 1631(d)(1) of that Act (43 U.S.C. 390h–13(d)(1)) otherwise available as of the date of enactment of this Act shall be reduced by $2,000,000.

PART III—BASIN WATER MANAGEMENT

Subpart A—Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement

SEC. 6321. SHORT TITLE.

This subpart may be cited as the ''Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project Phase III Act of 2016''.

SEC. 6322. MODIFICATION OF TERMS, PURPOSES, AND DEFINITIONS.

(a) MODIFICATION OF TERMS.—Title XII of Public Law 103–434 (108 Stat. 4550) is amended—

(1) by striking ''Yakama Indian'' each place it appears (except section 1204(g)) and inserting ''Yakama''; and

(2) by striking ''Superintendent'' each place it appears and inserting ''Manager''.

(b) MODIFICATION OF PURPOSES.—Section 1201 of Public Law 103–434 (108 Stat. 4550) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

''(1) to protect, mitigate, and enhance fish and wildlife and the recovery and maintenance of self-sustaining harvestable populations of fish and other aquatic life, both anadromous and resident species, throughout their historic distribution range in the Yakima Basin through—

''(A) improved water management and the constructions of fish passage at storage and diversion dams, as authorized under the Hoover Power Plant Act of 1984 (43 U.S.C. 619 et seq.);

''(B) improved instream flows and water supplies;

''(C) improved water quality, watershed, and ecosystem function;

''(D) protection, creation, and enhancement of wetlands; and

''(E) other appropriate means of habitat improvement;'';

(2) in paragraph (2), by inserting '', municipal, industrial, and domestic water supply and use purposes, especially during drought years, including reducing the frequency and severity of water supply shortages for proratable irrigation entities'' before the semicolon at the end;

(3) by striking paragraph (4);

(4) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4);

(5) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

''(3) to authorize the Secretary to make water available for purchase or lease for meeting municipal, industrial, and domestic water supply purposes;'';

(6) by redesignating paragraphs (5) and (6) as paragraphs (6) and (8), respectively;

(7) by inserting after paragraph (4) (as so redesignated) the following:

''(5) to realize sufficient water savings from implementing the Yakima River Basin Integrated Water Resource Management Plan, so that not less than 85,000 acre feet of water savings are achieved by implementing the first phase of the Integrated Plan pursuant to section 1213(a), in addition to the 165,000 acre feet of water savings targeted through the Basin Conservation Program, as authorized on October 31, 1994;'';

(8) in paragraph (6) (as so redesignated)—

(A) by inserting ''an increase in'' before ''voluntary''; and

(B) by striking ''and'' at the end;

(9) by inserting after paragraph (6) (as so redesignated) the following:

''(7) to encourage an increase in the use of, and reduce the barriers to, water transfers, leasing, markets, and other voluntary transactions among public and private entities to enhance water management in the Yakima River basin;'';

(10) in paragraph (8) (as redesignated by paragraph (6)), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(11) by adding at the end the following:

''(9) to improve the resilience of the ecosystems, economies, and communities in the Basin as they face drought, hydrologic changes, and other related changes and variability in natural and human systems, for the benefit of both the people and the fish and wildlife of the region; and

''(10) to authorize and implement the Yakima River Basin Integrated Water Resource Management Plan as Phase III of the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project, as a balanced and cost-effective approach to maximize benefits to the communities and environment in the Basin.''.

(c) MODIFICATION OF DEFINITIONS.—Section 1202 of Public Law 103–434 (108 Stat. 4550) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (6), (7), (8), (9), (10), (11), (12), (13), and (14) as paragraphs (8), (10), (11), (13), (14), (15), (16), (18), and (19), respectively;

(2) by inserting after paragraph (5) the following:

''(6) DESIGNATED FEDERAL OFFICIAL.—The term 'designated Federal official' means the Commissioner of Reclamation (or a designee), acting pursuant to the charter of the Conservation Advisory Group.

''(7) INTEGRATED PLAN.—The terms 'Integrated Plan' and 'Yakima River Basin Integrated Water Resource Plan' mean the plan and activities authorized by the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project Phase III Act of 2016 and the amendments made by that subpart, to be carried out in cooperation with and in addition to activities of the State of Washington and Yakama Nation.'';

(3) by inserting after paragraph (8) (as redesignated by paragraph (1)) the following:

''(9) MUNICIPAL, INDUSTRIAL, AND DOMESTIC WATER SUPPLY AND USE.—The term 'municipal, industrial, and domestic water supply and use' means the supply and use of water for—

''(A) domestic consumption (whether urban or rural);

''(B) maintenance and protection of public health and safety;

''(C) manufacture, fabrication, processing, assembly, or other production of a good or commodity;

''(D) production of energy;

''(E) fish hatcheries; or

''(F) water conservation activities relating to a use described in subparagraphs (A) through (E).'';

(4) by inserting after paragraph (11) (as redesignated by paragraph (1)) the following:

''(12) PRORATABLE IRRIGATION ENTITY.—The term 'proratable irrigation entity' means a district, project, or State-recognized authority, board of control, agency, or entity located in the Yakima River basin that—

''(A) manages and delivers irrigation water to farms in the basin; and

''(B) possesses, or the members of which possess, water rights that are proratable during periods of water shortage.''; and

(5) by inserting after paragraph (16) (as redesignated by paragraph (1)) the following:

''(17) YAKIMA ENHANCEMENT PROJECT; YAKIMA RIVER BASIN WATER ENHANCEMENT PROJECT.—The terms 'Yakima Enhancement Project' and 'Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project' mean the Yakima River basin water enhancement project authorized by Congress pursuant to this Act and other Acts (including Public Law 96–162 (93 Stat. 1241), section 109 of Public Law 98–381 (16 U.S.C. 839b note; 98 Stat. 1340), Public Law 105–62 (111 Stat. 1320), and Public Law 106–372 (114 Stat. 1425)) to promote water conservation, water supply, habitat, and stream enhancement improvements in the Yakima River basin.''.

SEC. 6323. YAKIMA RIVER BASIN WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM.

Section 1203 of Public Law 103–434 (108 Stat. 4551) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the second sentence, by striking ''title'' and inserting ''section''; and

(ii) in the third sentence, by striking ''within 5 years of the date of enactment of this Act''; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking ''irrigation'' and inserting ''the number of irrigated acres'';

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in each of subparagraphs (A) through (D), by striking the comma at the end and inserting a semicolon;

(ii) in subparagraph (E), by striking the comma at the end and inserting ''; and'';

(iii) in subparagraph (F), by striking ''Department of Wildlife of the State of Washington, and'' and inserting ''Department of Fish and Wildlife of the State of Washington.''; and

(iv) by striking subparagraph (G);

(B) in paragraph (3)—

(i) in each of subparagraphs (A) through (C), by striking the comma at the end and inserting a semicolon;

(ii) in subparagraph (D), by striking '', and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(iii) in subparagraph (E), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(iv) by adding at the end the following:

''(F) provide recommendations to advance the purposes and programs of the Yakima Enhancement Project, including the Integrated Plan.''; and

(C) by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the following:

''(4) AUTHORITY OF DESIGNATED FEDERAL OFFICIAL.—The designated Federal official may—

''(A) arrange and provide logistical support for meetings of the Conservation Advisory Group;

''(B) use a facilitator to serve as a moderator for meetings of the Conservation Advisory Group or provide additional logistical support; and

''(C) grant any request for a facilitator by any member of the Conservation Advisory Group.'';

(3) in subsection (d), by adding at the end the following:

''(4) PAYMENT OF LOCAL SHARE BY STATE OR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The State or the Federal Government may fund not more than the 17.5 percent local share of the costs of the Basin Conservation Program in exchange for the long-term use of conserved water, subject to the requirement that the funding by the Federal Government of the local share of the costs shall provide a quantifiable public benefit in meeting Federal responsibilities in the Basin and the purposes of this title.

''(B) USE OF CONSERVED WATER.—The Yakima Project Manager may use water resulting from conservation measures taken under this title, in addition to water that the Bureau of Reclamation may acquire from any willing seller through purchase, donation, or lease, for water management uses pursuant to this title.'';

(4) in subsection (e), by striking the first sentence and inserting the following: ''To participate in the Basin Conservation Program, as described in subsection (b), an entity shall submit to the Secretary a proposed water conservation plan.'';

(5) in subsection (i)(3)—

(A) by striking ''purchase or lease'' each place it appears and inserting ''purchase, lease, or management''; and

(B) in the third sentence, by striking ''made immediately upon availability'' and all that follows through ''Committee'' and inserting ''continued as needed to provide water to be used by the Yakima Project Manager as recommended by the System Operations Advisory Committee and the Conservation Advisory Group''; and

(6) in subsection (j)(4), in the first sentence, by striking ''initial acquisition'' and all that follows through ''flushing flows'' and inserting ''acquisition of water from willing sellers or lessors specifically to provide improved instream flows for anadromous and resident fish and other aquatic life, including pulse flows to facilitate outward migration of anadromous fish''.

SEC. 6324. YAKIMA BASIN WATER PROJECTS, OPERATIONS, AND AUTHORIZATIONS.

(a) YAKAMA NATION PROJECTS.—Section 1204 of Public Law 103–434 (108 Stat. 4555) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(2), in the first sentence, by striking ''not more than $23,000,000'' and inserting ''not more than $100,000,000''; and

(2) in subsection (g)—

(A) by striking the subsection heading and inserting ''REDESIGNATION OF YAKAMA INDIAN NATION TO YAKAMA NATION.—'';

(B) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

''(1) REDESIGNATION.—The Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Indian Nation shall be known and designated as the 'Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation'.''; and

(C) in paragraph (2), by striking ''deemed to be a reference to the 'Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Indian Nation'.'' and inserting ''deemed to be a reference to the 'Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation'.''.

(b) OPERATION OF YAKIMA BASIN PROJECTS.—Section 1205 of Public Law 103–434 (108 Stat. 4557) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (4)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) in clause (i)—

(aa) by inserting ''additional'' after ''secure'';

(bb) by striking ''flushing'' and inserting ''pulse''; and

(cc) by striking ''uses'' and inserting ''uses, in addition to the quantity of water provided under the treaty between the Yakama Nation and the United States'';

(II) by striking clause (ii);

(III) by redesignating clause (iii) as clause (ii); and

(IV) in clause (ii) (as so redesignated) by inserting ''and water rights mandated'' after ''goals''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B)(i), in the first sentence, by inserting ''in proportion to the funding received'' after ''Program'';

(2) in subsection (b) (as amended by section 6322(a)(2)), in the second sentence, by striking ''instream flows for use by the Yakima Project Manager as flushing flows or as otherwise'' and inserting ''fishery purposes, as''; and

(3) in subsection (e), by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Additional purposes of the Yakima Project shall be any of the following:

''(A) To recover and maintain self-sustaining harvestable populations of native fish, both anadromous and resident species, throughout their historic distribution range in the Yakima Basin.

''(B) To protect, mitigate, and enhance aquatic life and wildlife.

''(C) Recreation.

''(D) Municipal, industrial, and domestic use.''.

(c) LAKE CLE ELUM AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 1206(a)(1) of Public Law 103–434 (108 Stat. 4560), is amended, in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''at September'' and all that follows through ''to—'' and inserting ''not more than $12,000,000 to—''.

(d) ENHANCEMENT OF WATER SUPPLIES FOR YAKIMA BASIN TRIBUTARIES.—Section 1207 of Public Law 103–434 (108 Stat. 4560) is amended—

(1) in the heading, by striking ''**SUPPLIES**'' and inserting ''**MANAGEMENT**'';

(2) in subsection (a)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''supplies'' and inserting ''management'';

(B) in paragraph (1), by inserting ''and water supply entities'' after ''owners''; and

(C) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by inserting ''that choose not to participate or opt out of tributary enhancement projects pursuant to this section'' after ''water right owners''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by inserting ''nonparticipating'' before ''tributary water users'';

(3) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking the paragraph designation and all that follows through ''(but not limited to)—'' and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, following consultation with the State of Washington, tributary water right owners, and the Yakama Nation, and on agreement of appropriate water right owners, is authorized to conduct studies to evaluate measures to further Yakima Project purposes on tributaries to the Yakima River. Enhancement programs that use measures authorized by this subsection may be investigated and implemented by the Secretary in tributaries to the Yakima River, including Taneum Creek, other areas, or tributary basins that currently or could potentially be provided supplemental or transfer water by entities, such as the Kittitas Reclamation District or the Yakima-Tieton Irrigation District, subject to the condition that activities may commence on completion of applicable and required feasibility studies, environmental reviews, and cost-benefit analyses that include favorable recommendations for further project development, as appropriate. Measures to evaluate include—'';

(ii) by indenting subparagraphs (A) through (F) appropriately;

(iii) in subparagraph (A), by inserting before the semicolon at the end the following: '', including irrigation efficiency improvements (in coordination with programs of the Department of Agriculture), consolidation of diversions or administration, and diversion scheduling or coordination'';

(iv) by redesignating subparagraphs (C) through (F) as subparagraphs (E) through (H), respectively;

(v) by inserting after subparagraph (B) the following:

''(C) improvements in irrigation system management or delivery facilities within the Yakima River basin when those improvements allow for increased irrigation system conveyance and corresponding reduction in diversion from tributaries or flow enhancements to tributaries through direct flow supplementation or groundwater recharge;

''(D) improvements of irrigation system management or delivery facilities to reduce or eliminate excessively high flows caused by the use of natural streams for conveyance or irrigation water or return water;'';

(vi) in subparagraph (E) (as redesignated by clause (iv)), by striking ''ground water'' and inserting ''groundwater recharge and'';

(vii) in subparagraph (G) (as redesignated by clause (iv)), by inserting ''or transfer'' after ''purchase''; and

(viii) in subparagraph (H) (as redesignated by clause (iv)), by inserting ''stream processes and'' before ''stream habitats'';

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''the Taneum Creek study'' and inserting ''studies under this subsection'';

(ii) in subparagraph (B)—

(I) by striking ''and economic'' and inserting '', infrastructure, economic, and land use''; and

(II) by striking ''and'' at the end;

(iii) in subparagraph (C), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(iv) by adding at the end the following:

''(D) any related studies already underway or undertaken.''; and

(C) in paragraph (3), in the first sentence, by inserting ''of each tributary or group of tributaries'' after ''study'';

(4) in subsection (c)—

(A) in the heading, by inserting ''**AND NONSURFACE STORAGE**'' after ''**NONSTORAGE**''; and

(B) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting ''and nonsurface storage'' after ''nonstorage'';

(5) by striking subsection (d);

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

(7) in paragraph (2) of subsection (d) (as so redesignated)—

(A) in the first sentence—

(i) by inserting ''and implementation'' after ''investigation'';

(ii) by striking ''other'' before ''Yakima River''; and

(iii) by inserting ''and other water supply entities'' after ''owners''; and

(B) by striking the second sentence.

(e) CHANDLER PUMPING PLANT AND POWERPLANT-OPERATIONS AT PROSSER DIVERSION DAM.—Section 1208(d) of Public Law 103–434 (108 Stat. 4562; 114 Stat. 1425) is amended by inserting ''negatively'' before ''affected''.

(f) INTERIM COMPREHENSIVE BASIN OPERATING PLAN.—Section 1210(c) of Public Law 103–434 (108 Stat. 4564) is amended by striking ''$100,000'' and inserting ''$200,000''.

(g) ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE.—Section 1211 of Public Law 103–434 (108 Stat. 4564) is amended by striking ''$2,000,000'' and inserting ''$5,000,000''.

SEC. 6325. AUTHORIZATION OF PHASE III OF YAKIMA RIVER BASIN WATER ENHANCEMENT PROJECT.

Title XII of Public Law 103–434 (108 Stat. 4550) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 1213. AUTHORIZATION OF THE INTEGRATED PLAN AS PHASE III OF YAKIMA RIVER BASIN WATER ENHANCEMENT PROJECT.

''(a) INTEGRATED PLAN.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall implement the Integrated Plan as Phase III of the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project in accordance with this section and applicable laws.

''(2) INITIAL DEVELOPMENT PHASE OF THE INTEGRATED PLAN.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in coordination with the State of Washington and Yakama Nation and subject to feasibility studies, environmental reviews, and the availability of appropriations, shall implement an initial development phase of the Integrated Plan, to—

''(i) complete the planning, design, and construction or development of upstream and downstream fish passage facilities, as previously authorized by the Hoover Power Plant Act of 1984 (43 U.S.C. 619 et seq.) at Cle Elum Reservoir and another Yakima Project reservoir identified by the Secretary as consistent with the Integrated Plan, subject to the condition that, if the Yakima Project reservoir identified by the Secretary contains a hydropower project licensed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, the Secretary shall cooperate with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in a timely manner to ensure that actions taken by the Secretary are consistent with the applicable hydropower project license;

''(ii) negotiate long-term agreements with participating proratable irrigation entities in the Yakima Basin and, acting through the Bureau of Reclamation, coordinate between Bureaus of the Department of the Interior and with the heads of other Federal agencies to negotiate agreements concerning leases, easements, and rights-of-way on Federal land, and other terms and conditions determined to be necessary to allow for the non-Federal financing, construction, operation, and maintenance of—

''(I) new facilities needed to access and deliver inactive storage in Lake Kachess for the purpose of providing drought relief for irrigation (known as the 'Kachess Drought Relief Pumping Plant'); and

''(II) a conveyance system to allow transfer of water between Keechelus Reservoir to Kachess Reservoir for purposes of improving operational flexibility for the benefit of both fish and irrigation (known as the 'K to K Pipeline');

''(iii) participate in, provide funding for, and accept non-Federal financing for—

''(I) water conservation projects, not subject to the provisions of the Basin Conservation Program described in section 1203, that are intended to partially implement the Integrated Plan by providing 85,000 acre-feet of conserved water to improve tributary and mainstem stream flow; and

''(II) aquifer storage and recovery projects;

''(iv) study, evaluate, and conduct feasibility analyses and environmental reviews of fish passage, water supply (including groundwater and surface water storage), conservation, habitat restoration projects, and other alternatives identified as consistent with the purposes of this Act, for the initial and future phases of the Integrated Plan;

''(v) coordinate with and assist the State of Washington in implementing a robust water market to enhance water management in the Yakima River basin, including—

''(I) assisting in identifying ways to encourage and increase the use of, and reduce the barriers to, water transfers, leasing, markets, and other voluntary transactions among public and private entities in the Yakima River basin;

''(II) providing technical assistance, including scientific data and market information; and

''(III) negotiating agreements that would facilitate voluntary water transfers between entities, including as appropriate, the use of federally managed infrastructure; and

''(vi) enter into cooperative agreements with, or, subject to a minimum non-Federal cost-sharing requirement of 50 percent, make grants to, the Yakama Nation, the State of Washington, Yakima River basin irrigation districts, water districts, conservation districts, other local governmental entities, nonprofit organizations, and land owners to carry out this title under such terms and conditions as the Secretary may require, including the following purposes:

''(I) Land and water transfers, leases, and acquisitions from willing participants, so long as the acquiring entity shall hold title and be responsible for any and all required operations, maintenance, and management of that land and water.

''(II) To combine or relocate diversion points, remove fish barriers, or for other activities that increase flows or improve habitat in the Yakima River and its tributaries in furtherance of this title.

''(III) To implement, in partnership with Federal and non-Federal entities, projects to enhance the health and resilience of the watershed.

''(B) COMMENCEMENT DATE.—The Secretary shall commence implementation of the activities included under the initial development phase pursuant to this paragraph—

''(i) on the date of enactment of this section; and

''(ii) on completion of applicable feasibility studies, environmental reviews, and cost-benefit analyses that include favorable recommendations for further project development.

''(3) INTERMEDIATE AND FINAL PHASES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in coordination with the State of Washington and in consultation with the Yakama Nation, shall develop plans for intermediate and final development phases of the Integrated Plan to achieve the purposes of this Act, including conducting applicable feasibility studies, environmental reviews, and other relevant studies needed to develop the plans.

''(B) INTERMEDIATE PHASE.—The Secretary shall develop an intermediate development phase to implement the Integrated Plan that, subject to authorization and appropriation, would commence not later than 10 years after the date of enactment of this section.

''(C) FINAL PHASE.—The Secretary shall develop a final development phase to implement the Integrated Plan that, subject to authorization and appropriation, would commence not later than 20 years after the date of enactment of this section.

''(4) CONTINGENCIES.—The implementation by the Secretary of projects and activities identified for implementation under the Integrated Plan shall be—

''(A) subject to authorization and appropriation;

''(B) contingent on the completion of applicable feasibility studies, environmental reviews, and cost-benefit analyses that include favorable recommendations for further project development;

''(C) implemented on public review and a determination by the Secretary that design, construction, and operation of a proposed project or activity is in the best interest of the public; and

''(D) in compliance with all applicable laws, including the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) and the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

''(5) PROGRESS REPORT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary, in conjunction with the State of Washington and in consultation with the Yakama Nation, shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a progress report on the development and implementation of the Integrated Plan.

''(B) REQUIREMENTS.—The progress report under this paragraph shall—

''(i) provide a review and reassessment, if needed, of the objectives of the Integrated Plan, as applied to all elements of the Integrated Plan;

''(ii) assess, through performance metrics developed at the initiation of, and measured throughout the implementation of, the Integrated Plan, the degree to which the implementation of the initial development phase addresses the objectives and all elements of the Integrated Plan;

''(iii) identify the amount of Federal funding and non-Federal contributions received

and expended during the period covered by the report;

''(iv) describe the pace of project development during the period covered by the report;

''(v) identify additional projects and activities proposed for inclusion in any future phase of the Integrated Plan to address the objectives of the Integrated Plan, as applied to all elements of the Integrated Plan; and

''(vi) for water supply projects—

''(I) provide a preliminary discussion of the means by which—

''(aa) water and costs associated with each recommended project would be allocated among authorized uses; and

''(bb) those allocations would be consistent with the objectives of the Integrated Plan; and

''(II) establish a plan for soliciting and formalizing subscriptions among individuals and entities for participation in any of the recommended water supply projects that will establish the terms for participation, including fiscal obligations associated with subscription.

''(b) FINANCING, CONSTRUCTION, OPERATION, AND MAINTENANCE OF KACHESS DROUGHT RELIEF PUMPING PLANT AND K TO K PIPELINE.—

''(1) AGREEMENTS.—Long-term agreements negotiated between the Secretary and participating proratable irrigation entities in the Yakima Basin for the non-Federal financing, construction, operation, and maintenance of the Drought Relief Pumping Plant and K to K Pipeline shall include provisions regarding—

''(A) responsibilities of the participating proratable irrigation entities for the planning, design, and construction of infrastructure in consultation and coordination with the Secretary;

''(B) property titles and responsibilities of the participating proratable irrigation entities for the maintenance of and liability for all infrastructure constructed under this title;

''(C) operation and integration of the projects by the Secretary in the operation of the Yakima Project;

''(D) costs associated with the design, financing, construction, operation, maintenance, and mitigation of projects, with the costs of Federal oversight and review to be nonreimbursable to the participating proratable irrigation entities and the Yakima Project; and

''(E) responsibilities for the pumping and operational costs necessary to provide the total water supply available made inaccessible due to drought pumping during the preceding 1 or more calendar years, in the event that the Kachess Reservoir fails to refill as a result of pumping drought storage water during the preceding 1 or more calendar years, which shall remain the responsibility of the participating proratable irrigation entities.

''(2) USE OF KACHESS RESERVOIR STORED WATER.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The additional stored water made available by the construction of facilities to access and deliver inactive storage in Kachess Reservoir under subsection (a)(2)(A)(ii)(I) shall—

''(i) be considered to be Yakima Project water;

''(ii) not be part of the total water supply available, as that term is defined in various court rulings; and

''(iii) be used exclusively by the Secretary—

''(I) to enhance the water supply in years when the total water supply available is not sufficient to provide 70 percent of proratable entitlements in order to make that additional water available up to 70 percent of proratable entitlements to the Kittitas Reclamation District, the Roza Irrigation District, or other proratable irrigation entities participating in the construction, operation, and maintenance costs of the facilities under this title under such terms and conditions to which the districts may agree, subject to the conditions that—

''(aa) the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Wapato Irrigation Project, and the Yakama Nation, on an election to participate, may also obtain water from Kachess Reservoir inactive storage to enhance applicable existing irrigation water supply in accordance with such terms and conditions to which the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Yakama Nation may agree; and

''(bb) the additional supply made available under this clause shall be available to participating individuals and entities in proportion to the proratable entitlements of the participating individuals and entities, or in such other proportion as the participating entities may agree; and

''(II) to facilitate reservoir operations in the reach of the Yakima River between Keechelus Dam and Easton Dam for the propagation of anadromous fish.

''(B) EFFECT OF PARAGRAPH.—Nothing in this paragraph affects (as in existence on the date of enactment of this section) any contract, law (including regulations) relating to repayment costs, water right, or Yakama Nation treaty right.

''(3) COMMENCEMENT.—The Secretary shall not commence entering into agreements pursuant to subsection (a)(2)(A)(ii) or subsection (b)(1) or implementing any activities pursuant to the agreements before the date on which—

''(A) all applicable and required feasibility studies, environmental reviews, and cost-benefit analyses have been completed and include favorable recommendations for further project development, including an analysis of—

''(i) the impacts of the agreements and activities conducted pursuant to subsection (a)(2)(A)(ii) on adjacent communities, including potential fire hazards, water access for fire districts, community and homeowner wells, future water levels based on projected usage, recreational values, and property values; and

''(ii) specific options and measures for mitigating the impacts, as appropriate;

''(B) the Secretary has made the agreements and any applicable project designs, operations plans, and other documents available for public review and comment in the Federal Register for a period of not less than 60 days; and

''(C) the Secretary has made a determination, consistent with applicable law, that the agreements and activities to which the agreements relate—

''(i) are in the public interest; and

''(ii) could be implemented without significant adverse impacts to the environment.

''(4) ELECTRICAL POWER ASSOCIATED WITH KACHESS DROUGHT RELIEF PUMPING PLANT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Bonneville Power Administration, pursuant to the Pacific Northwest Electric Power Planning and Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 839 et seq.), shall provide to the Secretary project power to operate the Kachess Pumping Plant constructed under this title if inactive storage in Kachess Reservoir is needed to provide drought relief for irrigation, subject to the requirements of subparagraphs (B) and (C).

''(B) DETERMINATION.—Power may be provided under subparagraph (A) only if—

''(i) there is in effect a drought declaration issued by the State of Washington;

''(ii) there are conditions that have led to 70 percent or less water delivery to proratable irrigation districts, as determined by the Secretary; and

''(iii) the Secretary determines that it is appropriate to provide power under that subparagraph.

''(C) PERIOD OF AVAILABILITY.—Power under subparagraph (A) shall be provided until the date on which the Secretary determines that power should no longer be provided under that subparagraph, but for not more than a 1-year period or the period during which the Secretary determines that drought mitigation measures are necessary in the Yakima River basin.

''(D) RATE.—The Administrator of the Bonneville Power Administration shall provide power under subparagraph (A) at the then-applicable lowest Bonneville Power Administration rate for public body, cooperative, and Federal agency customers firm obligations, which as of the date of enactment of this section is the priority firm Tier 1 rate, and shall not include any irrigation discount.

''(E) LOCAL PROVIDER.—During any period in which power is not being provided under subparagraph (A), the power needed to operate the Kachess Pumping Plant shall be obtained by the Secretary from a local provider.

''(F) COSTS.—The cost of power for such pumping, station service power, and all costs of transmitting power from the Federal Columbia River Power System to the Yakima Enhancement Project pumping facilities shall be borne by irrigation districts receiving the benefits of that water.

''(G) DUTIES OF COMMISSIONER.—The Commissioner of Reclamation shall be responsible for arranging transmission for deliveries of Federal power over the Bonneville system through applicable tariff and business practice processes of the Bonneville system and for arranging transmission for deliveries of power obtained from a local provider.

''(c) DESIGN AND USE OF GROUNDWATER RECHARGE PROJECTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Any water supply that results from an aquifer storage and recovery project shall not be considered to be a part of the total water supply available if—

''(A) the water for the aquifer storage and recovery project would not be available for use, but instead for the development of the project;

''(B) the aquifer storage and recovery project will not otherwise impair any water supply available for any individual or entity entitled to use the total water supply available; and

''(C) the development of the aquifer storage and recovery project will not impair fish or other aquatic life in any localized stream reach.

''(2) PROJECT TYPES.—The Secretary may provide technical assistance for, and participate in, any of the following 3 types of groundwater recharge projects (including the incorporation of groundwater recharge projects into Yakima Project operations, as appropriate):

''(A) Aquifer recharge projects designed to redistribute Yakima Project water within a water year for the purposes of supplementing stream flow during the irrigation season, particularly during storage control, subject to the condition that if such a project is designed to supplement a mainstem reach, the water supply that results from the project shall be credited to instream flow targets, in lieu of using the total water supply available to meet those targets.

''(B) Aquifer storage and recovery projects that are designed, within a given water year or over multiple water years—

''(i) to supplement or mitigate for municipal uses;

''(ii) to supplement municipal supply in a subsurface aquifer; or

''(iii) to mitigate the effect of groundwater use on instream flow or senior water rights.

''(C) Aquifer storage and recovery projects designed to supplement existing irrigation water supply, or to store water in subsurface aquifers, for use by the Kittitas Reclamation District, the Roza Irrigation District, or any other proratable irrigation entity participating in the repayment of the construction, operation, and maintenance costs of the facilities under this section during years in which the total water supply available is insufficient to provide to those proratable irrigation entities all water to which the entities are entitled, subject to the conditions that—

''(i) the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Wapato Irrigation Project, and the Yakama Nation, on an election to participate, may also obtain water from aquifer storage to enhance applicable existing irrigation water supply in accordance with such terms and conditions to which the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Yakama Nation may agree; and

''(ii) nothing in this subparagraph affects (as in existence on the date of enactment of this section) any contract, law (including regulations) relating to repayment costs, water right, or Yakama Nation treaty right.

''(d) FEDERAL COST-SHARE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Federal cost-share of a project carried out under this section shall be determined in accordance with the applicable laws (including regulations) and policies of the Bureau of Reclamation.

''(2) INITIAL PHASE.—The Federal cost-share for the initial development phase of the Integrated Plan shall not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of the initial development phase.

''(3) STATE AND OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS.—The Secretary may accept as part of the non-Federal cost-share of a project carried out under this section, and expend as if appropriated, any contribution (including in-kind services) by the State of Washington or any other individual or entity that the Secretary determines will enhance the conduct and completion of the project.

''(4) LIMITATION ON USE OF OTHER FEDERAL FUNDS.—Except as otherwise provided in this title, other Federal funds may not be used to provide the non-Federal cost-share of a project carried out under this section.

''(e) SAVINGS AND CONTINGENCIES.—Nothing in this section shall—

''(1) be a new or supplemental benefit for purposes of the Reclamation Reform Act of 1982 (43 U.S.C. 390aa et seq.);

''(2) affect any contract in existence on the date of enactment of the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project Phase III Act of 2016 that was executed pursuant to the reclamation laws;

''(3) affect any contract or agreement between the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Reclamation;

''(4) affect, waive, abrogate, diminish, define, or interpret the treaty between the Yakama Nation and the United States; or

''(5) constrain the continued authority of the Secretary to provide fish passage in the Yakima Basin in accordance with the Hoover Power Plant Act of 1984 (43 U.S.C 619 et seq.).

''SEC. 1214. OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF WATER SUPPLIES.

''The Secretary shall retain authority and discretion over the management of project supplies to optimize operational use and flexibility to ensure compliance with all applicable Federal and State laws, treaty rights of the Yakama Nation, and legal obligations, including those contained in this Act. That authority and discretion includes the ability of the United States to store, deliver, conserve, and reuse water supplies deriving from projects authorized under this title.''.

Subpart B—Klamath Project Water and Power

SEC. 6329. KLAMATH PROJECT.

(a) ADDRESSING WATER MANAGEMENT AND POWER COSTS FOR IRRIGATION.—The Klamath Basin Water Supply Enhancement Act of 2000 (Public Law 106–498; 114 Stat. 2221) is amended—

(1) by redesignating sections 4 through 6 as sections 5 through 7, respectively; and

(2) by inserting after section 3 the following:

''SEC. 4. POWER AND WATER MANAGEMENT.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) COVERED POWER USE.—The term 'covered power use' means a use of power to develop or manage water for irrigation, wildlife purposes, or drainage on land that is—

''(A) associated with the Klamath Project, including land within a unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System that receives water due to the operation of Klamath Project facilities; or

''(B) irrigated by the class of users covered by the agreement dated April 30, 1956, between the California Oregon Power Company and Klamath Basin Water Users Protective Association and within the Off Project Area (as defined in the Upper Basin Comprehensive Agreement entered into on April 18, 2014), only if each applicable owner and holder of a possessory interest of the land is a party to that agreement (or a successor agreement that the Secretary determines provides a comparable benefit to the United States).

''(2) KLAMATH PROJECT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'Klamath Project' means the Bureau of Reclamation project in the States of California and Oregon.

''(B) INCLUSIONS.—The term 'Klamath Project' includes any dams, canals, and other works and interests for water diversion, storage, delivery, and drainage, flood control, and similar functions that are part of the project described in subparagraph (A).

''(3) POWER COST BENCHMARK.—The term 'power cost benchmark' means the average net delivered cost of power for irrigation and drainage at Reclamation projects in the area surrounding the Klamath Project that are similarly situated to the Klamath Project, including Reclamation projects that—

''(A) are located in the Pacific Northwest; and

''(B) receive project-use power.

''(b) WATER, ENVIRONMENTAL, AND POWER ACTIVITIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Pursuant to the reclamation laws and subject to appropriations and required environmental reviews, the Secretary may carry out activities, including entering into an agreement or contract or otherwise making financial assistance available—

''(A) to plan, implement, and administer programs to align water supplies and demand for irrigation water users associated with the Klamath Project, with a primary emphasis on programs developed or endorsed by local entities comprised of representatives of those water users;

''(B) to plan and implement activities and projects that—

''(i) avoid or mitigate environmental effects of irrigation activities; or

''(ii) restore habitats in the Klamath Basin watershed, including restoring tribal fishery resources held in trust; and

''(C) to limit the net delivered cost of power for covered power uses.

''(2) EFFECT.—Nothing in subparagraph (A) or (B) of paragraph (1) authorizes the Secretary—

''(A) to develop or construct new facilities for the Klamath Project without appropriate approval from Congress under section 9 of the Reclamation Projects Act of 1939 (43 U.S.C. 485h); or

''(B) to carry out activities that have not otherwise been authorized.

''(c) REDUCING POWER COSTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2016, the Secretary, in consultation with interested irrigation interests that are eligible for covered power use and representative organizations of those interests, shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a report that—

''(A) identifies the power cost benchmark; and

''(B) recommends actions that, in the judgment of the Secretary, are necessary and appropriate to ensure that the net delivered power cost for covered power use is equal to or less than the power cost benchmark, including a description of—

''(i) actions to immediately reduce power costs and to have the net delivered power cost for covered power use be equal to or less than the power cost benchmark in the near term, while longer-term actions are being implemented;

''(ii) actions that prioritize water and power conservation and efficiency measures and, to the extent actions involving the development or acquisition of power generation are included, renewable energy technologies (including hydropower);

''(iii) the potential costs and timeline for the actions recommended under this subparagraph;

''(iv) provisions for modifying the actions and timeline to adapt to new information or circumstances; and

''(v) a description of public input regarding the proposed actions, including input from water users that have covered power use and the degree to which those water users concur with the recommendations.

''(2) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 180 days after the date of submission of the report under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall implement those recommendations described in the report that the Secretary determines will ensure that the net delivered power cost for covered power use is equal to or less than the power cost benchmark, subject to availability of appropriations, on the fastest practicable timeline.

''(3) ANNUAL REPORTS.—The Secretary shall submit to each Committee described in paragraph (1) annual reports describing progress achieved in meeting the requirements of this subsection.

''(d) TREATMENT OF POWER PURCHASES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Any purchase of power by the Secretary under this section shall be considered to be an authorized sale for purposes of section 5(b)(3) of the Pacific Northwest Electric Power Planning and Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 839c(b)(3)).

''(2) EFFECT.—Nothing in this section authorizes the Bonneville Power Administration to make a sale of power from the Federal Columbia River Power System at rates, terms, or conditions better than those afforded preference customers of the Bonneville Power Administration.

''(e) GOALS.—The goals of activities under subsections (b) and (c) shall include, as applicable—

''(1) the short-term and long-term reduction and resolution of conflicts relating to water in the Klamath Basin watershed; and

''(2) compatibility and utility for protecting natural resources throughout the Klamath Basin watershed, including the protection, preservation, and restoration of

Klamath River tribal fishery resources, particularly through collaboratively developed agreements.

''(f) PUMPING PLANT D.—The Secretary may enter into 1 or more agreements with the Tulelake Irrigation District to reimburse the Tulelake Irrigation District for not more than 69 percent of the cost incurred by the Tulelake Irrigation District for the operation and maintenance of Pumping Plant D, on the condition that the cost benefits the United States.''.

(b) CONVEYANCE OF NON-PROJECT WATER; REPLACEMENT OF C CANAL.—

(1) DEFINITION OF KLAMATH PROJECT.—In this subsection:

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''Klamath Project'' means the Bureau of Reclamation project in the States of California and Oregon.

(B) INCLUSIONS.—The term ''Klamath Project'' includes any dams, canals, and other works and interests for water diversion, storage, delivery, and drainage, flood control, and similar functions that are part of the project described in subparagraph (A).

(2) CONVEYANCE OF NON-PROJECT WATER.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—An entity operating under a contract entered into with the United States for the operation and maintenance of Klamath Project works or facilities, and an entity operating any work or facility not owned by the United States that receives Klamath Project water, may use any of the Klamath Project works or facilities to convey non-Klamath Project water for any authorized purpose of the Klamath Project, subject to subparagraphs (B) and (C).

(B) PERMITS; MEASUREMENT.—An addition, conveyance, and use of water pursuant to subparagraph (A) shall be subject to the requirements that—

(i) the applicable entity shall secure all permits required under State or local laws; and

(ii) all water delivered into, or taken out of, a Klamath Project facility pursuant to that subparagraph shall be measured.

(C) EFFECT.—A use of non-Klamath Project water under this paragraph shall not—

(i) adversely affect the delivery of water to any water user or land served by the Klamath Project; or

(ii) result in any additional cost to the United States.

(3) REPLACEMENT OF C CANAL FLUME.—The replacement of the C Canal flume within the Klamath Project shall be considered to be, and shall receive the treatment authorized for, emergency extraordinary operation and maintenance work in accordance with Federal reclamation law (the Act of June 17, 1902 (32 Stat. 388, chapter 1093), and Acts supplemental to and amendatory of that Act (43 U.S.C. 371 et seq.)).

(c) ADMINISTRATION.—

(1) COMPLIANCE.—In implementing this section and the amendments made by this section, the Secretary of the Interior shall comply with—

(A) the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.);

(B) the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.); and

(C) all other applicable laws.

(2) EFFECT.—Nothing in this section—

(A) modifies the authorities or obligations of the United States with respect to the tribal trust and treaty obligations of the United States; or

(B) creates or determines water rights or affects water rights or water right claims in existence on the date of enactment of this Act.

PART IV—RESERVOIR OPERATION IMPROVEMENT

SEC. 6331. RESERVOIR OPERATION IMPROVEMENT.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) RESERVED WORKS.—The term ''reserved works'' means any Bureau of Reclamation project facility at which the Secretary of the Interior carries out the operation and maintenance of the project facility.

(2) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Army.

(3) TRANSFERRED WORKS.—The term ''transferred works'' means a Bureau of Reclamation project facility, the operation and maintenance of which is carried out by a non-Federal entity, under the provisions of a formal operation and maintenance transfer contract.

(4) TRANSFERRED WORKS OPERATING ENTITY.—The term ''transferred works operating entity'' means the organization that is contractually responsible for operation and maintenance of transferred works.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 360 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives, the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate, and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report including, for any State in which a county designated by the Secretary of Agriculture as a drought disaster area during water year 2015 is located, a list of projects, including Corps of Engineers projects, and those non-Federal projects and transferred works that are operated for flood control in accordance with rules prescribed by the Secretary pursuant to section 7 of the Act of December 22, 1944 (commonly known as the ''Flood Control Act of 1944'') (58 Stat. 890, chapter 665), including, as applicable—

(1) the year the original water control manual was approved;

(2) the year for any subsequent revisions to the water control plan and manual of the project;

(3) a list of projects for which—

(A) operational deviations for drought contingency have been requested;

(B) the status of the request; and

(C) a description of how water conservation and water quality improvements were addressed; and

(4) a list of projects for which permanent or seasonal changes to storage allocations have been requested, and the status of the request.

(c) PROJECT IDENTIFICATION.—Not later than 60 days after the date of completion of the report under subsection (b), the Secretary shall identify any projects described in the report—

(1) for which the modification of the water operations manuals, including flood control rule curve, would be likely to enhance existing authorized project purposes, including for water supply benefits and flood control operations;

(2) for which the water control manual and hydrometeorological information establishing the flood control rule curves of the project have not been substantially revised during the 15-year period ending on the date of review by the Secretary; and

(3) for which the non-Federal sponsor or sponsors of a Corps of Engineers project, the owner of a non-Federal project, or the non-Federal transferred works operating entity, as applicable, has submitted to the Secretary a written request to revise water operations manuals, including flood control rule curves, based on the use of improved weather forecasting or run-off forecasting methods, new watershed data, changes to project operations, or structural improvements.

(d) PILOT PROJECTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of identification of projects under subsection (c), if any, the Secretary shall carry out not fewer than 15 pilot projects, which shall include not less than 6 non-Federal projects, to implement revisions of water operations manuals, including flood control rule curves, based on the best available science, which may include—

(A) forecast-informed operations;

(B) new watershed data; and

(C) if applicable, in the case of non-Federal projects, structural improvements.

(2) CONSULTATION.—In implementing a pilot project under this subsection, the Secretary shall consult with all affected interests, including—

(A) non-Federal entities responsible for operations and maintenance costs of a Federal facility;

(B) individuals and entities with storage entitlements; and

(C) local agencies with flood control responsibilities downstream of a facility.

(e) COORDINATION WITH NON-FEDERAL PROJECT ENTITIES.—If a project identified under subsection (c) is—

(1) a non-Federal project, the Secretary, prior to carrying out an activity under this section, shall—

(A) consult with the non-Federal project owner; and

(B) enter into a cooperative agreement, memorandum of understanding, or other agreement with the non-Federal project owner describing the scope and goals of the activity and the coordination among the parties; and

(2) a Federal project, the Secretary, prior to carrying out an activity under this section, shall—

(A) consult with each Federal and non-Federal entity (including a municipal water district, irrigation district, joint powers authority, transferred works operating entity, or other local governmental entity) that currently—

(i) manages (in whole or in part) a Federal dam or reservoir; or

(ii) is responsible for operations and maintenance costs; and

(B) enter into a cooperative agreement, memorandum of understanding, or other agreement with each such entity describing the scope and goals of the activity and the coordination among the parties.

(f) CONSIDERATION.—In designing and implementing a forecast-informed reservoir operations plan under subsection (d) or (g), the Secretary may consult with the appropriate agencies within the Department of the Interior and the Department of Commerce with expertise in atmospheric, meteorological, and hydrologic science to consider—

(1) the relationship between ocean and atmospheric conditions, including—

(A) the El Niño and La Niña cycles; and

(B) the potential for above-normal, normal, and below-normal rainfall for the coming water year, including consideration of atmospheric river forecasts;

(2) the precipitation and runoff index specific to the basin and watershed of the relevant dam or reservoir, including incorporating knowledge of hydrological and meteorological conditions that influence the timing and quantity of runoff;

(3) improved hydrologic forecasting for precipitation, snowpack, and soil moisture conditions;

(4) an adjustment of operational flood control rule curves to optimize water supply storage and reliability, hydropower production, environmental benefits for flows and temperature, and other authorized project benefits, without a reduction in flood safety; and

(5) proactive management in response to changes in forecasts.

(g) FUNDING.—The Secretary may accept and expend amounts from non-Federal entities and other Federal agencies to fund all or a portion of the cost of carrying out a review or revision of operational documents, including water control plans, water control manuals, water control diagrams, release schedules, rule curves, operational agreements with non-Federal entities, and any associated environmental documentation for—

(1) a Corps of Engineers project;

(2) a non-Federal project regulated for flood control by the Secretary; or

(3) a Bureau of Reclamation transferred works regulated for flood control by the Secretary.

(h) EFFECT.—

(1) MANUAL REVISIONS.—A revision of a manual shall not interfere with the authorized purposes of a Federal project or the existing purposes of a non-Federal project regulated for flood control by the Secretary.

(2) EFFECT OF SECTION.—

(A) Nothing in this section authorizes the Secretary to carry out, at a Federal dam or reservoir, any project or activity for a purpose not otherwise authorized as of the date of enactment of this Act.

(B) Nothing in this section affects or modifies any obligation of the Secretary under State law.

(C) Nothing in this section affects or modifies any obligation to comply with any applicable Federal law.

(3) BUREAU OF RECLAMATION RESERVED WORKS EXCLUDED.—This section—

(A) shall not apply to any dam or reservoir operated by the Bureau of Reclamation as a reserved work, unless all non-Federal project sponsors of a reserved work jointly provide to the Secretary a written request for application of this section to the project; and

(B) shall apply only to Bureau of Reclamation transferred works at the written request of the transferred works operating entity.

(4) PRIOR STUDIES.—The Secretary shall—

(A) to the maximum extent practicable, coordinate the efforts of the Secretary in carrying out subsections (b), (c), and (d) with the efforts of the Secretary in completing—

(i) the report required under section 1046(a)(2)(A) of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (33 U.S.C. 2319 note; Public Law 113–121); and

(ii) the updated report required under subsection (a)(2)(B) of that section; and

(B) if the reports are available before the date on which the Secretary carries out the actions described in subsections (b), (c), and (d), consider the findings of the reports described in clauses (i) and (ii) of subparagraph (A).

(i) MODIFICATIONS TO MANUALS AND CURVES.—Not later than 180 days after the date of completion of a modification to an operations manual or flood control rule curve, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report regarding the components of the forecast-based reservoir operations plan incorporated into the change.

PART V—HYDROELECTRIC PROJECTS

SEC. 6341. TERROR LAKE HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT UPPER HIDDEN BASIN DIVERSION AUTHORIZATION.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) TERROR LAKE HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT.—The term ''Terror Lake Hydroelectric Project'' means the project identified in section 1325 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 3212), and which is Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project number 2743.

(2) UPPER HIDDEN BASIN DIVERSION EXPANSION.—The term ''Upper Hidden Basin Diversion Expansion'' means the expansion of the Terror Lake Hydroelectric Project as generally described in Exhibit E to the Upper Hidden Basin Grant Application dated July 2, 2014 and submitted to the Alaska Energy Authority Renewable Energy Fund Round VIII by Kodiak Electric Association, Inc.

(b) AUTHORIZATION.—The licensee for the Terror Lake Hydroelectric Project may occupy not more than 20 acres of Federal land to construct, operate, and maintain the Upper Hidden Basin Diversion Expansion without further authorization of the Secretary of the Interior or under the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 3101 et seq.).

(c) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—The Upper Hidden Basin Diversion Expansion shall be subject to appropriate terms and conditions included in an amendment to a license issued by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission pursuant to the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 791a et seq.), including section 4(e) of that Act (16 U.S.C. 797(e)), following an environmental review by the Commission under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

SEC. 6342. STAY AND REINSTATEMENT OF FERC LICENSE NO. 11393 FOR THE MAHONEY LAKE HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COMMISSION.—The term ''Commission'' means the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

(2) LICENSE.—The term ''license'' means the license for Commission project number 11393.

(3) LICENSEE.—The term ''licensee'' means the holder of the license.

(b) STAY OF LICENSE.—On the request of the licensee, the Commission shall issue an order continuing the stay of the license.

(c) LIFTING OF STAY.—On the request of the licensee, but not later than 10 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission shall—

(1) issue an order lifting the stay of the license under subsection (b); and

(2) make the effective date of the license the date on which the stay is lifted under paragraph (1).

(d) EXTENSION OF LICENSE.—On the request of the licensee and notwithstanding the time period specified in section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) for commencement of construction of the project subject to the license, the Commission shall, after reasonable notice and in accordance with the good faith, due diligence, and public interest requirements of that section, extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence the construction of the project for not more than 3 consecutive 2-year periods, notwithstanding any other provision of law.

(e) EFFECT.—Nothing in this section prioritizes, or creates any advantage or disadvantage to, Commission project number 11393 under Federal law, including the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 791a et seq.) or the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2601 et seq.), as compared to—

(1) any electric generating facility in existence on the date of enactment of this Act; or

(2) any electric generating facility that may be examined, proposed, or developed during the period of any stay or extension of the license under this section.

SEC. 6343. EXTENSION OF DEADLINE FOR HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the time period specified in section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (referred to in this section as the ''Commission'') project numbered 12642, the Commission may, at the request of the licensee for the project, and after reasonable notice, in accordance with the good faith, due diligence, and public interest requirements of that section and the procedures of the Commission under that section, extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence the construction of the project for up to 3 consecutive 2-year periods from the date of the expiration of the extension originally issued by the Commission.

(b) REINSTATEMENT OF EXPIRED LICENSE.—If the period required for commencement of construction of the project described in subsection (a) has expired prior to the date of enactment of this Act—

(1) the Commission shall reinstate the license effective as of the date of the expiration of the license; and

(2) the first extension authorized under subsection (a) shall take effect on that expiration date.

SEC. 6344. EXTENSION OF DEADLINE FOR CERTAIN OTHER HYDROELECTRIC PROJECTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the time period specified in section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (referred to in this section as the ''Commission'') projects numbered 12737 and 12740, the Commission may, at the request of the licensee for the applicable project, and after reasonable notice, in accordance with the good faith, due diligence, and public interest requirements of that section and the procedures of the Commission under that section, extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence the construction of the applicable project for up to 3 consecutive 2-year periods from the date of the expiration of the extension originally issued by the Commission.

(b) REINSTATEMENT OF EXPIRED LICENSE.—If the period required for commencement of construction of a project described in subsection (a) has expired prior to the date of enactment of this Act—

(1) the Commission may reinstate the license for the applicable project effective as of the date of the expiration of the license; and

(2) the first extension authorized under subsection (a) shall take effect on that expiration.

SEC. 6345. EQUUS BEDS DIVISION EXTENSION.

Section 10(h) of Public Law 86–787 (74 Stat. 1026; 120 Stat. 1474) is amended by striking ''10 years'' and inserting ''20 years''.

SEC. 6346. EXTENSION OF TIME FOR A FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION PROJECT INVOLVING CANNONSVILLE DAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the time period specified in section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project numbered 13287, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (referred to in this section as the ''Commission'') may, at the request of the licensee for the project, and after reasonable notice, in accordance with the good faith, due diligence, and public interest requirements of that section and the procedures of the Commission under that section, extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence construction of the project for up to 4 consecutive 2-year periods after the required date of the commencement of construction described in Article 301 of the license.

(b) REINSTATEMENT OF EXPIRED LICENSE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If the required date of the commencement of construction described in subsection (a) has expired prior to the date

of enactment of this Act, the Commission may reinstate the license effective as of that date of expiration.

(2) EXTENSION.—If the Commission reinstates the license under paragraph (1), the first extension authorized under subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of that expiration.

PART VI—PUMPED STORAGE HYDROPOWER COMPENSATION

SEC. 6351. PUMPED STORAGE HYDROPOWER COMPENSATION.

Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission shall initiate a proceeding to identify and determine the market, procurement, and cost recovery mechanisms that would—

(1) encourage development of pumped storage hydropower assets; and

(2) properly compensate those assets for the full range of services provided to the power grid, including—

(A) balancing electricity supply and demand;

(B) ensuring grid reliability; and

(C) cost-effectively integrating intermittent power sources into the grid.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I now ask unanimous consent that there be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to each vote in this series.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Thank you, Mr. President.

The amendment I have called up is an amendment Senator CANTWELL and I have been working on. It is what we are dubbing our ''Natural Resources'' title. There are 30 different provisions—15 from the Republican side, 15 from the Democratic side. Nearly all of them have been reported from the committee. They have strong bipartisan support. It is a balanced collection of land and water bills.

We have included the sportsmen's bill, which we have heard talk of here on the floor, as it was reported from the committee with some additional provisions that came out of the Environment and Public Works Committee. It includes our open and less closed provisions to make sure our public lands and our national forests are accessible for hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting. We have included several land transactions involving the land management agencies, including some conveyances to correct Federal survey errors and to adjust boundaries. We have provisions to get more renewable hydropower online and keep existing projects operating in at least five different States. We also protect some treasured landscapes and rivers. We reroute a national scenic trail, and we authorize the National Park Service to study three sites to determine their national significance. So, again, it is a broad package, a package that is balanced, and a package that continues to add to the good in the overall Energy bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, if I may add to my colleague's comments, this underlying bill supports the Yakima River Basin bill, which is an integrated approach to addressing water management needs for farmers, families, and fish. It will help restore the ecosystem, ensure that communities have access to water, and conserve and provide water for farmers in times of drought. It is not only important to the future of our State, it is also a model for how water management should be done in the 21st century.

This legislation also includes water provisions for Senators FEINSTEIN, FLAKE, MERKLEY, and WYDEN, as the chairwoman said, MURKOWSKI herself, and several of our other colleagues—MERKLEY, BURR, GILLIBRAND, and KAINE.

Support this legislation.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the votes following the first vote in this series be 10 minutes in length.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. If there is no further debate, I ask for the yeas and nays on amendment No. 3234.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is all time yielded back?

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Yes, all time on the Republican side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment, as modified.

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 Georgia (Mr. PERDUE).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. AYOTTE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 97, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 48 Leg.]

YEAS—97

Alexander	Durbin	Markey
Ayotte	Enzi	McCain
Baldwin	Ernst	McCaskill
Barrasso	Feinstein	McConnell
Bennet	Fischer	Menendez
Blumenthal	Flake	Merkley
Blunt	Franken	Mikulski
Booker	Gardner	Moran
Boozman	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Boxer	Graham	Murphy
Brown	Grassley	Murray
Burr	Hatch	Nelson
Cantwell	Heinrich	Paul
Capito	Heitkamp	Peters
Cardin	Heller	Portman
Carper	Hirono	Reed
Casey	Hoeven	Reid
Cassidy	Inhofe	Risch
Coats	Isakson	Roberts
Cochran	Johnson	Rounds
Collins	Kaine	Rubio
Coons	King	Sasse
Corker	Kirk	Schatz
Cornyn	Klobuchar	Schumer
Cotton	Lankford	Scott
Crapo	Leahy	Sessions
Daines	Lee	Shaheen
Donnelly	Manchin	Shelby
Stabenow	Toomey	Whitehouse
Sullivan	Udall	Wicker
Tester	Vitter	Wyden
Thune	Warner	
Tillis	Warren	

NOT VOTING—3

Cruz	Perdue	Sanders

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3202

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will now be 2 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to a vote on amendment No. 3202, offered by the Senator from Georgia, Mr. ISAKSON.

The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Madam President, I just want all Members of the Senate to consider this amendment favorably.

It is an amendment that allows for consideration, in the qualification of the underwriting of a loan for the purchase of a single-family dwelling, of those enhanced standards for energy efficiency to go in over and above the minimum standard. It is permissive, and it is FHA only.

I appreciate every Member's vote.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SHELBY. Madam President, this amendment offered by my friend from Georgia sounds good, but let's examine it for a little while.

This amendment is opposed by the scholars of the Heritage Foundation, the Cato Institute, the American Action Forum, the American Enterprise Institute, and the Competitive Enterprise Institute.

As we all know, the mortgage underwriting process is about evaluating a borrower's ability to afford a mortgage, and history tells us that if we play around with it, it does not end well when we forget this.

This amendment would weaken FHA's underwriting standards, leading to greater safety and perhaps soundness concerns for FHA's portfolio, which received a $1.7 billion bailout in 2013. It would require that appraisals be inflated to account for the value of energy efficiency upgrades as determined by HUD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. SHELBY. I ask unanimous consent for 1 additional minute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SHELBY. It would also project energy savings and inflated borrowers' income for debt-to-income valuation.

I think it would be dangerous for FHA loans. We don't need it. FHA already has an FHA energy-efficient program, and according to HUD, FHA's energy-efficient program helps families save money on their utility bills by enabling them to finance energy-efficient improvements with their FHA insurance mortgage.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia has 30 seconds.

Mr. ISAKSON. Madam President, I don't know who wrote what my friend

from Alabama is reading, but the truth and the fact is that this is a recommendation that allows the installation of more energy efficiency and the funding of that in terms of housing. Homebuilders have endorsed it. Most energy efficiency organizations have endorsed it. It is good practice. It is good procedure. It is not ruining underwriting in any way whatsoever. It is good for America. It is good for energy efficiency. It is good for the housing industry.

I would appreciate the vote of each and every Member.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. 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. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 66, nays 31, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 49 Leg.]

YEAS—66

Alexander	Feinstein	Mikulski
Ayotte	Franken	Murkowski
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Murphy
Bennet	Graham	Murray
Blumenthal	Hatch	Nelson
Blunt	Heinrich	Peters
Booker	Heitkamp	Portman
Boxer	Heller	Reed
Brown	Hirono	Reid
Burr	Hoeven	Rounds
Cantwell	Isakson	Schatz
Capito	Johnson	Schumer
Cardin	Kaine	Shaheen
Carper	King	Stabenow
Casey	Kirk	Sullivan
Cassidy	Klobuchar	Tester
Cochran	Leahy	Tillis
Collins	Manchin	Udall
Coons	Markey	Warner
Cornyn	McCaskill	Warren
Donnelly	Menendez	Whitehouse
Durbin	Merkley	Wyden

NAYS—31

Barrasso	Gardner	Rubio
Boozman	Grassley	Sasse
Coats	Inhofe	Scott
Corker	Lankford	Sessions
Cotton	Lee	Shelby
Crapo	McCain	Thune
Daines	McConnell	Toomey
Enzi	Moran	Vitter
Ernst	Paul	Wicker
Fischer	Risch	
Flake	Roberts	

NOT VOTING—3

Cruz	Perdue	Sanders

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3175, AS MODIFIED, TO AMENDMENT NO. 2953

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will now be 2 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to a vote on amendment No. 3175, to be offered by the Senator from North Carolina, Mr. BURR.

The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Madam President, I rise to speak on my amendment very briefly. Many of my colleagues may have seen these wild horses on a vacation to the Outer Banks or maybe you viewed the movie ''Nights in Rodanthe.'' These horses have been there for over 200 years. What we are doing is we are injecting some new genetics so this herd is sustainable for another 200 years.

Let me tell my colleagues that they have never been managed by the Fish & Wildlife Service. The Fish & Wildlife Service doesn't want to manage them. They are managed by a private nonprofit that goes to great lengths and expense to make sure that this herd survives.

With that, I yield the floor. I reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, is all time yielded back?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is a minute left in opposition and 12 seconds remaining to the Senator from North Carolina.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, if there is no further discussion on this amendment, I call up the Burr amendment No. 3175 and ask unanimous consent that it be modified with the changes at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the amendment, as modified, by number.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Alaska [Ms. MURKOWSKI], for Mr. BURR, proposes an amendment numbered 3175, as modified, to amendment No. 2953.

The amendment, as modified, is as follows:

(Purpose: To ensure that the Secretary of the Interior collaborates fully with State and local authorities and certain nonprofit entities in managing the Corolla Wild Horse population on Federal land)

At the end of subtitle E of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 4_____. WILD HORSES IN AND AROUND THE CURRITUCK NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE.

(a) GENETIC DIVERSITY.—The Secretary of the Interior (referred to in this section as the ''Secretary''), in consultation with the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Currituck County, North Carolina, and the Corolla Wild Horse Fund, shall allow for the introduction of a small number of free-roaming wild horses from the Cape Lookout National Seashore as necessary to ensure the genetic diversity and viability of the wild horse population currently found in and around the Currituck National Wildlife Refuge, consistent with—

(1) the laws (including regulations) applicable to the Currituck National Wildlife Refuge and the Cape Lookout National Seashore; and

(2) the December 2014 Wild Horse Management Agreement approved by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Currituck County, North Carolina, and the Corolla Wild Horse Fund.

(b) AGREEMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may enter into an agreement with the Corolla Wild Horse Fund to provide for the cost-effective management of the horses in and around the Currituck National Wildlife Refuge while ensuring that natural resources within the Currituck National Wildlife Refuge are not adversely impacted.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The agreement entered into under paragraph (1) shall specify that the Corolla Wild Horse Fund shall pay the costs associated with—

(A) coordinating and conducting a periodic census, and inspecting the health, of the horses;

(B) maintaining records of the horses living in the wild and in confinement;

(C) coordinating and conducting the removal and placement of horses and monitoring of any horses removed from the Currituck County Outer Banks; and

(D) administering a viable population control plan for the horses, including auctions, adoptions, contraceptive fertility methods, and other viable options.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. The original Burr amendment did have a lot of discussion and passion on both sides, but the Senators were able to come together this afternoon to resolve their differences over this issue and craft a reasonable compromise that is acceptable to both sides. I want to thank Senator BURR, Senator TILLIS, and Senator BOXER for their willingness to find a solution that we can support. So I urge all my colleagues to support the Burr amendment, as modified.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the 60-vote affirmative threshold with respect to the Burr amendment be vitiated.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment, as modified.

The amendment (No. 3175), as modified, was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3210

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will now be 2 minutes, equally divided, prior to a vote on the Lankford amendment.

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, it is a very straightforward Land and Water Conservation Fund amendment. We have common agreement on the Land and Water Conservation Fund—what it does, what it funds, how it is funded. Where we have some dispute is in whether we are we taking care of the land that we have. We continue to add more acres into the Federal inventory, and we are not taking care of them. The original plan of the Land and Water Conservation Fund is that someday, out of general budget, we will do maintenance on this, but let's keep adding land. We have all known for decades that has not worked. For decades we have added more land, and for decades we are not maintaining it.

The easiest way to identify this amendment is this: This amendment is about not only purchasing land but taking care of the land that we actually purchased. It splits half and half—half for the purchase of land and half for the maintenance.

My daughter's birthday is today. She is 16. She will get a car—an old used car—at some point. But the requirement for her is to not only help pay for the car but to actually have enough in her bank account that she can help maintain it and buy gasoline for it. She has to have a job so she can have income.

We have set aside the Land and Water Conservation Fund to continually get more land but not be able to maintain it. We wouldn't do that with our children. We wouldn't do that with our homes. But we have done it year after year with this.

Let's do something simple. Let's maintain what we actually purchased and make sure it comes into strict oversight of the Federal Government. We should take care of our Federal treasures that are these national parks and other Federal lands.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. LANKFORD. With that, I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Madam President, speaking in opposition to the Lankford amendment, it would gut the Land and Water Conservation Fund. This is a program in which the Senator's new language would produce obstacles to the Federal government acquiring land that would cost more than $50,000 per acre, and it would simply add more redtape by having to pass another law just for the land acquisition to be purchased.

I urge my colleagues to oppose the Lankford amendment and keep the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the purposes that it was designed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 34, nays 63, as follows:

[Rollcall No. 50 Leg.]

YEAS—34

Barrasso	Hatch	Rounds
Boozman	Heller	Rubio
Cassidy	Hoeven	Sasse
Coats	Inhofe	Scott
Corker	Johnson	Sessions
Cornyn	Lankford	Shelby
Cotton	Lee	Sullivan
Enzi	McConnell	Thune
Ernst	Moran	Toomey
Fischer	Murkowski	Vitter
Flake	Paul	
Grassley	Roberts	

NAYS—63

Alexander	Durbin	Mikulski
Ayotte	Feinstein	Murphy
Baldwin	Franken	Murray
Bennet	Gardner	Nelson
Blumenthal	Gillibrand	Peters
Blunt	Graham	Portman
Booker	Heinrich	Reed
Boxer	Heitkamp	Reid
Brown	Hirono	Risch
Burr	Isakson	Schatz
Cantwell	Kaine	Schumer
Capito	King	Shaheen
Cardin	Kirk	Stabenow
Carper	Klobuchar	Tester
Casey	Leahy	Tillis
Cochran	Manchin	Udall
Collins	Markey	Warner
Coons	McCain	Warren
Crapo	McCaskill	Whitehouse
Daines	Menendez	Wicker
Donnelly	Merkley	Wyden

NOT VOTING—3

Cruz	Perdue	Sanders

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is rejected.

AMENDMENT NO. 3311 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2953

There will now be 2 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to a vote on amendment No. 3311, to be offered by the Senator from Arkansas, Mr. BOOZMAN.

The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, I call up my amendment No. 3311.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment by number.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Arkansas [Mr. BOOZMAN] proposes an amendment numbered 3311 to amendment No. 2953.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require a report relating to certain transmission infrastructure projects)

At the end of subtitle D of title II, add the following:

SEC. 23_____. REPORTING REQUIREMENT FOR CERTAIN TRANSMISSION INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS.

Section 1222 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16421) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(h) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—Before carrying out a Project under subsection (a) or (b), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that—

''(1) describes the impact that the proposed Project would have on electricity rates;

''(2) demonstrates that the proposed Project meets the requirements of paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a) and paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (b); and

''(3) includes a list of utilities that have entered into contracts for the purchase of power from the proposed Project.

''(i) DECISION.—The Secretary may not issue a decision on whether to carry out a Project under subsection (a) or (b) before the date that is 90 days after the date of submission of a report required under subsection (h).''.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, this amendment provides a simple report from the Department of Energy on a specific kind of transmission project. The amendment will not cause delays or add additional redtape. It provides transparency and ensures that the Department follows the law.

This amendment just ensures that the Department provides information in a timely manner.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. HEINRICH. Madam President, this amendment is a job killer. It blocks a major new 700-mile, multistate electric transmission project.

The Plains & Eastern Clean Line will deliver four gigawatts of economical renewable energy to the Southeast. This is $2 billion of nontaxpayer dollars that will lead to over $6 billion in private investment in new wind generation that will produce enough power to power 1 million homes.

During the 3 years of construction, the Clean Line will create 6,000 local construction jobs. Our Nation's grid is the energy of our economy and it needs modernization. I urge my colleagues to vote no on this job-killing amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. 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. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 42, nays 55, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 51 Leg.]

YEAS—42

Alexander	Ernst	Portman
Ayotte	Fischer	Risch
Blunt	Flake	Roberts
Boozman	Grassley	Rounds
Burr	Hatch	Rubio
Capito	Heller	Sasse
Cassidy	Isakson	Scott
Coats	Johnson	Sessions
Cochran	Lee	Shelby
Corker	McCain	Sullivan
Cornyn	McConnell	Thune
Cotton	Moran	Toomey
Crapo	Murkowski	Vitter
Daines	Paul	Wicker

NAYS—55

Baldwin	Bennet	Booker
Barrasso	Blumenthal	Boxer

Brown	Hirono	Nelson
Cantwell	Hoeven	Peters
Cardin	Inhofe	Reed
Carper	Kaine	Reid
Casey	King	Schatz
Collins	Kirk	Schumer
Coons	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Donnelly	Lankford	Stabenow
Durbin	Leahy	Tester
Enzi	Manchin	Tillis
Feinstein	Markey	Udall
Franken	McCaskill	Warner
Gardner	Menendez	Warren
Gillibrand	Merkley	Whitehouse
Graham	Mikulski	Wyden
Heinrich	Murphy	
Heitkamp	Murray	

NOT VOTING—3

Cruz	Perdue	Sanders

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is rejected.

AMENDMENT NO. 3312

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will now be 2 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to a vote on amendment No. 3312, offered by the Senator from New Mexico, Mr. UDALL.

The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL. Thank you, Mr. President.

This amendment is a very simple study amendment. It does nothing more than ask for a study. It is pro clean energy; it changes no rules; it doesn't mandate anything; it has no cost; it has no score. It simply directs the Secretary of the Treasury to submit a report to Congress on the issuance of clean energy victory bonds.

It is supported by a number of groups. Just to mention a few: the American Sustainable Business Council, the Evangelical Environmental Network, the League of Conservation Voters, the Union of Concerned Scientists, and a number of others.

I urge my colleagues to support it, and I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

Ms. MURKOWSKI. We yield all time back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 52 Leg.]

YEAS—50

Ayotte	Gardner	Murray
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Nelson
Bennet	Heinrich	Peters
Blumenthal	Heitkamp	Portman
Booker	Hirono	Reed
Boxer	Kaine	Reid
Brown	King	Schatz
Cantwell	Kirk	Schumer
Cardin	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Carper	Leahy	Stabenow
Casey	Markey	Tester
Collins	McCaskill	Udall
Coons	Menendez	Warner
Donnelly	Merkley	Warren
Durbin	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murkowski	Wyden
Franken	Murphy	

NAYS—47

Alexander	Fischer	Paul
Barrasso	Flake	Risch
Blunt	Graham	Roberts
Boozman	Grassley	Rounds
Burr	Hatch	Rubio
Capito	Heller	Sasse
Cassidy	Hoeven	Scott
Coats	Inhofe	Sessions
Cochran	Isakson	Shelby
Corker	Johnson	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lankford	Thune
Cotton	Lee	Tillis
Crapo	Manchin	Toomey
Daines	McCain	Vitter
Enzi	McConnell	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	

NOT VOTING—3

Cruz	Perdue	Sanders

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is rejected.

AMENDMENT NO. 3787

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will now be 2 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to a vote on amendment No. 3787, offered by the Senator from Kentucky, Mr. PAUL.

The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, Jack Kemp and others who have looked at and examined the issue of poverty have often found that we have not done a great job alleviating poverty. We have tried government programs. In my State, we tried them in rural Appalachia for 40 years. Yet we still have persistent poverty.

Many of us believe we would have a better chance with poverty if we would lower taxes in these areas, lessen regulation, and instead of sending the money to Washington, leave it where the poverty is. My amendment alone would leave half a billion dollars in Eastern Kentucky, $200 million in Louisville.

We have had much discussion of Flint, MI, and the water problem there. My amendment would leave $124 million in Flint, MI, next week. My amendment would leave over $1 billion in Detroit.

If there are those in this body who can come together and say we have a unified presence and a unified ability and desire to combat poverty, this is the amendment to do it. It is called economic freedom zones. I hope we will get bipartisan support in favor of leaving money in these impoverished communities to help them get started again.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment and this vision. Senator PAUL's amendment takes advantage of economically distressed communities in our country by saying we will take the hedge funds, big banks, rich investors and see their capital gains taxes completely eliminated.

The amendment would allow some of the areas in the country with the biggest environmental challenges, the most vulnerable communities, to ignore environmental laws like the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, ignore the requirements of National Heritage Areas, would lift Davis-Bacon, and it would scar school districts in these areas by not allowing public education dollars but allowing them to go to private schools instead.

In short, this amendment would turn these vulnerable communities into an experiment I don't think we need to have.

I raise a point of order that the pending measure violates section 311(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, 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 my amendment, No. 3787, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion to waive.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 33, nays 64, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 53 Leg.]

YEAS—33

Blunt	Flake	Moran
Boozman	Gardner	Paul
Capito	Graham	Risch
Cassidy	Grassley	Rubio
Coats	Hatch	Sasse
Cornyn	Heller	Scott
Cotton	Hoeven	Shelby
Crapo	Johnson	Sullivan
Daines	Kirk	Toomey
Ernst	Lee	Vitter
Fischer	McConnell	Wicker

NAYS—64

Alexander	Baldwin	Bennet
Ayotte	Barrasso	Blumenthal

Booker	Hirono	Portman
Boxer	Inhofe	Reed
Brown	Isakson	Reid
Burr	Kaine	Roberts
Cantwell	King	Rounds
Cardin	Klobuchar	Schatz
Carper	Lankford	Schumer
Casey	Leahy	Sessions
Cochran	Manchin	Shaheen
Collins	Markey	Stabenow
Coons	McCain	Tester
Corker	McCaskill	Thune
Donnelly	Menendez	Tillis
Durbin	Merkley	Udall
Enzi	Mikulski	Warner
Feinstein	Murkowski	Warren
Franken	Murphy	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Murray	Wyden
Heinrich	Nelson	
Heitkamp	Peters	

NOT VOTING—3

Cruz	Perdue	Sanders

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 33, the nays are 64.

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.

CHANGE OF VOTE

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, on rollcall vote No. 53, I voted yea. It was my intention to vote nay. Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to change my vote since it will not affect the outcome.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The foregoing tally has been changed to reflect the above order.)

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, on rollcall vote No. 53, I voted yea. It was my intention to vote nay. Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to change my vote since it will not affect the outcome.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The foregoing tally has been changed to reflect the above order.)

AMENDMENT NO. 2954

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will now be 2 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to a vote on amendment No. 2954, offered by the Senator from Louisiana, Mr. CASSIDY.

The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, this amendment pertains to the sale from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. It merely gives the government the authority to time that sale. We can buy oil high or buy oil low, but we should sell it higher.

All this amendment does—a commonsense, bipartisan amendment—is to say that whenever the oil is sold from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, it should be when the best price is fetched, if you will, for the taxpayers of the country. It is common sense. It protects taxpayers. It should be adopted.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, Senator CASSIDY and I have offered this amendment in order to correct a problem in the bill. Without this amendment, there would not be the kind of discipline which is necessary in order to make sure the Strategic Petroleum oil is sold strategically so that the Federal Government gets the best price for it, so that we sell high—or as high as we can—in order to limit the number of barrels of oil that ultimately will be sold so that we can keep as many as possible in the Strategic Petroleum Reserve.

In order to meet the budget objectives, this amendment satisfies it but also ensures that we keep the maximum number of barrels of oil remaining in the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. This is going to make millions—tens of millions of extra dollars for the Federal taxpayers because it will be done in a very smart way. We will be selling as high as possible because we bought this oil, for the most part, in a very high-priced marketplace.

Senator CASSIDY and I urge an ''aye'' vote on the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I appreciate the work of both Senators, who came together with a very commonsense amendment.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the 60-vote affirmative threshold for the Cassidy-Markey amendment be vitiated.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Is there further debate on the amendment?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 2954) was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2953, AS AMENDED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, amendment No. 2953, as amended, is agreed to.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order with respect to the vote on the motion to invoke cloture on S. 2012, upon reconsideration, be vitiated.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following leader remarks on Wednesday, April 20, the time until 10 a.m. be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; further, that at 10 a.m., the Senate vote on passage of S. 2012, as amended.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, this brings us to the end of the agreed-to votes on the amendments that required a rollcall, as well as the 29 various amendments that were accepted by voice en bloc. We have made extraordinary progress on a good, strong, bipartisan energy modernization bill. I thank colleagues for the process we have all engaged in today as we have worked to wrap up the final measures to allow us to move to final passage tomorrow morning.

MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Washington.

ENERGY POLICY MODERNIZATION BILL

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I thank my colleagues for a productive afternoon. We certainly improved the Senate Energy bill with a variety of amendments—the lands package specifically but other amendments as well, such as the energy savings by our colleagues, Senator ISAKSON and Senator BENNET.

I am very glad we are where we are today, and hopefully we will have this wrapped up very early tomorrow. I thank all our colleagues for their cooperation. I again thank the staff for getting us to this point today.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DAINES). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

OKLAHOMA CITY BOMBING ANNIVERSARY AND FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, in February of this year, Justice Scalia passed away. It was an enormous loss to the Nation.

In the hours and the days following that, Republicans in the Senate had the opportunity to talk about their constitutional responsibility—the responsibility of advice and consent. Supreme Court justices don't show up to the Supreme Court because the President just nominates them. In the Constitution, article II, section 2, lays out a 50–50 proposition.

The President has the first 50 percent. He narrows down his list, and he nominates.

The Senate then has the second 50 percent. They have the power of what is called advice and consent. The first half of that is when. Is this the right time to do a nominee? And with many nominees, historically—Ambassadors, Justices, Cabinet officers—the Senate has had a long delay to be able to say: No, this is not the right time.

So the first question is, Is this the right time? The second question is, Is this the right person? That is the process of advice and consent, and it has been for 200 years.

So what has happened since February? Since February, Republicans

have been very consistent—myself included—to say: This is not the time to have a Supreme Court Justice go through the nomination process. In the hours after Justice Scalia passed away, we made it very clear so that any nominee who went through the process, regardless of who they were, would know in advance this: You will not move to a hearing because it is not the right time. Of our two-part test—Is this the right time? Is this the right person?—the first part is not complete. It is not the right time. So this nominee will not move at all throughout this entire year, and everyone knew that in advance.

So I understand Republicans have talked about the first test on that, the priority of ''is this the right time?'' Democrats have focused on ''is this the right person?'' They have focused on Judge Garland as the nominee. They want to be able to raise and talk about his profile, and I get the politics of that. But it is just the politics of it. We would expect that banter back and forth on the politics, but this is a settled issue among Republicans. He will not move through the nomination process.

But we hit a new low today on this floor, and I had to come and address it. Today, this moved from a conversation about whether this is the right time and whether this is the right person to drawing in the memory of the 168 lives that were lost in Oklahoma City 21 years ago today—April 19, 1995. It was the worst act of terrorism at that time on American soil, carried out by another American, killing 168 people at the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. A Ryder truck loaded with fertilizer and diesel pulled up to the front and blew it up, killing 168.

Timothy McVeigh carried that out. He got into his Ford and drove north to leave out of the State. But 90 minutes later—90 minutes later—Trooper Charlie Hanger, who was just doing his job, saw a vehicle on I–35 without a license plate on it, pulled him over, found out he also had a weapon on him, and put him in jail to be able to hold him. Trooper Charlie Hanger, doing his job, actually arrested the person who had killed 168 people just 90 minutes before, not knowing it.

Local law enforcement and individuals quickly went through the debris trying to find individuals to save and evidence to be able to identify who this was. Within a few hours, they found the axle of the Ryder truck. They called the rental company. They identified it. They did a composite sketch, and they figured out within hours who this might be—a guy named Timothy McVeigh. Running a search on him, they figured out he was already in jail. He had been picked up by Trooper Charlie Hanger. Before he was released—because he was in the process of being released—they were able to hold him and unwind a horrific crime. It was incredible local law enforcement. It was an incredible task that happened.

Within 40 hours of that event occurring, a gentleman named Merrick Garland had come from DC, where he worked for the Department of Justice, to Oklahoma City to help on the Federal side of the prosecution, along with thousands of other people from around the country. Our State and our city was overwhelmed with the compassion of people around the country as we saw what happened, and Merrick Garland was one of those. We are grateful as a community for what he did in the prosecution of Timothy McVeigh, what he did against Terry Nichols, and what he did against Michael Fortier. We are grateful for his work there.

But today, on the floor of this Senate, the implication was laid out twofold. One is that, since Judge Garland served the country and did that, he deserves something else. I have never met Judge Garland. I will meet him next week and, quite frankly, look him in the face and say: Thank you for your service to Oklahoma.

To make clear again the same position before, there will be no nomination this year. He does deserve our gratitude. He doesn't deserve a lifetime appointment onto the bench because of his faithful service to our country and to our community as is being alluded to.

The politics of it really, really deeply struck me as an Oklahoman—that for some reason, today, of all days, the tragedy that happened to 168 people and their death 21 years ago suddenly became paraded out here as a political prop. One of the Senators was even standing with a picture of a dead child behind him like she is a prop. This child is not a prop for politics. She has a name. She was identified as a toddler. She was 1 year and 1 day old. She was killed in the Murrah Building the day after her 1-year birthday. She is not some random toddler. Her name is Baylee, and she is not to be used as a prop for politics in the Supreme Court nomination process.

It is absolutely fair game to talk about the record of Judge Garland and what he has done. We are grateful as Oklahomans for his service to our State and to our Nation to put away those awful terrorists. But to use a child who was killed in the Murrah Building bombing as a prop so far exceeds the line that I had to come and speak about it and say that I am absolutely offended—and I should be.

So it was 21 years ago today. We remember. It is a statement that comes up to Oklahomans over and over: We remember. We remember the victims. We remember the survivors. We remember the first responders. We remember the thousands of people who came from across the country to help us. We remember, and we will continue to remember. But don't do politics with the life and death of the children and adults in Oklahoma City. Let's keep this where it should be. We could have the debate about process. Do not draw this in.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

NOMINATION OF MICHAEL MISSAL

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I rise today to urge my colleagues to confirm Michael Missal, the nominee for the Department of Veterans Affairs inspector general.

For far too long, our Nation's veterans have been without a permanent watchdog in place to ensure the VA affords them the care that they deserve.

I have seen the damage that acting leadership in the VA Office of Inspector General has done in my own State of Wisconsin. Numerous veterans of the Tomah VA facility suffered for years through dangerous prescription practices, whistleblower retaliation, and a culture of fear. The VA Office of Inspector General, under acting leadership, conducted a multiyear investigation of the Tomah VA facility but then swept the allegations under the rug—the secret report that was hidden from veterans, the public, and Congress.

Months after the report was finalized and closed, Jason Simcakoski, a 35-year-old Marine Corps veteran, died of a lethal cocktail of over a dozen different drugs at the Tomah VA facility.

Another Wisconsin veteran, Thomas Behr, died after being treated at the Tomah VA facility. Mr. Behr's daughter Candace told me that had she known about the inspector general's report, she never would have taken her father to the facility and he might be alive today.

In other words, had the VA Office of Inspector General been transparent and published the findings of its investigation, these tragic outcomes could very well have been avoided.

Under acting leadership, the VA Office of Inspector General has tried to stonewall my investigation into the tragedies at Tomah VA medical facility. Its actions have shown that, under acting leadership, the VA Office of Inspector General has become too close to the VA, the agency it is charged with overseeing. The acting leadership lacked the fundamental tenets of transparency and accountability that all inspectors general should have that could literally mean the difference between life and death.

I was forced to resort to a subpoena to obtain the information about the investigation of the Tomah VA Office of Inspector General, and there are still some documents the acting leadership has refused to produce. For over a year, I have urged President Obama to appoint a permanent VA inspector general. I was pleased that President Obama finally heeded my calls—and, quite honestly, the calls of many of my colleagues—when he nominated Michael Missal to the position late last year. My committee, the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, moved his nomination after carefully considering his

qualifications, and we reported him out to the full Senate immediately.

I am hopeful that under Mr. Missal's leadership, the VA Office of Inspector General will restore veterans' trust in the inspector general's office, protect VA whistleblowers, and forge a new relationship with Congress, but above all else, I hope Mr. Missal will use his position to help ensure the finest among us receives the high-quality care they deserve.

I am confident Mr. Missal is up to the task, and I thank him for agreeing to serve in this supporting role.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 448 only, with no other executive business in order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Michael Joseph Missal, of Maryland, to be Inspector General, Department of Veterans Affairs.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on the nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Missal nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION ACT OF 2016

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, after months of debate and piecemeal short-term reauthorizations, the Senate has finally approved a comprehensive reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration, FAA, that will improve the safety and efficiency of our Nation's airline transportation system. The Federal Aviation Administration Act of 2016 will not only make airline travel safer and more efficient, it will also strengthen our economy by creating jobs and supporting those who rely on the benefits of airline transportation, day to day. From protecting the rights and safety of airline employees, to ensuring the needs of passengers with disabilities are recognized and upheld, this legislation takes necessary steps to improve travel experiences for all Americans.

I am especially pleased that the Federal Aviation Administration Act includes a number of policies that will benefit Vermont's airports, including the preservation of the Essential Air Service program, an important source of support for the Rutland-Southern Vermont Regional Airport. The bill also increases Airport Improvement Program funding, which is essential to the expansion and improvements of airports in Vermont and across the country. Also importantly, the bill will not privatize the Air Traffic Control System.

As the opportunities and challenges associated with new technology continue to evolve—both in NextGen implementation and use of drones—it is important that safety remains a top priority. This FAA reauthorization bill takes steps to address the safety and privacy concerns related to the widespread proliferation of unmanned aircraft within our domestic airspace. The legislation adds several provisions to increase safety by adding new technical and operational standards. For example, the bill requires the FAA and government agencies to collaborate with industry stakeholders to develop guidelines and procedures to ensure the safe integration of drones into the national airspace. I was also pleased that the bill addresses certain privacy concerns about the use of drones by requiring the FAA to establish a publicly accessible website containing information about commercial and government drone operations, the type of information those drones will collect, and how that information will be used. While the drone-related provisions in the bill are an improvement from the status quo, I believe that we must do more to ensure that safety and privacy safeguards are improved.

In Vermont, our airports are essential to a strong economy. They facilitate both tourism and commerce, and they are a source of economic growth for our communities. I am disappointed that, despite support from 99 other Senators, the objections of just one Senator prevented the passage of an amendment that would further facilitate travel and commerce between the United States and Canada, our largest trading partner. Expanding U.S. preclearance operations in Canada not only improves the travel experience for Americans traveling back and forth between Canada, but encourages neighbors to the north to visit the United States and infuses our economies through tourism and commerce. Importantly, it also furthers our national security. I will be looking for opportunities to advance this legislation moving forward.

The Federal Aviation Administration Act represents a strong step forward in keeping the U.S. airspace as the safest and most efficient in the world. I hope that, as the House takes up this important legislation, they will maintain the carefully balanced proposals included in the Senate bill.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I voted no on final passage of the FAA reauthorization bill because I was unable to offer my amendment to ensure that cargo pilots have the same rest and duty rules as passenger pilots.

Not only was I unable to secure a vote on my amendment, my offer to modify my amendment into a study by the National Transportation Safety Board was objected to by the other side. We should ensure that all pilots, whether they fly people or goods, have the same opportunities for rest. As this bill has many safety implications for our aviation system, I am very disappointed that my amendment did not receive consideration in the Senate.

However, I would like to thank the Senate Commerce Committee for their hard work on this bill, which includes many safety improvements, helpful consumer protections, and enhancements to airport security. I am particularly pleased that the bill includes a provision to ban the use of electronic cigarettes on board aircraft that I had asked to be included in this bill.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, today the Senate approved legislation to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration—FAA—for 18 months. I applaud the work of my colleagues, Senators THUNE and NELSON, and their staff who worked tirelessly to get this important legislation over the finish line. I hope leaders in the House of Representatives see what we passed here in the Senate and ensure smooth passage of the bill. This legislation truly represents bipartisan compromise. While it takes important steps forward, more work remains to be done to ensure the United States remains a global leader in aviation, safety, and innovation.

This legislation advanced many key priorities that I was proud to fight for. Aviation is a critical means of travel for people in my State and across the country, and I am confident that this legislation takes strides to improve the status quo for travelers.

I worked to advance provisions that help improve accessibility for persons with disabilities traveling through our Nation's commercial air system. The increased and improved data collected as a result of this legislation and the new advisory committee put in place will help fuel effective policies that enhance the traveling experience for persons with disabilities and remove barriers to accessibility.

The legislation will help improve the use of disadvantaged business enterprises in aviation infrastructure. I authored an amendment to align the size standard used by the Department of Transportation—DOT—to identify small businesses, with the metric used

by the Small Business Administration—SBA. This small update will enable more minority and women-owned businesses to compete for infrastructure work. This amendment had widespread support in the aviation construction industry including from the U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce, the Airport Minority Advisory Council, the National Association of Minority Contractors, and I was pleased to see it unanimously supported in this legislation.

I also joined colleagues on the floor and through my role on the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation to move the legislation forward on policies that embrace innovation and help the United States maintain global leadership when it comes to embracing new technology and integrating UAS into the national airspace.

From a floor amendment with Senator INHOFE that will improve the safe use of UAS to examine and maintain our critical infrastructure to amendments I championed in committee that will move the United States forward on new applications of micro-UAS, we took important strides forward. This technology has the power to enhance search and rescue, deliver humanitarian aid, improve agriculture practices, and news-gathering. I introduced the Commercial UAS Modernization Act to help advance this technology and was pleased to see many of our ideas incorporated in this reauthorization.

This legislation also includes provisions to bolster the use of test sites and further important research initiatives that will benefit safety, infrastructure, and aviation technology. New Jersey is home to the FAA's William J. Hughes Technical Center in Atlantic City and a UAS test site in Cape May. These sites play a key role in advancing aviation research and technology, and this legislation includes important provisions that ensure New Jersey will remain a leader in advancing aviation safety and R&D.

Lastly, I would like to discuss an area that is ripe for further congressional action: the Transportation Security Administration—TSA. The FAA reauthorization takes some steps towards stronger security, but more work needs to be done to advance our Nation's security, and TSA plays a critical role to these endeavors. I will continue to fight for accountability and further resources to this important entity that plays such an important role in keeping travelers safe and secure. We must ensure there are adequate resources and top-notch technologies deployed to our airports and our surface transportation systems.

Again, I thank my esteemed colleagues in Senate leadership and Senators THUNE and NELSON for their efforts on this important legislation. I know this will make a difference to my constituents in New Jersey and to people across the country.

Thank you.

OLDER AMERICANS ACT REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2016

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, recently the Senate marked a significant achievement—the final passage of the bipartisan reauthorization of the Older Americans Act—and now the President has signed it into law.

This act provides seniors access to home-delivered meals, like Meals on Wheels; seniors centers; transportation, like rides to the senior center and the grocery store; and meals served at senior centers and churches. Other services include caregiver support, preventive health services, job training and support, elder abuse prevention, and the long-term care ombudsman.

In 2012, Tennessee served 2.4 million meals to seniors through Older Americans Act programs.

This reauthorization also will make a few important improvements.

One, it will provide States, area agencies on aging, and service providers with information and technical assistance in collaboration with relevant Federal agencies, on providing efficient, person-centered transportation services, including across geographic boundaries.

That means that when a senior who lives Kentucky and wants to come see her doctor just over the border in Tennessee, it is easier for her to get that ride.

Two, this bill addresses the tragic issue of elder abuse with provisions for the prevention of abuse, neglect, and exploitation. It bolsters services that address elder justice and exploitation of older individuals, including financial exploitation, which can be devastating to a senior's ability to stay independent and in his own home.

Three, this bill ensures States receive funding based on their senior population. Senator RICHARD BURR worked hard with me on this, and we have him to thank for this update.

This bill is the product of several years of bipartisan collaboration and compromise. This legislation protects and strengthens the underlying law's many vital programs. I look forward to seeing S. 192 signed into law, and now I would like to yield to my colleague, Senator BURR.

Mr. BURR. I would also like to thank my colleagues, particularly Chairman ALEXANDER, Ranking Member MURRAY, and Senator SANDERS, for their partnership in working with me to reauthorize the Older Americans Act. I am pleased that our efforts have resulted in sending a strong reauthorization of the Older Americans Act to the President's desk. The reauthorization of these critical support programs for seniors has been a process that each of us has been actively involved in over the last few years, and I am proud to see this bipartisan piece of legislation on its way to becoming law.

I want to focus on a key aspect of this reauthorization for my constituents—the change in the funding formula. In 2010, the Government Accountability Office, GAO, determined that the formula responsible for the allocation of State funding in the OAA was broken. It took us 6 years to act, and I am pleased to see this important change included in the OAA reauthorization, allowing funds to be directed where they are most needed. This is a commonsense, but critical change for better ensuring that the dollars are following the needs.

This change is especially important for North Carolina's seniors. The change in the formula calculation will increase resources for these programs in North Carolina and other States where seniors have moved since the last reauthorization of the Older Americans Act, a decade ago. As more and more seniors make North Carolina their home, this will help ensure that resources are being more fairly allocated based on the needs of seniors today and in the future, which is a key aspect of helping some of our most vulnerable seniors age with the dignity and respect they deserve.

I often hear from my constituents—area agencies on aging, PACE program directors, and North Carolinians themselves—about the benefits that come from the programs authorized by the Older Americans Act. The continuation of these programs, which provide meals, caregiver supports, and help seniors stay in the comfort of their homes and local communities longer positively impacts the lives of millions of seniors every day. With the passage of this legislation, almost 2 million North Carolina seniors may be able to benefit from State and local programs that provide needed support for them and their families. I am proud to have fought on behalf of North Carolina's seniors for the improvements reflected in this reauthorization bill, and I look forward to continuing to work to improve the quality of life for my constituents.

Mr. ALEXANDER. In addition to providing grants to States for senior social and nutrition services, this reauthorization also aims to continue protecting vulnerable elders from abuse by ensuring access to abuse screening and prevention through efforts like the Senior Medicare Patrol, SMP, program, which helps train seniors to recognize and protect themselves from Medicare and Medicaid fraud. The most recent inspector general report noted that the program had educated over 3.5 million beneficiaries, reached 27 million people, and saved about $106 million.

The programs authorized by this law provide critical services to help Americans live with dignity well into their later years, but these services also provide a significant return on investment for taxpayers.

They help decrease the increasing cost pressures on Medicare and Medicaid. These programs that help seniors stay healthy, independent, and living

in their own homes also are helping seniors stay where they want to be—and that is less expensive for taxpayers than if these seniors were instead in nursing homes.

Mr. ENZI. I would also like to highlight the National Resource Center for Women and Retirement as a highly successful program run by the Women's Institute for a Secure Retirement—known to most as ''WISER''—a nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring the security of women's retirement income through outreach, partnerships, and policy development. The staff and programs at WISER have provided important and effective trainings and education in my home State of Wyoming, as well as around the country.

Mr. ALEXANDER. For more than 50 years, the Older Americans Act has been effective in large part because these successful programs are funded through flexible grants to States. States know best what services will be most beneficial for their residents to live healthier, more independent lives as they age.

I want to thank Senator MURRAY for working with me on this bill in our committee.

I want to thank Senator COLLINS, whose leadership on the Special Committee on Aging was instrumental. Her determination to help seniors stay home and independent helped us get this bill through the full Senate.

I want to thank Senator BURR for his determination to get a result on the funding issue.

Finally, I would like to thank Senator SANDERS for his tireless work on this issue and on this bill.

NATIONAL CONGENITAL DIAPHRAGMATIC HERNIA AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, today I wish to discuss S. Res. 408. I am delighted that the Senate has unanimously declared April as National Congenital Diaphragmatic Hernia Awareness Month for the fourth consecutive year. I would like to thank my friend and able colleague, Senator BEN CARDIN of Maryland, for joining me in this legislation. This resolution is very important to me and my family as my grandson Jim Beau is a CDH survivor.

I specifically wanted to speak today, April 19, to commemorate Congenital Diaphragmatic Hernia Action Day. Charities and families in 60 countries and cities all over the U.S. are working together to raise CDH Awareness through State and town proclamations, lighted buildings, Parades of Cherubs, fundraisers, and other events.

CDH is a birth defect that occurs when the fetal diaphragm fails to fully develop. The lungs develop at the same time as the diaphragm and the digestive system. When a diaphragmatic hernia occurs, the abdominal organs move into and develop in the chest instead of remaining in the abdomen. With the heart, lungs, and abdominal organs all taking up space in the chest, the lungs do not have space to develop properly. This may cause the lungs to be small and underdeveloped.

A diaphragmatic hernia is a life-threatening condition. When the lungs do not develop properly during pregnancy, it can be difficult for the baby to breathe after birth, or the baby is unable to take in enough oxygen to stay healthy.

Several members from the CHERUBS group visited my office yesterday. I was encouraged by their good spirit and enthusiasm. These individuals have been coming to Capitol Hill every year for the last several years to advocate for Federal assistance for this birth defect. Over the last 4 years, we have made good progress.

We have seen an increase in funding at the National Institutes of Health, NIH. In fiscal year 2015, the NIH funded approximately $3,300,000 in CDH research. This is an increase of $800,000 from fiscal year 2014. We have also seen an increase in awareness and education. But more research is needed. The cause of CDH remains unknown. Most cases of diaphragmatic hernia are believed to be multifactorial in origin, meaning both genetic and environmental factors are involved. It is thought that multiple genes from both parents, as well as a number of environmental factors that scientists do not yet fully understand, contribute to the development of a diaphragmatic hernia.

Congenital diaphragmatic hernia is a birth defect that occurs in 1 out of every 3,836 live births worldwide.

The CDC estimates that CDH affects 1,088 babies in the U.S. each year.

Every 10 minutes, a baby is born with CDH, adding up to more than 700,000 babies with CDH since just 2000; yet most people have never heard of CDH.

Up to 20 percent of cases of CDH have a genetic cause due to a chromosome defect or genetic syndrome.

According to the CDC, babies born with CDH experience a high mortality rate ranging from 20–60 percent depending on the severity of the defect and the treatments available at delivery. The mortality rate has remained stable since 1999.

Approximately 40 percent of babies born with CDH will have other birth defects, in addition to CDH. The most common is a congenital heart defect.

Awareness, good prenatal care, early diagnosis, and skilled treatment are the keys to a greater survival rate in these babies. That is why this resolution is so important.

In 2009, my grandson Jim Beau was diagnosed with CDH during my daughter Mary Abigail's 34th week of pregnancy. At that time, no one in my family had heard of CDH before. My family was very lucky that Jim Beau's defect was caught before he was born and that he was in the right place to receive excellent care for his CDH.

He is now a happy, rambunctious 6-year-old.

The resolution Senator CARDIN and I introduced is important because it will bring awareness to this birth defect, and this awareness will save lives. Although hundreds of thousands of babies have been diagnosed with this defect, the causes are still unknown, and more research is needed. Every year more is learned and there are more successes. We are making good progress, and we must continue these efforts.

I want to thank my colleagues for joining me in supporting this legislation to bring awareness to CDH.

I thank the Chair.

TRIBUTE TO LARRY MACDONALD

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Larry MacDonald as he retires from the city of Bayfield, WI, after an impressive 20 years as the city's mayor. Since his election in 1994, Larry has dedicated himself to improving the city of Bayfield and making it a wonderful destination in northwestern Wisconsin.

Larry was born in Munich, Germany, to American parents. After growing up in the Twin Cities area of Minnesota, Larry and his wife, Julie, moved to Bayfield in 1989. They opened Cooper Hill House B&B, contributing to Bayfield's tradition of welcoming visitors from across the State to beautiful Bayfield County. The MacDonalds also opened the Apostle Islands Outfitters that, for close to two decades, supported Bayfield and the city's practice of providing outstanding outdoor recreation opportunities to residents and tourists alike.

While he has served as mayor for 20 years, Larry's career in public service began as a casual interest in local government. However, as a proactive politician, a committed environmentalist, and a savvy businessman, Larry's casual interest quickly grew into a remarkable passion for his work and dedication to his city. Over the past two decades and despite an ill-fated attempt at retirement in 2004, Larry has influenced all aspects of the Bayfield community.

The city of Bayfield is the smallest city in Wisconsin, but one of our most popular destinations. A beautiful city located on Lake Superior, Bayfield draws visitors from across the State. When others would be daunted, he faced head-on the challenges of a local economy based on tourism, working with local organizations and listening closely to his community. Larry also dedicated his career to maintaining the natural beauty of Lake Superior and the Apostle Islands through his work as a board member of the Alliance of the Great Lakes and the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore. As mayor, he led the city to be one of the first in the Nation to adopt an eco-municipality resolution, thereby codifying its commitment to sustainability, setting an example for others to follow, and preserving Bayfield's natural resources for generations to come.

Larry's involvement in the community goes beyond his work as mayor. His many civic contributions include roles as master of ceremonies for the Bayfield Apple Festival for many years, an avid participant in the Big Top Chautauqua annual Pie & Politics event, and a regular contributor to the Bayfield School Reading Days. Larry's influence can be seen throughout the city, whether it is through his community work, the time he has spent working at his family's business interests, or simply enjoying the city.

However, when he looks back on his many roles in life, his greatest accomplishment will be his 20 years of service as mayor. Larry himself describes it as the best job he ever had. While he attributes his success to the Bayfield community, the city council and his dedicated staff, Larry's success comes from his own will. His investment in his staff, his honesty and involvement, and his personal touch are what spurred Bayfield residents to return him to office year after year. Although in retirement he will no longer be in the mayor's office, Larry's legacy will remain.

Over the past 20 years, Larry has impacted Bayfield residents and the community around him through his dedication, honest nature, and kind heart. I am so pleased to join others in recognizing Larry's success and accomplishments. I wish him, his wife, Julie, their children, many grandchildren and great-grandchildren all the best in the next chapter of their lives together.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL THOMPSON

• Mr, SCOTT. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate and recognize Mr. Michael Thompson of Greenville, SC, for receiving one of Scouting's highest honors—the Distinguished Eagle Scout Award. This is a significant achievement and a testament to his continued service to our country, State, and especially to the South Carolina community.

As sitting president of the Blue Ridge Council Boy Scouts, Michael Thompson's love for service and the community, as well as his many achievements, place him in the company of other great individuals who have received this award, such as President Gerald Ford, Neil Armstrong, and former Secretary of Defense Dr. Robert Gates, to name a few. His involvement in the Upstate community represents what it truly means to be an outstanding leader.

It is with pride and honor that we recognize Mr. Michael Thompson and his outstanding achievements today and add his legacy to our April 19, 2016, Congressional Record. We will always remember his admiration for the community, the Upstate, and above all for the scouts.•

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNTAIN INN WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH

• Mr. SCOTT. Mr. President, today I wish to honor one of South Carolina's most impactful ministries, the Fountain Inn Wesleyan Methodist Church. Celebrating 100 years of faith and teachings on April 24, 2016, the church has remained dedicated to its vision, ''To exalt Jesus Christ by Evangelizing the Lost, Disciplining Believers, Equipping the Church, and Ministering to the Community,'' and intends to continue on this path for years to come.

Evangelist Rev. J.M. Hames first organized the church in 1916, and its official name, the Wesleyan Church, was obtained in 1968 following mergers with several other denominations. Following a tent revival meeting at the start of its history, the church began as a place of worship for workers and residents of the Woodside Mill Village community. It was later provided its permanent place of worship when the Woodside Mill company deeded the building and property to the Wesleyan Methodist Church.

Despite many changes incurred over time, including the leadership of 21 pastors, the church has continued to serve the community without straying from its initial mission. The Fountain Inn Wesleyan Methodist Church has remained a consistent source of guidance for its community and has brought many individuals to know the Lord throughout its history.

It is with honor and admiration that we recognize the Fountain Inn Wesleyan Methodist Church and its great impact, adding its legacy to our April 19, 2016, Congressional Record.•

TRIBUTE TO SOPHIE DOEDEN

• Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize Sophie Doeden, an intern in my Aberdeen, SD, office for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Sophie is a graduate of Beresford High School in Beresford, SD. Currently, Sophie is attending Northern State University, where she is majoring in political science. Sophie is a dedicated worker who has been committed to getting the most out of her experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Sophie Doeden for all of the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.•

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

REPORT RELATIVE TO THE ISSUANCE OF AN EXECUTIVE ORDER EXPANDING THE SCOPE OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13566 OF FEBRUARY 25, 2011, WITH RESPECT TO LIBYA—PM 46

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:

Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*) (IEEPA), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order (the ''order'') expanding the scope of the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13566 of February 25, 2011, with respect to the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States posed by the situation in Libya.

In the order, I find that the ongoing violence in Libya, including attacks by armed groups against Libyan state facilities, foreign missions in Libya, and critical infrastructure, as well as human rights abuses, violations of the arms embargo imposed by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1970 (2011), and misappropriation of Libya's natural resources threaten the peace, security, stability, sovereignty, democratic transition, and territorial integrity of Libya, and thereby constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. The order blocks the property and interests in property of persons determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State:

• to be responsible for or complicit in, or to have engaged in, directly or indirectly, any of the following:

○ actions or policies that threaten the peace, security, or stability of Libya, including through the supply of arms or related materiel;

○ actions or policies that obstruct, undermine, delay, or impede, or pose a significant risk of obstructing, undermining, delaying, or impeding, the adoption of or political transition to a Government of National Accord or a successor government;

○ actions that may lead to or result in the misappropriation of state assets of Libya; or

○ threatening or coercing Libyan state financial institutions or the Libyan National Oil Company;

• to be planning, directing, or committing or to have planned, directed, or committed, attacks against any Libyan state facility or installation (including oil facilities), against any air, land, or sea port in Libya, or against any foreign mission in Libya;

• to be involved in, or to have been involved in, the targeting of civilians through the commission of acts of violence, abduction, forced displacement, or attacks on schools, hospitals, religious sites, or locations where civilians are seeking refuge, or through conduct that would constitute a serious abuse or violation of human rights or a violation of international humanitarian law;

• to be involved in, or to have been involved in, the illicit exploitation of crude oil or any other natural resources in Libya, including the illicit production, refining, brokering, sale, purchase, or export of Libyan oil;

• to be a leader of an entity that has, or whose members have, engaged in any activity described above;

• to have materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, logistical, or technological support for, or goods or services in support of any of the activities described above or any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order; or

• to be owned or controlled by, or to have acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order.

In addition, the order suspends entry into the United States of any alien determined to meet one or more of the above criteria.

I have delegated to the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, the authority to take such actions, including the promulgation of rules and regulations, and to employ all powers granted to the President by IEEPA as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the order. All agencies of the United States Government are directed to take all appropriate measures within their authority to carry out the provisions of the order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *April 19, 2016*.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:42 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, without amendment:

S. 719. An act to rename the Armed Forces Reserve Center in Great Falls, Montana, the Captain John E. Moran and Captain William Wylie Galt Armed Forces Reserve Center.

S. 1638. An act to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to submit to Congress information on the Department of Homeland Security headquarters consolidation project in the National Capital Region, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2928. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 201 B Street in Perryville, Arkansas, as the ''Harold George Bennett Post Office''.

H.R. 3866. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1265 Hurffville Road in Deptford Township, New Jersey, as the ''First Lieutenant Salvatore S. Corma II Post Office Building''.

H.R. 4570. An act to amend the Department of Agriculture program for research and extension grants to increase participation by women and underrepresented minorities in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to redesignate the program as the ''Jeannette Rankin Women and Minorities in STEM Fields Program''.

H.R. 4605. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 615 6th Avenue SE in Cedar Rapids, Iowa as the ''Sgt. 1st Class Terryl L. Pasker Post Office Building''.

H.R. 4618. An act 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''.

The message further announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 119. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby.

The message also announced that pursuant to section 803(a) of the Congressional Recognition for Excellence in Arts Education Act (2 U.S.C. 803(a)), the Minority Leader appoints the following Member of the House of Representatives to the Congressional Award Board: DEBBIE DINGELL of Michigan.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 2928. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 201 B Street in Perryville, Arkansas, as the ''Harold George Bennett Post Office''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 3866. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1265 Hurffville Road in Deptford Township, New Jersey, as the ''First Lieutenant Salvatore S. Corma II Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 4570. An act to amend the Department of Agriculture program for research and extension grants to increase participation by women and underrepresented minorities in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to redesignate the program as the ''Jeannette Rankin Women and Minorities in STEM Fields Program''; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

H.R. 4605. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 615 6th Avenue SE in Cedar Rapids, Iowa as the ''Sgt. 1st Class Terryl L. Pasker Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 4618. An act 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''; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

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. MCCAIN (by request):

S. 2814. A bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2017 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mr. TOOMEY, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 2815. A bill to establish the United States Semiquincentennial Commission, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CARPER (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mrs. BOXER):

S. 2816. A bill to reauthorize the diesel emissions reduction program; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. PETERS:

S. 2817. A bill to improve understanding and forecasting of space weather events, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. REED:

S. 2818. A bill to reduce housing-related health hazards, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. REED:

S. 2819. A bill to establish the Council on Healthy Housing and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. WICKER (for himself, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CASEY, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. DAINES, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. ENZI, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. KIRK, Mr. KING, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. MORAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. PETERS, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. UDALL, Mr. VITTER, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. ERNST, and Mr. INHOFE):

S. Res. 431. A resolution recognizing the immeasurable benefits of the national 4–H program to the young people of the United States and supporting the campaign to expand the 4–H program; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. Con. Res. 35. A concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the United States should continue to exercise its veto in the United Nations Security Council on resolutions regarding the Israeli-Palestinian peace process; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 53

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 53, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue

Code of 1986 to clarify eligibility for the child tax credit.

S. 91

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of S. 91, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow refunds of Federal motor fuel excise taxes on fuels used in mobile mammography vehicles.

S. 290

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 290, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the accountability of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 386

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 386, a bill to limit the authority of States to tax certain income of employees for employment duties performed in other States.

S. 391

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 391, a bill to preserve and protect the free choice of individual employees to form, join, or assist labor organizations, or to refrain from such activities.

S. 677

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 677, a bill to prohibit the application of certain restrictive eligibility requirements to foreign nongovernmental organizations with respect to the provision of assistance under part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

S. 979

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the names of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) and the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) were added as cosponsors of S. 979, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan by veterans' dependency and indemnity compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 1002

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1002, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for collegiate housing and infrastructure grants.

S. 1555

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1555, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Filipino veterans of World War II, in recognition of the dedicated service of the veterans during World War II.

S. 1566

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1566, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to require group and individual health insurance coverage and group health plans to provide for coverage of oral anticancer drugs on terms no less favorable than the coverage provided for anticancer medications administered by a health care provider.

S. 1567

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1567, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for a review of the characterization or terms of discharge from the Armed Forces of individuals with mental health disorders alleged to affect terms of discharge.

S. 1856

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1856, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for suspension and removal of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs for performance or misconduct that is a threat to public health or safety and to improve accountability of employees of the Department, and for other purposes.

S. 1982

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1982, a bill to authorize a Wall of Remembrance as part of the Korean War Veterans Memorial and to allow certain private contributions to fund the Wall of Remembrance.

S. 2108

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2108, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for an extension of certain long-term care hospital payment rules and the moratorium on the establishment of certain hospitals and facilities.

S. 2151

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2151, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide liability protections for volunteer practitioners at health centers under section 330 of such Act.

S. 2217

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2217, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to improve and clarify certain disclosure requirements for restaurants and similar retail food establishments, and to amend the authority to bring proceedings under section 403A.

S. 2291

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2291, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish procedures within the Department of Veterans Affairs for the processing of whistleblower complaints, and for other purposes.

S. 2613

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2613, a bill to reauthorize certain programs established by the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006.

S. 2640

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2640, a bill to amend the market name of genetically altered salmon in the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 2659

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2659, a bill to reaffirm that the Environmental Protection Agency cannot regulate vehicles used solely for competition, and for other purposes.

S. 2680

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) and the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2680, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide comprehensive mental health reform, and for other purposes.

S. 2702

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2702, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow individuals with disabilities to save additional amounts in their ABLE accounts above the current annual maximum contribution if they work and earn income.

S. 2707

At the request of Mr. SCOTT, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 2707, a bill to require the Secretary of Labor to nullify the proposed rule regarding defining and delimiting the exemptions for executive, administrative, professional, outside sales, and computer employees, to require the Secretary of Labor to conduct a full and complete economic analysis with improved economic data on small businesses, nonprofit employers, Medicare or Medicaid dependent health care providers, and small governmental jurisdictions, and all other employers, and minimize the impact on such employers, before promulgating any substantially similar rule, and to provide a rule of construction regarding the salary threshold exemption

under the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, and for other purposes.

S. 2746

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2746, a bill to establish various prohibitions regarding the transfer or release of individuals detained at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and with respect to United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, and for other purposes.

S. 2750

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) and the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2750, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code to extend and modify certain charitable tax provisions.

S. 2782

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2782, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the participation of pediatric subspecialists in the National Health Service Corps program, and for other purposes.

S. 2788

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2788, a bill to prohibit closure of United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to prohibit the transfer or release of detainees at that Naval Station to the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 2790

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2790, a bill to provide requirements for the appropriate Federal banking agencies when requesting or ordering a depository institution to terminate a specific customer account, to provide for additional requirements related to subpoenas issued under the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery, and Enforcement Act of 1989, and for other purposes.

S. 2808

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2808, a bill to amend the John F. Kennedy Center Act to authorize appropriations for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

S.J. RES. 33

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the names of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) and the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. CORKER) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 33, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to the definition of the term ''fiduciary'' and the conflict of interest rule with respect to retirement investment advice.

S. RES. 368

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 368, a resolution supporting efforts by the Government of Colombia to pursue peace and the end of the country's enduring internal armed conflict and recognizing United States support for Colombia at the 15th anniversary of Plan Colombia.

S. RES. 373

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the names of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 373, a resolution recognizing the historical significance of Executive Order 9066 and expressing the sense of the Senate that policies that discriminate against any individual based on the actual or perceived race, ethnicity, national origin, or religion of that individual would be a repetition of the mistakes of Executive Order 9066 and contrary to the values of the United States.

AMENDMENT NO. 3787

At the request of Mr. MCCONNELL, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3787 proposed to S. 2012, an original bill to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. REED:

S. 2818. A bill to reduce housing-related health hazards, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today I am introducing two bills pertaining to healthy housing, the Healthy Housing Council Act and the Title X Amendments Act. These bills seek to improve federal coordination of healthy housing efforts and better integrate healthy housing activities into the ongoing lead poisoning prevention work at the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The crisis in Flint, Michigan reaffirms a tragic reality; millions of Americans, including thousands of children and families in Rhode Island, remain at risk from lead exposure. For example, Rhode Island has the highest percentage of low-income children living in older housing, which poses health risks for these children because of the lead paint used in these older homes. Fortunately, Rhode Island has been a national leader in working to reduce lead hazards and bring down childhood lead poisoning rates. The number of children with elevated blood lead levels has been steadily declining in all areas of Rhode Island over the last decade, from 212 children under the age of 6 in 2005 to 42 children in 2015. But as we have seen this year with the tragedy in Flint, MI, lead poisoning among children is still a huge problem in this country. This is unacceptable, which is why I have long sought to improve and maximize federal finding for lead poisoning prevention programs.

The Title X Amendments Act makes important improvements to lead poisoning prevention programs at HUD to better serve low income families at risk for lead poisoning. It would provide HUD with the necessary authority to continue to carry out healthy housing activities while protecting important ongoing lead remediation efforts, allow grantees to improve the conditions in zero-bedroom units, and streamline eligibility for assistance. These are simple, yet necessary reforms designed to improve and expand cost-effective services, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to see them enacted.

It is also vital that we continue the type of collaboration and coordination among Federal departments and agencies, like HUD, HHS, EPA, and CDC, that resulted in the Strategy for Action to Advance Healthy Homes. Indeed, there are many programs fragmented across multiple agencies that are responsible for addressing housing-related health hazards like lead and radon, and we should strive to improve the efficiency and efficacy of these efforts by ensuring that these agencies continue to work together.

The Healthy Housing Council Act would establish an independent interagency Council on Healthy Housing in the executive branch in order to improve coordination, bring existing efforts out of their respective silos, and reduce duplication.

The bill calls for the council to convene periodic meetings with experts in the public and private sectors to discuss ways to educate individuals and families on how to recognize housing-related health hazards and access the necessary services and preventive measures to combat these hazards. The council would also be required to hold biannual stakeholder meetings, maintain an updated website, and work to unify healthy housing data collection.

In addition to the 23 million homes with lead-based paint hazards, there are nearly 6 million households with moderate or severe health hazards, resulting in approximately 22,600 unintentional injury and fire deaths and 21,000 radon-associated lung cancer deaths every year. These bills seek to tackle these numbers, which contribute to increasing health care costs for individuals and families, as well as for Federal, State, and local governments.

The presence of housing-related health hazards is often overlooked and yet these hazards are sometimes the cause of a variety of preventable diseases and conditions like cancer, lead poisoning, and asthma. Promoting low-cost measures to eliminate subpar housing can make a dramatic and meaningful difference in the lives of children and families and help reduce

health care costs. I am pleased that the National Center for Healthy Housing supports both of these bills and I look forward to working with my colleagues to move this legislation forward.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 431—RECOGNIZING THE IMMEASURABLE BENEFITS OF THE NATIONAL 4-H PROGRAM TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES AND SUPPORTING THE CAMPAIGN TO EXPAND THE 4-H PROGRAM

Mr. WICKER (for himself, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CASEY, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. DAINES, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. ENZI, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. KIRK, Mr. KING, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. MORAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. PETERS, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. UDALL, Mr. VITTER, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. ERNST, and Mr. INHOFE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 431

Whereas in the late 1800s, 4-H clubs developed in rural communities to promote agricultural education among young people;

Whereas the Smith-Lever Act (7 U.S.C. 341 et seq.) established the cooperative extension services, which resulted in a national 4-H program;

Whereas the 4-H program and pledge are based on the values of community service, public leadership, and healthful living;

Whereas 4-H has played an indispensable role in shaping the lives of young leaders in rural areas of the United States for over 100 years;

Whereas nearly 6,000,000 young people are currently involved in 4-H, 40 percent of whom are from urban and suburban backgrounds;

Whereas the 4-H program has evolved to include opportunities for 4-H youth to become proficient in—

(1) science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM); and

(2) citizenship and public speaking;

Whereas young people who participate in 4-H are twice as likely as their peers who are not involved in 4-H—

(1) to be civically engaged;

(2) to participate in science, engineering, and computer technology programs outside of school; and

(3) to make healthful life choices;

Whereas the National 4-H Congress, National 4-H Conference, and Citizenship Washington Focus give hundreds of young people who participate in 4-H the opportunity to exercise leadership skills nationally and to learn about the history and government of the United States; and

Whereas in April 2016, the National 4-H Council launched a ''Grow True Leaders'' campaign to expand the benefits of 4-H to more communities, with the goal of creating 10,000,000 True Leaders by 2025: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes 4-H as a vital organization for training the next generation for national leadership;

(2) congratulates the National 4-H Council on its ''Grow True Leaders'' campaign; and

(3) supports the efforts of the National 4-H Council to grow and diversify the 4-H program.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 35—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THE UNITED STATES SHOULD CONTINUE TO EXERCISE ITS VETO IN THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL ON RESOLUTIONS REGARDING THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN PEACE PROCESS

Mr. RUBIO (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. CON. RES. 35

Whereas it is long-standing practice of the United States Government that a peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict must come through direct, bilateral negotiations between the two parties;

Whereas President Barack Obama has stated this longstanding practice at the United Nations General Assembly in 2011, expressing ''genuine peace can only be realized between the Israelis and the Palestinians themselves'';

Whereas it is long-standing practice of the United States Government to veto any United Nations Security Council resolution dictating terms, conditions, and timelines on the peace process;

Whereas President Barack Obama also expressed before the United Nations General Assembly in 2011, that ''peace will not come through statements and resolutions at the United Nations – if it were that easy, it would have been accomplished by now'';

Whereas Yasser Arafat committed by letter dated September 9, 1993, to then Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, ''The PLO commits itself to the Middle East peace process and to the peaceful resolution of the conflict between the two sides and declares that all outstanding issues relating to permanent status will be resolved by negotiation.'';

Whereas the United States has vetoed 42 unconstructive, anti-Israel resolutions in the United Nations Security Council since 1972;

Whereas after the United States voted against a resolution on Palestinian statehood, the United States Ambassador to the United Nations, Samantha Power, said the proposal was ''deeply unbalanced'', had ''unconstructive deadlines'', and failed to take ''account of Israel's security concerns'';

Whereas the United Nations is not the appropriate venue and should not be a forum used for seeking unilateral action, recognition, or dictating guidelines on the Israeli–Palestinian peace process;

Whereas in the two most recently completed United Nations General Assembly sessions, 21 of the 25 (68th Session) and 20 of the 23 (69th Session) resolutions attacked Israel;

Whereas the human rights bodies and agencies of the United Nations, such as the United Nations Human Rights Council, have consistently demonstrated unwarranted bias against Israel; and

Whereas since 2006, 7 of the 23 Council's sessions have focused on Israel and 61 of their 116 condemnations have unfairly singled out and targeted Israel: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) a durable resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian peace process can only come through direct, bilateral negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians;

(2) the United Nations cannot be a truly neutral arbiter of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; and

(3) the United States Government should continue to uphold its practice of vetoing any United Nations Security Council resolution that inserts the Council into the peace process, unilaterally recognizes a Palestinian state, makes declarations concerning Israeli controlled territories, or dictates terms and a timeline for the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3799. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend title 49, United States Code, to authorize appropriations for the Federal Aviation Administration for fiscal years 2016 through 2017, and for other purposes.

SA 3800. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3799. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 636, to amend title 49, United States Code, to authorize appropriations for the Federal Aviation Administration for fiscal years 2016 through 2017, and for other purposes; as follows:

Amend the title so as to read: ''An Act to amend title 49, United States Code, to authorize appropriations for the Federal Aviation Administration for fiscal years 2016 through 2017, and for other purposes.''.

SA 3800. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3679 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. NELSON)) to the bill H.R. 636, to amend title 49, United States Code, to authorize appropriations for the Federal Aviation Administration for fiscal years 2016 through 2017, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. REIMBURSEMENT FOR AIRPORT SECURITY PROJECTS.

Paragraph (3) of section 44923(h) is amended to read as follows:

''(3) DISCRETIONARY GRANTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Of the amount made available under paragraph (1) for a fiscal year, up to $ 50,000,000 shall be used to make discretionary grants, including other transaction agreements for airport security improvement projects, with priority given to small hub airports and nonhub airports.

''(B) REIMBURSEMENT.—For each of the fiscal years 2018 through 2022, of the amount available under paragraph (1), up to $10,000,000 shall be made available for reimbursement to airports that have incurred eligible costs under section 1604(b)(2) of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (Public Law 110–53; 121 Stat. 481).''.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 19, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. ISAKSON. 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 April 19, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD–406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled, ''Examining the President's FY 2017 budget request for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 19, 2016, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled, ''Central America and the Alliance for Prosperity: Identifying U.S. Priorities and Assessing Progress.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. ISAKSON. 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 April 19, 2016, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled, ''Preventing Drug Trafficking through International Mail.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 19, 2016, at 2:30 p.m., in room SH–2196 of the Hart Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 19, 2016, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Coast Guard Fellow, John Ariail, in Senator COCHRAN's office, be granted floor privileges through the remainder of the 114th Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Marion Wittmann, a fellow in my office, be given floor privileges for the remainder of this session of the Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FALLEN HEROES FLAG ACT OF 2016

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Senate Rules and Administration be discharged from further consideration of S. 2755 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2755) to provide Capitol-flown flags to the immediate family of firefighters, law enforcement officers, members of rescue squads or ambulance crews, and public safety officers who are killed in the line of duty.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to support the Fallen Heroes Flag Act of 2016, S. 2755. This bipartisan legislation will create a program to provide Capitol-flown flags to the immediate family members of firefighters, law enforcement officers, members of rescue squads or ambulance crews, and public safety officers who are killed in the line of duty. These flags are provided at no cost to the family and will come with a certificate from the Senate, signed by the providing Member and President pro tempore, which contains our expression of sympathy for the grieving family. Certificates coming from the other body will be signed by the Speaker of the House and the providing House Member and express the sympathy of the House of Representatives.

I hope all my colleagues will join me in support of this legislation. Our first responders make tremendous sacrifices for our communities. If one of them makes the ultimate sacrifice, the least we can do to recognize their life, show our gratitude, and express our sympathy for their family is present them with a flag flown over this building.

Under existing rules, Senate offices may not use official funds to send flags to individuals. This legislation authorizes a new program, administered by the Architect of the Capitol, that will make it possible for families who have lost a loved one in these circumstances to request and receive a Capitol-flown flag at no expense. We are all grateful for the sacrifices these dedicated public servants make every day to serve and protect our communities, and this legislation will make it possible to present grieving families with a symbol of our gratitude.

This legislation has been endorsed by the National Fraternal Order of Police and the Sergeants Benevolent Association. I ask unanimous consent that their letters of support be printed in the RECORD following my statement.

I would like to thank all my colleagues who cosponsored this legislation, particularly our ranking member of the Rules Committee, Senator SCHUMER. I would also like to thank Congressman PETER KING, who has championed this cause in the other body for many years. This legislation includes some revisions to the previously passed version in the House, but I expect they will be agreeable to the other body.

I hope both bodies will pass this legislation quickly and send it on to the President for his signature.

Thank you.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

SERGEANTS BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION, POLICE DEPARTMENT, CITY OF NEW YORK,
New York, NY, April 7, 2016.

Hon. ROY BLUNT,
Chairman, Committee on Rules,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. CHARLES SCHUMER,
Ranking Member, Committee on Rules,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN AND SENATOR SCHUMER, I am writing on behalf of the more than 13,000 active and retired members of the Sergeants Benevolent Association of the New York City Police Department to advise you of our strong support for the ''Fallen Heroes Flag Act.'' We appreciate your leadership on this legislation to honor those law enforcement officers and other first responders who have lost their lives protecting their fellow citizens.

In the first four months of 2016 alone, thirty federal, state, and local law enforcement officers have fallen in the line of duty. According to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, sixteen of these officers perished in firearms-related incidents. Statistics such as these are a sobering reminder of the sacrifices that are made daily by our first responders. These men and women, as well as countless others who have lost their lives in the line of duty, have earned the right to be honored for their heroism.

The legislation that you have introduced would provide this opportunity by allowing the surviving family of a law enforcement officer, firefighter, or EMT who dies in the line of duty to request that an American flag be flown over the U.S. Capitol in honor of their fallen family member. The flag would be provided to the family without cost, and would include a signed certificate with an expression of sympathy for the family involved. It is a simple yet extremely meaningful way to demonstrate to surviving families our recognition of and gratitude for the tremendous sacrifice their loved one made to keep our nation safe.

On behalf of the membership of the Sergeants Benevolent Association, thank you again for your leadership on this important issue. Please do not hesitate to contact me, or our Washington Representatives Andrew Siff and Chris Granberg, if we can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

ED MULLINS,
President.

NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE,
Washington, DC, 7 April 2016.

Hon. ROY D. BLUNT,
Chairman, Committee on Rules and Administration, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN, I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to advise you of our support for S. 2755, the ''Fallen Heroes Flag Act of 2016.''

This legislation will provide a flag flown over the U.S. Capitol and a certificate containing an expression of sympathy to the immediate family member of a firefighter, law enforcement officer, member of a rescue squad or ambulance crew, or public safety officer who died in the line of duty.

Every day thousands of men and women put their lives on the line to help others and keep their communities safe. It takes a special person who is willing to sacrifice his/her life to run towards danger, while everyone else is running away from it. Mr. Chairman, as co-chair of the Law Enforcement Caucus, you know how important it is to honor the commitment and sacrifice of the men and women who died protecting their communities and that of their families.

Nothing can take away the pain or replace a loved one whose life has been unjustly taken. What we can offer is our deepest condolences and a symbol of our infinite gratitude. This legislation ensures that the heroes and their families who gave the ultimate sacrifice are honored and recognized.

On behalf of more than 330,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I want to thank you for introducing this legislation and amendment. If I can be of any further help, please do not hesitate to contact me or Executive Director Jim Pasco in my Washington Office.

Sincerely,

CHUCK CANTERBURY,
National President.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 2755) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 2755

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 ''Fallen Heroes Flag Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act—

(1) the term ''Capitol-flown flag'' means a flag of the United States flown over the Capitol in honor of the deceased individual for whom the flag is requested;

(2) the terms ''chaplain'', ''firefighter'', ''law enforcement officer'', ''member of a rescue squad or ambulance crew'', and ''public agency'' have the meanings given such terms in section 1204 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3796b);

(3) the term ''immediate family member'', with respect to an individual, means—

(A) the spouse, parent, brother, sister, or child of the individual or a person to whom the individual stands in loco parentis; or

(B) any other person related to the individual by blood or marriage;

(4) the term ''public safety officer'' means an individual serving a public agency in an official capacity, with or without compensation, as a law enforcement officer, as a firefighter, or as a chaplain; and

(5) the term ''Representative'' includes a Delegate or Resident Commissioner to the Congress.

SEC. 3. PROVIDING CAPITOL-FLOWN FLAGS FOR FAMILIES OF FALLEN HEROES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—At the request of an immediate family member of a firefighter, law enforcement officer, member of a rescue squad or ambulance crew, or public safety officer who died in the line of duty, the Representative or Senator of the family may provide to the family a Capitol-flown flag, together with the certificate described in subsection (c).

(b) NO COST TO FAMILY.—A Capitol-flown flag provided under this section shall be provided at no cost to the family.

(c) CERTIFICATE.—The certificate described in this subsection is a certificate which is signed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Representative, or the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Senator, providing the Capitol-flown flag, as applicable, and which contains an expression of sympathy for the family involved from the House of Representatives or the Senate, as applicable.

SEC. 4. REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Architect of the Capitol shall issue regulations for carrying out this Act, including regulations to establish procedures (including any appropriate forms, guidelines, and accompanying certificates) for requesting a Capitol-flown flag.

(b) REVIEW.—The regulations issued under subsection (a) shall take effect upon approval by the Committee on House Administration of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate.

SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated for each of fiscal years 2017 through 2022 such sums as may be necessary to carry out this Act, to be derived from amounts appropriated in each such fiscal year for the operation of the Architect of the Capitol, except that the aggregate amount appropriated to carry out this Act for all such fiscal years may not exceed $40,000.

SEC. 6. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act, except that a Capitol-flown flag may not be provided under section 3 until the regulations issued under section 4(a) take effect in accordance with section 4(b).

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS COMMEMORATIVE COIN ACT

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 2722 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2722) to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of the fight against breast cancer.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. JOHNSON. I further ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 2722) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

RECOGNIZING THE IMMEASURABLE BENEFITS OF THE NATIONAL 4–H PROGRAM TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 431, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 431) recognizing the immeasurable benefits of the national 4–H program to the young people of the United States and supporting the campaign to expand the 4–H program.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. JOHNSON. 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. 431) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20, 2016

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Wednesday, April 20; 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. 2012.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:50 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, April 20, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate April 19, 2016:

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

MICHAEL JOSEPH MISSAL, OF MARYLAND, TO BE INSPECTOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TREATING SMALL AIRPORTS WITH FAIRNESS ACT OF 2016

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL T. McCAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following cost estimate from the Congressional Budget Office regarding H.R. 4549.

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, April 13, 2016.

Hon. MICHAEL MCCAUL,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 4549, the Treating Small Airports with Fairness Act of 2016.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Megan Carroll.

Sincerely,

KEITH HALL.

Enclosure.

H.R. 4549—Treating Small Airports with Fairness Act of 2016

Summary: Under current law, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is required to screen passengers and property on scheduled commercial flights and some charter flights involving aircraft that meet certain capacity-related specifications. Broadly speaking, the agency oversees or conducts screening at most airports with commercial service; for all other airports, the agency uses a risk-based methodology for determining appropriate policies for security-related screening of passengers and cargo.

H.R. 4549 would require TSA to provide screening services at certain airports that lost or experienced a disruption in service by commercial airlines after January 1, 2013. Based on information from the agency, CBO estimates that implementing the bill would cost $33 million over the 2017–2021 period, assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts.

Pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply because enacting H.R. 4549 would not affect direct spending or revenues. CBO estimates that enacting the bill would not increase net direct spending or on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2027.

H.R. 4549 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

Estimated cost to the Federal Government: The estimated budgetary effect of H.R. 4549 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget function 400 (transportation).

	By fiscal year, in millions of dollars—					
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2017–2021
INCREASES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION						
Estimated Authorization Level	8	5	6	7	8	34
Estimated Outlays	6	6	6	7	8	33

Basis of estimate: for this estimate, CBO assumes that H.R. 4549 will be enacted before the start of fiscal year 2017 and the estimated amounts will be appropriated each year.

At the request of the operator of an airport that lost commercial air service after January 1, 2013, H.R. 4549 would require TSA to provide screening services at that airport. According to the agency, 22 airports could become eligible for federal screening services under the bill, several of which have agreements with commercial airlines to resume service in the near future. TSA has denied requests from some of those airports to resume screening services in the recent past and CBO expects that under current law the agency is unlikely to provide screening services at such airports in the near future. As a result, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 4549 would increase the cost of TSA's aviation security programs.

Based on information from TSA about average screening-related costs for airports with characteristics similar to those that would be affected by the bill, CBO estimates that increased spending for aviation-related screening would total $6 million in 2017 and $33 million over the 2017–2021 period. That amount includes roughly $9 million in one-time costs to acquire and install screening-related equipment and $24 million in ongoing personnel costs and other expenses. CBO expects that initially about one-third of the airports that would be eligible for screening services from TSA under the bill—particularly those with agreements from air carriers to resume commercial service—would apply for such services, with that number doubling by 2021.

CBO also estimates that implementing H.R. 4549 would not affect security-related fees collected by TSA to offset a portion of the agency's screening costs. Such fees are collected by air carriers from passengers when tickets for commercial flights are sold—whether or not TSA performs security screening—and would be unaffected by this legislation.

Pay-As-You-Go considerations: None.

Increase in long-term direct spending and deficits: CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 4549 would not increase net direct spending or on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2027.

Intergovernmental and private-sector impact: H.R. 4549 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

Estimate prepared by: Federal Costs: Megan Carroll; Impact on state, local, and tribal governments: Jon Sperl; Impact on the Private Sector: Amy Petz.

Estimate approved by: H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

FORCED ARBITRATION

SPEECH OF

HON. DONALD S. BEYER, JR.

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2016

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I stand here today to express my opposition to the increasing use of forced or binding arbitration. Most Americans don't even know about forced or binding arbitration until it happens to them.

Clauses are buried in the fine print of everyday contracts and, before they know it, they are unknowingly compelled to give up their legal rights. Quite honestly, if we just take into consideration human behavior—most Americans don't read the fine print even if they know they should. And let's assume that if they did, I guarantee you most don't have enough of legal background to recognize problem language when they read it.

This is concerning and dangerous when we consider that arbitration clauses are increasingly being inserted into consumer and employment contracts. This allows companies to circumvent the courts and bars people from joining together in class-action lawsuits. And class action law suits are realistically one of the few tools citizens have to fight illegal or deceitful business practices.

Applying for a credit card, using a cellphone, getting cable or Internet service and you are likely agreeing to private arbitration unknowingly. This is concerning because arbitration is heavily weighted in favor of the more powerful party. Not only does the corporation that wrote the contract set the terms of arbitration, but it also often decides on the arbitrator. Arbitrators do not have to be trained in the law, nor are they required to follow the law.

Quite simply, arbitration lacks many of the fundamental guarantees of fairness that a court provides. As a small business owner, I view binding arbitration as plainly unfair to the consumer and also unnecessary in the operation of a successful business practice. My business currently operates successfully without engaging in the same predatory practice for consumers.

Lawyers can continually put together more sophisticatedly drafted agreements meaning courts routinely enforce such agreements. That means we have a legally enforceable culture that is reinforcing these one-sided provisions which unfairly tilt the playing field in favor of one party. This is a practice we must stop. I am here to say we must stop it. Let us

stop this predatory practice on consumers and bid binding arbitration a farewell.

NO RATE REGULATION OF BROADBAND INTERNET ACCESS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2016

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2666) to prohibit the Federal Communications Commission from regulating the rates charged for broadband Internet access service:

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to H.R. 2666 the No Rate Regulation of Broadband Internet Access Act. Both Republicans and Democrats agree that the FCC should not have the authority to establish monthly rates for customers but I cannot vote in favor of this bill. Republicans crafted a poorly written and overly broad bill that threatens consumer protections. This is not the first time this Republican majority Congress has introduced legislation that is really a guise to strip administrative authority from agencies and to weaken consumer protection laws. I will continue to fight efforts to erode consumer rights and protections.

IN RECOGNITION OF JOSEPH ROCKS

HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Joseph Rocks, former Pennsylvania State Senator and Pennsylvania State Representative, who is retiring after a long career in public service.

Mr. Rocks served as a member of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives before joining the Pennsylvania State Senate. During his decade of service there, Mr. Rocks led the creation of the Pennsylvania Intergovernmental Cooperation Authority, which provides financial oversight for the City of Philadelphia.

After retiring from the Senate, Mr. Rocks served as the CEO of NHS Human Services, where he focused on providing specialized services in mental health, addictive diseases, autism, intellectual and developmental disabilities, juvenile justice, treatment foster care, and education.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. Rocks for his dedication and service to his community both as a member of the Pennsylvania state legislature and as a leader in mental health care. I applaud his many accomplishments and wish him the best of luck in retirement.

COMMEMORATING THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF THE CITY OF CRESTVIEW, FLORIDA

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the Centennial Anniversary of the City of Crestview, located in the Florida Panhandle.

Situated on the peak of a long woodland range between the Yellow and Shoal rivers and one of the highest points in the state, Crest View, or Crestview as it would soon be combined, first earned its place on the map as a railroad depot. Outgrowing neighboring communities in both size and population, with a school, four general stores, and post office, where its first citizen Hamner F. "Doc" Powell served as shipping clerk and railroad agent, Crestview reached a population of 100 in 1889. With a growing community, Crestview's early residents soon built a congregational church, where members of the community could practice their faith, as well as a drug store, hotel, and numerous small businesses. During this time, industry in the area experienced a boom, particularly the turpentine and lumber industry, which brought jobs and prosperity to the area.

Although the Crestview community continued to grow, the city did not formally incorporate until April 11, 1916, when a group of citizens gathered at the congregational church to vote on the question of incorporating the Town of Crestview. With Crestview's residents voting in favor of incorporation, the newly formed Crestview Town Council met for the first time on April 18, 1916, with the city's first Mayor W.R. White presiding over the meeting. The previous year, following the creation of Okaloosa County in 1915, Florida State Representative William Mapoles, known as "The Father of Okaloosa County," moved to Crestview from Laurel Hill and became the driving force behind the movement to eventually establish Crestview as the county seat in 1917.

Throughout the one hundred years to follow, businesses flourished, and Crestview became Okaloosa County's largest municipality and the only municipality between Pensacola and Tallahassee with a Sister City (Noirmoutier-en-l'Île, France). Crestview also became a major transportation hub and has also long been home to servicemembers and veterans. Crestview's citizens make every effort to ensure that those who wear the uniform are thanked for their service and sacrifice. In fact, Crestview opened its first recreation center for enlisted servicemembers in 1941. Home to tens of thousands, as the northern gateway to the Department of Defense's largest and most dynamic Air Force Installation in the United States—Eglin Air Force Base, the Crestview-area family expanded when it welcomed 6,000 new residents to the community upon the arrival of the U.S. Army's 7th Special Forces Group.

There is no question that the residents of Crestview are a resilient people, and even through the most challenging of times, they have united as a community to develop and maintain its place as a key area for business in the State of Florida and throughout the entire Gulf Coast region.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, it gives me great pleasure to commemorate the Centennial Anniversary of Crestview, Florida. My wife Vicki joins me in congratulating all of those who have been fortunate to call Crestview home throughout the last century, and we wish them and the city continued success.

CELEBRATING THE ACHIEVEMENTS AND 70TH BIRTHDAY OF THEODORE KATTOUF

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 70th birthday of Mr. Theodore Kattouf of Altoona, Pennsylvania. Mr. Kattouf has dedicated his life to serving our country, and in so doing has achieved a uniquely distinguished career.

Upon graduation from Penn State University in 1968, Mr. Kattouf served in the United States Army infantry for over three years and subsequently joined the Foreign Service in 1972. Beginning in 1973, Mr. Kattouf served as the economic and commercial officer in Kuwait, which then led to his assignment as a political officer to Damascus, the second largest city in Syria. Upon returning to the United States, Mr. Kattouf became a Middle East analyst at the U.S. State Department. Mr. Kattouf returned abroad from 1983 to 1986, serving in Baghdad as the Deputy Chief of Mission. Mr. Kattouf has spent numerous years working abroad with distinguished titles such as: Deputy Chief of Mission, Deputy Chief of Mission in Damascus, Deputy Chief of Mission in Riyadh, and Charge d'Affaires. His international work is not to be overshadowed by his work in the United States, which included Deputy Director and Director of Lebanon, Jordan and Syrian Affairs, and President and CEO of AMIDEAST.

Additionally, under President Clinton, Mr. Kattouf was nominated and confirmed as Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates in 1998. Later, in 2001, he was confirmed as Ambassador to Syria, having received a nomination for the post from President Bush.

Over the years, Theodore has encouraged international cooperation through his work as a U.S. Ambassador for the UAE and Syria. Mr. Kattouf has also received numerous awards, highlighting his dedication and advocacy efforts, some of which include: the Cobb Award, two Meritorious Honor Awards, four Senior Performance Awards, and one Presidential Honor Award.

It is with great pleasure and honor that I recognize Mr. Kattouf's service and contributions to our nation at the highest level. I applaud Mr. Kattouf for his dedication to our country and wish him a happy 70th birthday.

WORLD HEMOPHILIA DAY

HON. JARED POLIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of April 17 as World Hemophilia Day. Hemophilia is a rare genetic condition that prevents

the proper formation of blood clots. Four hundred newborns are diagnosed with this disease annually, and hundreds of thousands more suffer from it around the world. We share a responsibility to this global patient population to ensure that they are receiving the most innovative treatments and advanced care. In addition, we must reaffirm our commitment to research and development to try and find a cure for this dangerous condition.

On World Hemophilia Day, I speak in support of the many people battling this complex disease. It is my hope that by raising awareness, we will eventually see the day where treatment for hemophilia is affordable, feasible, and accessible for all.

DON WICK

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Don Wick for receiving the Arvada Chamber of Commerce's 2015 Image Award.

Over the years, Don has been involved in a variety of boards and organizations that have exemplified his passion and deep commitment to the City of Arvada. Don has served as a board member for the Jefferson Foundation, Colorado Associations of Chiefs of Police, Center for Public Safety, Ralston House, and the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. In addition, he is the former executive director for the Arvada Child Advocacy Center and also been involved in the Arvada Jefferson Kiwanis Club. With all he does, Don has the best interest of the community and its residents in mind.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Don Wick for this well-deserved recognition by the Arvada Chamber of Commerce.

ESSAY BY KAITLIN FOSTER

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Kaitlin Foster attends Seven Lakes High School in Katy, Texas. The essay topic is: What makes the political process in Congress so challenging?

Everyone wants something. If our government worked in reality as it does in theory, everyone would be satisfied, but theories are just theories.

Members of Congress have a unique challenge of balancing the beliefs of many people. A politician would generally enter the political field because they want to improve society; of course, the term ''improve'' is entirely subjective, and its meaning lies with each individual. Thus, politicians use their own beliefs and values as a basis for change. However, personal beliefs are not enough to be elected; many groups and parties must be convinced in order to get the votes.

Once elected into Congress, a member will now have a large base of people—constituents, party members, donors—relying on them to effectively ''improve'' society. It is the responsibility of each member to balance the voices of the many groups.

The general population often chides Congress for ''not compromising.'' However, with the vast amount of opinions invested into one Congressional member, each policy decision is not just each member acting on his or her own beliefs, but the beliefs of their constituents, donors, and party members. Each time a member of Congress casts a vote on a piece of legislation, they are not just voting for themselves, but for every entity that initially elected them. It is for this reason that the political process in Congress is so challenging. While it is impossible to make everyone happy, politicians cannot simply forfeit a portion of the beliefs for which they are responsible. When the general population accuses Congress of being uncompromising, they are forgetting why they elected these people into office: to advocate for us. Congress is meant to be our country in a microcosm; by choosing a candidate, we choose a vote, and we choose a voice. While popular culture may paint it differently, Congress is far from detached from general society; in fact, it is directly embedded into it. Members of Congress are speaking on behalf of the entire population, so when they give up on even a small issue, it affects thousands of lives. People may be willing to ''compromise'' something in the name of progress, but they most likely are not willing to compromise on their most closely held issue, the one they care the most about. Unfortunately, every issue, no matter how small, is the one that someone cares the most about. This is why members of Congress do not compromise easily; policy gridlock often ensues because they truly believe stopping all policies is better than willingly allowing someone who relies on them to be devastated. All the general population sees is a group of people not passing laws and waiting for a day when the other party finally gives up, but they do not see the true intentions of the members of Congress: to improve the lives of their constituents, as each of them see fit. The challenge actually lies not in Congress, itself, but in the country it represents.

TRIBUTE TO ZACH JOHNSTON

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Zach Johnston of Adel DeSoto Minburn (ADM) High School for winning the Class 2A, 160-pound bracket at the Iowa High School Athletic Association State Wrestling tournament on February 20, 2016.

Iowa has a long and proud history of strong wrestling programs in our state, producing college and Olympic champions for years. Winning a state championship is the culmination of years of hard work and commitment, not only on the part of Mr. Johnston, but also his parents, his family and coaches.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by this student demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication, and perseverance. I am honored to represent his family and him in the United States Congress. I know all of my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives join me in congratulating Zach Johnston on competing in this rigorous competition and wishing him continued success in his education and high school wrestling career.

JEAN SCHARFENBERG

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Jean Scharfenberg as the Arvada Chamber of Commerce's 2015 Woman of the Year for her years of volunteerism, kindness and dedication to the community.

After many years as an educator and volunteer, Jean embodies the spirit of the community and is a perfect recipient for this award. Jean worked as a volunteer for the Arvada Community Food Bank, Meals on Wheels, Rose Roots Garden, Santa House, and the Majestic View Nature Center. Jean regularly participates in the City of Arvada's Adopt-a-Trail Program and has been a long-time supporter of the Arvada Center. She also cofounded Trees Across Arvada, a nonprofit program that offers an annual opportunity for residents to purchase low-cost trees suitable for Colorado's drought environment and to help beautify the community.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Jean Scharfenberg for this well-deserved recognition by the Arvada Chamber of Commerce.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, on April 18, 2016, I was unavoidably detained and missed two votes. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yea'' on Roll Call No. 153 and ''yea'' on Roll Call No. 154.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, on April 15, 2016, I did not vote on Roll Call vote Numbers 150 through 152. Had I been present I would have voted:

Roll Call Number 150, Yarmuth of Kentucky Amendment No. 2—AYE

Roll Call Number 151, McNerney of California Amendment No. 3—AYE

Roll Call Number 152, No Rate Regulation of Broadband Internet Access Act—NO.

KORISSA STRAUB

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Korissa Straub for receiving the Arvada Chamber of Commerce's 2015 Rising Star Award.

Korissa exemplifies outstanding leadership and involvement in the Arvada community. With a 4.46 GPA, including in AP and Honors classes, and as a three-sport athlete, Korissa clearly excels in school and all she does. She is an accomplished art student, vice president of her DECA team, student ambassador, and is involved in seven other clubs at school as well as the Outdoor Leadership Program and the International Career Development Conference. Korissa also helped coordinate a children's book drive at her middle school and has since continued that annual effort.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Korissa Straub for this well-deserved recognition by the Arvada Chamber of Commerce.

ESSAY BY JORDYN WEBER

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Jordyn Weber attends St. Agnes Academy in Sugar Land, Texas. The essay topic is: Select an important event that has occurred in the past year and explain how that event has changed/shaped our country.

An especially important event that has occurred this year is the terrorist attacks that took place in Paris, France on Friday, November 13, 2015. Not only did this attack prove the eminent threat that ISIS poses to the western world, but it also brought about a new era of terrorism. The attack on Paris was the first time that local ''soft targets'' have been ambushed in this kind of attack. Soft targets refer to areas such as super markets, hotels, concert halls, restaurants, clubs, and any place that attacks every day normal people. These areas were always assumed to be safe from attacks as it was assumed terrorists wanted to kill large numbers, but this notion was changed after the terrifying attacks occurred in Paris. This new threat of attacks has altered the way the United States will live and fight in our war on terror.

The arising of this soft target attacks has shaped American fear in a new way. Since the 9/11 attacks, most Americans have experienced some subconscious fear of terrorist attacks, but never before has that fear been about going to a grocery store or to eat dinner. We now must face an era where we have to worry about the possibility of lower scale attacks. This brings about questions on how the United States should decrease the possibilities of the attacks. Since the attacks in Paris many citizens have begun to question the right steps to take in protecting our nation from the threat of a future terrorist attack. This questioning has led to two main issues at hand; how should the United States monitor the threat of terrorism in our country as well as who should be allowed to enter the country without posing a threat?

The first question of how should the United States monitor the threat of terrorism has been demonstrated in many ways. Should the US begin to observe conversations and invade the privacy of those believed to be possibly involved in terrorism within our country? Should we begin taking actions overseas like other countries have begun doing? One thing that is for sure is that the United States needs to get serious about their war on terror. This is going to shape the future of American life. If we sit back and do nothing Americans will continue to live in a world of fear of everyday activities. The government must take action to put American's minds to peace.

The second question of who poses a threat to our national security has brought up a huge debate in regards to the refugee crisis. When it was uncovered that one of the attackers from Paris arrived to Europe disguised as a refugee everyone began to question allowing the flow of refugees into the United States at this time. This is shaping and brining into question what the United States's priorities need to be, the protection of our own citizens? Or the leadership in the protection of our world's most vulnerable people?

The attack on Paris has impacted the United States in an enormous way. It has instilled a new kind of fear among US citizens as well as brought into question many new issues that will continue to shape the future of the United States.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 154, due to severe weather in my district, I was unavoidably detained and unable to return to Washington, DC in time to cast votes.

Had I been present, I would have voted YES.

TRIBUTE TO DR. STEVEN C. BEERING

HON. TODD ROKITA

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a notable Hoosier, Dr. Steven C. Beering, who is being honored by the Anti-Defamation League at the 2016 Man of Achievement Award Dinner in Indianapolis.

The Anti-Defamation League's Man of Achievement Award was established to recognize individuals and companies who have demonstrated exceptional commitment to the community, justice and equal opportunity for all. Dr. Beering was chosen for this honor for his service to the state and nation.

Dr. Beering was born in Berlin, Germany and raised in Hamburg. His family was interred by the Nazi's late during World War II and he served in a Bavarian labor camp with members of his family before being liberated by the allied forces. The family immigrated to the United States through Ellis Island. He served in the United States Air Force Medical Corps for 12 years, retiring as a Lt. Colonel.

Dr. Beering earned his B.S. and M.D. from the University of Pittsburgh and served as the Dean of Medicine and Director of the Indiana University Medical Center before being named President at Purdue University where he served from 1983 to 2000.

Dr. Beering has led on the national level as chairman of the Association of American Medical Colleges and the Association of American Universities. He is a former regent of the National Library of Medicine. He is a Fellow and Master of the American College of Physicians, a member of the Royal Society of Medicine, Phi Beta Kappa, Alpha Omega Alpha, the Institute of Medicine and National Academy of Sciences, and the Indiana Academy. Dr. Beering has served on a number of national and corporate boards and is a Trustee at the University of Pittsburgh.

I first met Dr. Beering while serving as Deputy Indiana Secretary of State and have been an admirer of his since. He is a great friend and confidant of mine, and a wonderful asset to our community, state and nation. I wish to congratulate him on this latest honor and thank him for his leadership at Purdue University, Indiana and our nation.

STEELHEAD COMPOSITES

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Steelhead Composites for receiving the Innovative Technology Award from the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation.

The Innovative Technology Award is given to a company that is on the forefront of new and advanced technologies including the industries of aerospace, aviation, bioscience, energy, outdoor recreation and apparel, among others. Steelhead Composites manufactures lightweight, high-strength cylinders to be used for weight-sensitive energy and fuel storage application. The company's specialties include lightweight bladder accumulators, mobile compressed natural gas (CNG) fuel storage and transport, gas bottles, aluminum liners, and accessories. Steelhead also offers a full array of technical services in vessel design, metal spin forming, filament winding, prototyping, and testing of high pressure vessels. These fuel tanks are designed for the CNG and hydrogen vehicle industry, are lined with aluminum, and are just as strong as steel but at one-sixth the weight.

Steelhead is in the early stages of commercialization and currently has 6 high-paying employees with plans to expand significantly during the next couple of years.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Steelhead Composites for this well-deserved recognition by Jefferson County EDC. Thank you for your contributions to the Jefferson County economy and community.

TRIBUTE TO MATT MALCOLM

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Matt Malcolm of Glenwood High School in Glenwood, Iowa for winning the Class 2A, 152-pound bracket at the Iowa High School Athletic Association State Wrestling tournament on February 20, 2016.

Iowa has a long and proud history of strong wrestling programs in our state, producing college and Olympic champions for years. Winning a state championship is the culmination of years of hard work and commitment, not only on the part of Matt, but also his parents, his family and coaches.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by Matt demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication, and perseverance. I am honored to represent Matt and his family in the United States Congress. I know all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Matt on competing in this rigorous competition, and wishing him continued success in his education and high school wrestling career.

CELEBRATING THE 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FLORHAM PARK MEMORIAL FIRST AID SQUAD

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 65th Anniversary of The Florham Park Memorial First Aid Squad, located in Florham Park, in Morris County, New Jersey.

Over the years, the squad has responded to various types of emergencies including: motor vehicle collisions, fire, plane crashes and have cared for victims of crimes. They have also been in attendance at countless parades, gazebo concerts, football games and graduations. For fifty years the squad has functioned as a free-of-charge service, relying upon donations from residents and businesses in order to cover their expenses.

As time has passed, the borough's population has increased, causing a raise in the number of calls they receive. In their first year, they had fifty-eight calls, while in 2000, there were 962. They have racked up more than 350,000 miles on a total of fourteen ambulances.

In 1951, first aid squads were considered an innovative idea. Only a few surrounding towns had them and there were only one-hundred and thirty squads operating in New Jersey. On January 15, 1951 the Florham Park Volunteer Fire Department decided to form their town's squad as a separate non-profit corporation. At the start, firemen served as advisors and trustees.

The concept of dialing 9-1-1 was not used until the early 1990s by Florham Park. When the squad first formed, a local storekeeper, Carmen Kursino, fielded calls during the day and the police department answered at night. In 1955, technology had advanced and an answering service in Madison dispatched calls. During this time, not many families had two cars, so in order to assist the volunteers the ambulance would pick up the crew on the way to the call. In 1965, calls would be broadcasted to volunteers over radio receivers called Plectrons. These were later upgraded to battery-operated units which allowed the crew to travel around town freely. They currently use Minitor II technology.

In order to be able to staff weekday shifts, Florham Park became one of the first squads in New Jersey that allowed women to join. An article written in the Newark Sunday News on October 2, 1955, echoed the feelings of that day. It stated, these women "may have to drop their brooms, forsake the washing or leave the dishes to rush to the squads headquarters" in order to receive a call.

Originally, their ambulance was stored in the Brooklake firehouse. However, after the fire department purchased a second fire truck, the squad was forced to find a new home. On February 20, 1953 they purchased a garage next door to their old location. They dedicated the building to the late Captain C. Howard Collins on Memorial Day 1953. In 1964, the town suggested the squad move to Felch Road. They listened and ended up purchasing a building costing around $40,000.

The squad continues to update their equipment and training in order to keep up with advancements in emergency care. They are still the primary providers of first aid care to residents and workers of the borough and provide trusted aid to the surrounding communities.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the Executive Board, members and volunteers of the Florham Park Memorial First Aid Squad of Florham Park, New Jersey for all of their service to their community.

VANESSA KENDRICK

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Vanessa Kendrick for receiving the Arvada Chamber of Commerce's 2015 Arvada Young Professionals Leadership Award.

As a local realtor in Arvada, Vanessa's professionalism and energetic attitude has enabled her to become a leader and successful entrepreneur in the City. Vanessa's dedication to the community is obvious through her involvement in several local organizations including Chair of the Arvada Young Professionals, Two Ponds Foundation board member, and captain for Sand and the City.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Vanessa Kendrick for this well-deserved recognition by the Arvada Chamber of Commerce.

HONORING PAUL COOKE

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the career of Mr. Paul Cooke, for his selfless protection of the state and citizens of Colorado. Mr. Cooke served bravely in the name of fire safety and emergency services for over 40 years.

Throughout his time as a servant to the people of Colorado, Mr. Cooke has organized teams of volunteer and career firefighters as a fire chief, he has instructed fellow servicemen at the National Fire Academy and has served as the director of the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control.

It is impossible to measure the number of lives Mr. Cooke has touched and affected, but I hope that I can speak for these people today and express our strong sense of gratitude.

I thank Mr. Cooke for protecting our land, farms, and ranches. For protecting family homes and local businesses. And ultimately, for protecting the lives of Coloradoans throughout his career. I thank him for recognizing the importance of fire safety and for answering the call to serve in its name. Mr. Cooke is a model citizen, and I am inspired that the great state of Colorado is home to men and women like him.

I am proud to salute Mr. Cooke with these words today, and I wish him happiness in his retirement.

CELEBRATING THE RETIREMENT OF CITY MANAGER DAN NICK

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the retirement of City Manager Dan Nick of Jourdanton, Texas. He has proudly served the people of Jourdanton for nearly eighteen years.

Dan Nick was born on April 21st, 1948 in Duluth, Minnesota. After graduating from high school in 1966, Dan attended the University of Minnesota-Duluth and graduated with a degree in Business and minor in Economics in 1970. After graduation, Mr. Nick enlisted in the U.S. Army and courageously served his country, and completed a tour in Vietnam. He returned home to Minnesota in 1972.

After moving and briefly working for the city of Boise, Idaho, Dan began a 25-year career with Morrison-Knudsen Construction Company. His career took him all over the country, helping to build and work on America's infrastructure in states like Wyoming, Utah, Alaska, and Missouri. He and his family chose to settle down in Atascosa County, Texas in 1981 where he worked for seventeen years as a business manager for Lignite Mine, located just south of Jourdanton. In 1998, he embarked on his career as the City Manager of Jourdanton.

For nearly 18 years Dan has worked to improve quality of life and opportunities in Jourdanton. His efforts helped to bring a number of new facilities to the city. Some notable accomplishments include: a new water waste treatment plant, a municipal complex, a municipal court, a police department, and council chambers. Presently, the construction of a new sports complex is under way for the city; another project Dan had a hand in accomplishing. Dan Nick's impact as City Manager can be seen in the prosperity and success of the city of Jourdanton.

In addition to his exemplary career as a public servant, Dan Nick is a devoted husband and father to Kathryn Hendrickson and their two children Kimberley and Daniel.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have the opportunity to recognize Dan Nick, a patriotic American citizen, a devoted City Manager to Jourdanton, and a loving family man.

TERUMO BCT

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Terumo BCT for receiving the Chairman's Choice Award from the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation.

Terumo BCT, a global leader in blood component and cellular technologies, has a 45-year history in Jefferson County. Starting as a small medical device manufacturer in California, Terumo has grown to be one of Jefferson County's largest employers with more than 1,800 employees in the county. They are the only company with the unique combination of apheresis collections, manual and automated whole blood processing, and pathogen reduction coupled. Additionally, they operate the only ethanol-oxide sterilization facility in the state.

Terumo BCT has been in Lakewood since 1964 and evolved into the organization it is today through mergers of different companies and increased growth. In April 2015, Terumo BCT opened their new 125,000 square foot state-of-the-art global headquarters in Lakewood, which includes office, lab, parking, and an onsite fitness center and cafeteria. The expansion will bring 300 high-paying jobs and over $37 million in new capital investment to Jefferson County over the next couple of years.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Terumo BCT for this well-deserved recognition by Jefferson County EDC. Thank you for your contributions to the Jefferson County economy and community.

IN MEMORY OF MR. DEREK DUNN-RANKIN

HON. THOMAS J. ROONEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Mr. Derek Dunn-Rankin, founder and chairman of the Sun Media Group, who passed away at his home in Venice, Florida this weekend at the age of 88.

Mr. Dunn-Rankin began his newspaper career at age eleven as a delivery boy for the Miami News. While attending Rollins College, he worked as the editor for the student paper and as the sports editor for the Sanford Daily Herald. Following graduation, he returned home and took the position of circulation manager at the Miami News before becoming a Vice President with Landmark Communications in Norfolk, VA.

In 1977, Mr. Dunn-Rankin left Landmark Communications to start his own company in Venice, Florida. Derek began by purchasing the Venice Gondolier and within three years, the small newspaper was winning awards at the state level. His next endeavor was purchasing the Charlotte Sun in 1979, a small tabloid with four employees. By 1987, thanks to Mr. Dunn-Rankin's business savvy, the Sun had become a daily publication and was one of the fastest growing daily papers in the country. Today, Sun Media Group employs over 350 people, produces printed publications in seven areas and has twice received national recognition for its online publication.

In addition to his pioneering work in news media, Mr. Dunn-Rankin was a cornerstone of the Charlotte County community. Following the devastation of Hurricanes Charley and Ivan in 2004, many residents were forced to leave their homes and most were left without power, phones or any viable means of communication. Derek took it upon himself to help his community through this extremely challenging time. The Charlotte Sun distributed free newspapers in order to keep people in the community informed amidst the chaos. His telephone company also set up emergency call centers for residents to call loved ones and reach out to FEMA for assistance. Mr. Dunn-Rankin's tireless devotion to the people of Charlotte County during this disaster speaks volumes to his benevolent nature.

Mr. Dunn-Rankin's continuous dedication to growing the community did not go unnoticed. The Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce named him the ''Pacesetter of the Year'' in 1995 and the Cultural Center awarded him their ''Citizen of the Year'' in 2003 for his decades of service to the community. He will be sorely missed but his efforts will continue to have a positive impact on the community for years to come. Derek is survived by his loving wife Betty, his daughter Debbie and his four sons, Peter, David, Jeff and Mike.

Mr. Speaker, our thoughts and prayers are with Mr. Dunn-Rankin's family and the entire community as they mourn his passing. He will be greatly missed.

TRIBUTE TO THE SOUTHEAST POLK WRESTLING TEAM

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the Southeast Polk Wrestling team for winning the Iowa High School Athletic Association Class 3A Wrestling Championship Title.

I send my congratulations to each member of the Team:

Wrestlers: Mark Ames, Ryan Strickland, Gauge Perrien, Wiley Parks, Adam Brown, Trent Nelson, Nate Lendt, Zach Strickland, Cody Batterson, Nathan Marchand, Zach Barnes, Andrei Allen, Gunner Jorgensen, Michael Lopez, Solomon Jones, Thad Breitsprecker, Gavin Babcock, Al Durr, Cody Wonderlich, Dawson Velez, Kameron Padavich, Brady Wenner, Eric Pingel, Grant Dishinger, Ethan Andersen, Damien Ramirez, Dan Ramirez, Levi Brand

Head Coach: Jason Christenson

Coaches: Jessman Smith, Jeff Evans, Jake Helvey, Jesse Smith, Eric Morrow, Pat Wilson, Tom Koch, Jeremy Dove

Mr. Speaker, the success of this team and their coaches demonstrates the rewards of hard work, commitment, and determination. I am honored to represent them in the United States Congress. I ask that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating the team for competing in this rigorous competition and wishing them nothing but continued success in all aspects of their lives.

CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF BOY SCOUT TROOP 8

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of the Centennial Anniversary of Boy Scout Troop 8, located in Chatham, Morris County, New Jersey.

Troop 8 is one of the earliest chartered troops of the Boy Scouts of America in the eastern United States, founded in 1916. For one hundred years, Troop 8 has held an integral part in the Chatham community, fostering civic values, compassion, and a sense of moral aptitude in the young men who have filed through its ranks.

Troop 8 is sponsored by Ogden Memorial Church, located within Chatham Borough. The troop currently possesses an enrollment of one hundred young men of various ages. Throughout the year, the group partakes in a variety of community service events, aimed at improving the overall standard of living within Chatham and the surrounding area. The troop also organizes outings for members, such as camping trips and group hikes. Both these outings and trips strengthen the bonds of fellow scouts and build individual character.

Examples of past community service events are numerous and deeply impactful on the community. Scouts have cleaned up various Chatham parks, created campsites, and traveled as far as New Mexico in the name of community service.

Troop 8 is home to over 150 Eagle Award recipients. This award, one of the highest honors bestowed on a scout, requires active involvement in the troop, a minimum of 21 merit badges, a clear leadership role in the troop, and an original service project that benefits the community in some way. Past projects have included improvements to local churches, creating an outdoor reading center at the Chatham Library, and discovering and implementing a way to prevent flooding from Milton Pond. The completed projects, as well as the

high volume of Eagle Award recipients within Troop 8, are a testament to the Boy Scout's dedication to serving the community.

Boys who have passed through the program have gone on to become successful adults, upholding the ideals instilled during their time as Boy Scouts. The life skills provided by Troop 8 are invaluable in preparing these young men for future roles and responsibilities. Moreover, the Chatham community is extremely thankful for the time and effort these young men contribute to improving their neighborhoods.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in thanking the members of the Boy Scout Troop 8 of Chatham, New Jersey for all of their service to the community, and in congratulating them and their scout leaders on their Centennial Anniversary.

RYAN STACHELSKI

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Ryan Stachelski for receiving the Arvada Chamber of Commerce's 2015 Arvada Young Professionals Leadership Award.

As the Deputy Director of the Arvada Economic Development Association (AEDA), Ryan has achieved outstanding results in fostering economic development and vitality for the City of Arvada. His community-mindedness has helped create and enhance meaningful partnerships with a variety of organizations across the City. Ryan played an integral role in AEDA becoming certified as an economic development organization for the city and has helped grow engagement from local businesses to assist in Arvada's overall economic development efforts.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Ryan Stachelski for this well-deserved recognition by the Arvada Chamber of Commerce.

ESSAY BY JONATHAN FROST

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Jonathan Frost attends Seven Lakes High School in Katy, Texas. The essay topic is: What makes the political process in Congress so challenging?

John Adams once said, ''Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.'' Today the political process in Congress is challenging because the representatives in Congress have lost that shared set of core values. Congress was not always in the gridlocked state that it is now. While political parties have always differed on priorities, strategies, and tactics, until recent decades members of Congress held a set of core values. Such values included a shared view of America's role in the world, the independence of the judiciary, respect for the Constitution, universal freedom, a shared religion, and the desire for the nation to put America's interests first.

What do we have today in Congress instead of that shared set of core values? Instead of acting as a unified body that acts in the interests of the people of the nation, Congress acts more like a divided group of tribes who always try to harm the opposing tribe. The tribes primarily call themselves ''Republicans'' and ''Democrats'', both of which would rather hurt each other than do what's best for the nation. If Congress could agree again on a shared set of core values, then the legislative process would be easier and more productive.

To spawn these shared values, the stubborn allegiance most Congressmen have to their respective parties cannot continue. The challenge of getting political parties to change their ways is exasperated by many decades of bad blood and misbehavior. Many observers date the deterioration of the political parties from the character assassination of Clarence Thomas and his nomination as a Supreme Court Justice. The personal and insulting nature of the tactics of a few Democrats led to a downward spiral of revenge and payback that continues to this day.

The practical solution will require courageous leadership by strong and popular leaders of each of the two major political parties to join together in forging a concise set of core values to guide the work of the legislative branch. Only those leaders can define the values, but here are a few that might guide us:

Individual Responsibility
Compassion for those who cannot provide for themselves
Hard Work
Innovation
Free Enterprise
Strong Military

In the same way that great organizations are guided by a shared set of core values, Congress could consider only legislation that does not run afoul of the agreed set of core values. Sadly, the course of human history suggests that it is unlikely that two such visionary leaders will simultaneously emerge.

IN RECOGNITION OF STEPHEN P. CURTO ON THE OCCASION OF A DAY NAMED IN HIS HONOR BY THE CITY OF EASTON

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Mr. Stephen P. Curto. This past Sunday, City of Easton Mayor Salvatore J. Panto, Jr. declared April 17 to be Stephen P. Curto Day to give tribute to a man who brightened his community through a lifetime of service.

Stephen Curto dedicated himself to the city of his birth. A noteworthy chapter in his life was filled by nearly fifty years of volunteering for the Easton Area Community center, which, for over sixty years, served the West Ward, one of the most diverse and impoverished neighborhoods in the City. He was instrumental in establishing the Center's annual testimonial roast fundraiser and diligently worked to ensure its continued success.

Stephen Curto was also a dedicated family man and was involved for years in Democratic politics and labor causes. In 1990, he retired from his position as a business agent for the United Food and Commercial Workers Union and gave himself even more fully to his family and his causes.

I applaud the City of Easton for bestowing such a worthy tribute to a uniquely resolute and enduring figure of community service.

JIM SCHARFENBERG

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Jim Scharfenberg as the Arvada Chamber of Commerce's 2015 Man of the Year for his volunteerism, kindness and dedication to the community.

Jim has been a long-time supporter and participant in many of Arvada's community programs, such as the Arvada Center and the City of Arvada's Adopt-a-Trail Program. He also worked as a volunteer for the Arvada Community Food Bank, Meals on Wheels, Rose Roots Garden, Santa House, and the Majestic View Nature Center. He co-founded Trees Across Arvada with his wife, a nonprofit program that offers an annual opportunity for residents to purchase low-cost trees suitable for Colorado's drought environment and to help beautify the community.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Jim Scharfenberg for this well-deserved recognition by the Arvada Chamber of Commerce.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on roll call No. 153, due to severe weather in my district, I was unavoidably detained and unable to return to Washington, D.C. in time to cast votes.

Had I been present, I would have voted YES.

TRIBUTE TO GRANT STOTTS

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Grant Stotts of Valley High School in West Des Moines, Iowa for winning the Class 3A, 132-

pound bracket at the Iowa High School State Wrestling tournament on February 20, 2016.

Iowa has a long and proud history of strong wrestling programs at all levels, producing collegiate and Olympic champions for decades. Winning a state championship is the culmination of years of hard work and commitment, not only on the part of Grant, but also his parents, his family and coaches.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by Grant demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication, and perseverance. I am honored to represent him and his family in the United States Congress. I ask that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Grant on winning this rigorous competition and wishing him continued success in his education and high school wrestling career.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Food for Thought for receiving the Arvada Chamber of Commerce's 2015 Image Award.

With support and initial funding from the Arvada Sunrise Rotary Foundation, Food for Thought today serves a tremendous need with free or reduced meals in public schools across the Denver metro area. The Food for Thought program has expanded into Denver and now delivers more than 1,600 weekly ''Powersacks'' and has delivered over 4,300 tons of food in total to children in need. The support from the Arvada Sunrise Rotary Foundation was instrumental in this program and the expansion of the program into Denver.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Food for Thought for this well-deserved recognition by the Arvada Chamber of Commerce.

RECOGNIZING THE TOP GRADUATING SENIORS FROM JOLIET CATHOLIC ACADEMY, JOLIET WEST HIGH SCHOOL, AND JOLIET CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the hard work and determination of the top 25 graduating seniors from Joliet Catholic Academy, Joliet West High School, and Joliet Central High School.

The academic achievements of these students are impressive, as are their community service and participation in school activities. These students truly have taken advantage of all that high school has to offer.

Also to be commended are the Joliet Region Chamber of Commerce, along with the Joliet Exchange, the Joliet Kiwanis, the Joliet Lions, and the Joliet Rotary Clubs, for hosting the 2016 Top Student Recognition Banquet to recognize these students.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing these top graduating seniors, as well as the Joliet Region Chamber of Commerce, the Joliet Exchange, Joliet Kiwanis, Joliet Lions, and Joliet Rotary Clubs for hosting the 2016 Top Student Banquet.

INTRODUCING THE VETERANS PENSIONS PROTECTION ACT OF 2016

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Veterans Pensions Protection Act of 2016. This bipartisan legislation will protect veterans from losing their pension benefits in the event they receive compensation covering unforeseen health care costs.

A few years ago, a constituent of mine was confronted with this situation. He is a Navy veteran who suffers from muscular dystrophy. One day, as he crossed the street, he was struck by a truck. He was injured. His service dog was injured. His wheelchair was severely damaged. Like any person would, he filed an insurance claim, and received a settlement to cover his medical expenses and the costs for replacing his wheelchair.

Now Mr. Speaker, imagine his surprise when he received a letter for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), explaining to him that because of his sudden jump in income, he no longer qualified for a pension. It sounds ridiculous, but that's what happened.

Now, when assessing a veteran's eligibility for a pension, the VA considers a variety of sources of revenue to calculate annual income. The VA uses this formula to make a simple determination: if a veteran's income exceeds the limit set by the VA, he or she does not qualify for a pension.

Under current law, compensation for medical expenses or pain and suffering, including insurance settlement payments or reimbursements, is considered income. This means that veterans are effectively punished when they receive these types of compensation after suffering medical emergencies like the one I just outlined. This is, quite simply, wrong.

Mr. Speaker, my legislation exempts reimbursements and compensation for medical expenses from the VA's formula for calculating income and pension eligibility. This will guarantee the continuity of our veterans' pensions, and will ensure that no veteran will have their benefits unfairly and abruptly depreciated or cancelled. This is a bill we can all get on board with. I urge my colleagues to support this critical legislation.

DEE GILL

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Dee Gill for receiving the Arvada Chamber of Commerce's 2015 Image Award.

Dee's unwavering and ongoing kindness and generosity has helped to make the Arvada community a better place. Dee's community-minded focus and perspective has enhanced the sense of community and family across Arvada. Her support and bigheartedness provides an example for all of us. Dee's contribution and dedication to her community will forever be remembered.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Dee Gill for this well-deserved recognition by the Arvada Chamber of Commerce.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF SEGUNDO ''SY'' UNPINGCO

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Segundo ''Sy'' Unpingco. Sy was a son of Guam, strong promoter of Chamorro culture, and a survivor of the occupation of Guam during World War II. He passed away on November 26, 2015 at the age of 81.

Sy was born on Guam on May 21, 1934 to Jose Rivera Unpingco and Vicenta Aguon Unpingco. He was just seven years old when enemy forces invaded Guam during World War II. Like many Chamorros on Guam, Sy and his family endured the atrocities committed against the Chamorro people during the occupation. However following the war, Sy attended George Washington High School in Mangilao, Guam. He went on to receive his Bachelor of Administration degree from St. Mary's College and a Juris Doctorate from Lincoln Law School.

While in high school Sy met his beloved wife, Remedios ''Remmy'' Pangelinan and they were married in 1953. Together they had three children, Segundo, Jr., Vivian, and Paul. They made their home in San Jose, California, and throughout his career, Sy worked with the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Department and as a Courtroom Bailiff until his retirement. Following his retirement, Sy partnered with the late Marcial Sablan and Tony Chargualaf to form the Hafa Adai Golf Classic.

Throughout its 35 year history, the Hafa Adai Golf Classic has brought together golfers, nine hosting clubs from California, Washington, and Nevada, sponsors, donors, supporters, families and friends together for a two day tournament. It has attracted approximately 17,000 semi-professionals and amateur golfers and their families from across the U.S. mainland, Hawaii, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Japan. Under Sy's leadership, the Hafa Adai Golf Classic promoted our Chamorro culture, and extended Guam's Inafa'maolek spirit to all who participated in the event. Sy was a shining example of that island spirit of cooperation, camaraderie and reciprocity of our culture and heritage, but he leaves behind a legacy that will live on in the years to come.

I join the people of Guam in mourning the passing of Sy Unpingco and commending him for his service to our island and contributions to our people and Chamorro culture. I extend my condolences to his wife, Remmy, children, grandchildren, family and friends. He will be missed but his memory will always be remembered by the countless people he touched throughout the years.

ESSAY BY KAYSIE FAAS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Kaysie Faas attends Needville High School in Needville, Texas. The essay topic is: Oil Prices Crash: The Impacts on Our Country and Our State.

Over the past year to eighteen months, we have watched crude oil prices plummet from over $100 per barrel to the $30 per barrel range. Over this same period gas prices at the pump have fallen from almost $4.00 per gallon, to well below $2.00; the lowest in years. While many people enjoy paying these lower gas prices and extra cash in their wallet, the effects on our economy are often very damaging, especially now that the United States produces much more oil than the past.

Years ago, the United States relied heavily on foreign oil as domestic production was falling short of expectations. Generally, when we rely on imported oil, increased oil prices negatively impact the U.S. economy, as the price for many goods and services are driven by the price of oil. For example, higher fuel prices result in increased shipping costs, which basically impact the cost of everything from apples to IPADs. Also, higher oil prices result in higher chemical prices for all chemicals that are produced from oil. So, in general, when we heavily rely on foreign oil, higher oil prices have a large impact on our economy.

However, in the 2000s, new technology (called ''fracking'') emerged in the oil and gas industry which made it possible to extract oil from previously untapped layers. As this technology spread across the U.S., the U.S. became one of the top oil and gas producers in the world. Closer to home, oil and gas production in our state of Texas also followed suit and boomed as well. This boom resulted in a great economic boost for our state as a whole and also for the greater Houston area that relies heavily on the oil and gas industry. I personally witnessed this boom during my family travels around the state. One time quiet and desolate small south Texas towns had become full of activity, with new hotels, convenience stores and restaurants. Everyone who wanted a job, had a job, and times were good. However, as the U.S. and Texas produces more oil, we are now more dependent and affected by the price of oil. So, as the price of oil drops, drilling and production does as well. This directly affects these small Texas towns and large city oil and gas centers such as our home congressional district and the Houston area. These decreases in drilling and production activities result in massive lay-offs in oil producing regions. Now the small town hotels and restaurants are empty and forced to close. Large oil companies in the big cities are forced to cut thousands of jobs. These falling oil prices have a devastating effect on our area.

As stated above, cheaper gas prices appear to be a blessing to an economy. However, residing in a state and a congressional district that rely heavily on oil and gas, the effects can be devastating, even though we are saving at the pump.

RECOGNIZING MILDRED JANE WORSHAM AND LANDON WORSHAM

HON. ROBERT HURT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. HURT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I submit these remarks in recognition of the service and dedication of Mildred Jane Worsham and Landon Worsham to the Chatham Presbyterian Church and the entire Chatham community.

Mildred Jane Worsham has been serving the Chatham Presbyterian Church congregation as their organist for over 70 years. Mildred began playing for Chatham Presbyterian in 1945 at the age of sixteen. Over the years, she shared that duty with the late Augusta Parrish on an every-other-month basis, and she now serves as the sole organist.

In addition to her duties as organist, Mrs. Worsham has also served as the church's long-standing session clerk, Choir Director, taught Sunday School, Bible School and Bible Studies, and Mrs. Worsham had the honor of being named the first female elder of Chatham Presbyterian Church and was one of the church's first female deacons. She was also a commissioner for the Presbytery of the Peaks, which included 129 churches spanning parts of Central Virginia, Southside, the New River Valley and Allegheny Highlands, and served as the Commissioner to the General Assembly of Presbyterian Church in the United States. Mrs. Worsham has also been a member of the Sylvania Garden Club, the Homemaker's Club, and assisted her husband's work as Chief of the Chatham Volunteer Fire Department for over 50 years.

For decades, Landon Worsham's service to the Chatham community has extended far beyond firefighting. In 2013, I had the privilege of joining the Town of Chatham, Virginia to honor Mr. Worsham for his 60 years of service to Chatham as a volunteer firefighter, 50 of which he spent as fire chief. In addition to this tremendous accomplishment, Mr. Worsham has been an active volunteer at the Chatham Presbyterian Church, serving as the superintendent of Chatham Presbyterian's Sunday school for over 50 years and counting. Mr. Worsham is also an elder at the church and has served numerous times on the session.

Mr. Worsham also served as a leader in the Chatham Lions Club and the Chatham Jaycees, as well as serving as the Vice President of the Pittsylvania County Fire-Rescue Association. He also served his country in the U.S. Air Force during World War II, and was wounded in New Guinea and awarded the Purple Heart.

I ask the members of this House of Representatives to join with me and the entire Chatham community in thanking and honoring the service and dedication of Jane Worsham and Landon Worsham to the Chatham Presbyterian Church and the Town of Chatham, and to the surrounding counties and our great nation.

CONGRATULATING JESSICA M. BARRETT ON RECEIVING THE U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION'S 2016 WOMEN IN BUSINESS CHAMPION OF THE YEAR AWARD FOR GUAM

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Jessica M. Barrett on her selection as the U.S. Small Business Administration's 2016 Women in Business Champion for Guam. This award honors an individual on Guam who, as an advocate for women entrepreneurs, has fulfilled a commitment to the advancement of women's business ownership.

Jessica is the President of Barrett Enterprise, Inc., a local family-owned business started in 1972 by her parents Jack and Maxine Barrett that provides basic plumbing and water infrastructure services to residential, commercial, and government clients on Guam. Originally an operation of two employees providing only plumbing services, today, Barrett Plumbing has grown to a workforce of 19 full-time and locally hired employees, including five women, providing plumbing services, as well as maintenance and installation of new construction of water and wastewater lines infrastructure. Under Jessica's leadership, Barrett Plumbing expanded its operations and achieved federal HUBZone certification. The company also partners with the Guam Department of Labor to provide an apprenticeship program to train new practitioners on Guam.

Jessica is also deeply involved with several community organizations on Guam. She is a founding member and current president of the Guam Chapter of the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC). In this capacity, Jessica has worked to provide guidance and counsel to local organizations and businesses about promoting and advancing the role of women in the construction industry. She has also supported local organizations such as the Guam Animals in Need (GAIN), Santa Teresita Catholic Church, and Catholic Social Services. Further, in 2014, the Guam Women's Chamber of Commerce recognized Jessica as Guam's first Chamorro woman plumber.

I join the people of Guam in congratulating Jessica Barrett on her selection as the SBA's 2016 Women in Business Champion for Guam. I commend her for her many contributions to our island and community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, had I been present for the vote on H.R. 4570, the

"100 Years of Women in Congress Act," which expands Department of Agriculture programs for research and extension grants to increase participation by women and underrepresented minorities in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, I would have voted "aye."

Also, had I been present for the vote on passage of S. 719, a bill to rename the Armed Forces Reserve Center in Great Falls, Montana, I would have voted "aye."

TRIBUTE TO DENNIS McDANIEL

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Dennis McDaniel who has been named Chief of Police of Johnston, Iowa. Chief McDaniel has proudly served the central Iowa area as Chief of Police in nearby Windsor Heights, Iowa, and in Marshalltown, Iowa at the start of his career.

His dedication to public service and law enforcement is a testament to many aspiring community leaders. He has been integrally involved with the Central Iowa Traffic Safety Task Force and served as Chairman of the Polk County Law Enforcement Executives Association. His commitment to neighborhood outreach programs have earned him applause from his peers. Those programs include Neighborhood Watch, National Night Out and Special Olympics Iowa.

In announcing his move across the Des Moines metropolitan area from one jurisdiction to another, the Johnston, Iowa mayor said, "One thing Chief McDaniel did say about community policing is that your community can be the first line of defense against things happening to you. It takes an entire community to be safe."

Mr. Speaker, I applaud and congratulate Chief McDaniel for this award and for sharing his leadership with an entire community. I am proud to represent him in the United States Congress. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Chief McDaniel and wishing him nothing but continued success.

CONGRATULATING JENNIFER B. SANCHEZ ON RECEIVING THE U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION'S 2016 FINANCIAL SERVICES CHAMPION AWARD FOR GUAM

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Jennifer B. Sanchez on her selection as the U.S. Small Business Administration's 2016 Financial Services Champion for Guam. Jennifer is being honored for her work in assisting small business owners through advocacy efforts to increase the usefulness and availability of accounting or financial services for small businesses.

Jennifer is the Vice President and Central South Regional Manager for the Bank of Guam, the largest financial institution on Guam, serving individual clients, small businesses, middle-market and large corporations, and government entities. She is responsible for overseeing six Bank of Guam branches with 78 employees serving approximately 44,000 customers on Guam. She began her career with the Bank of Guam in 2003 when she joined the bank's management training program, and since then she has held several management roles, including an operations manager, customer service manager, assistant branch manager, and the Hagåtña branch manager. Throughout her career, Jennifer has worked to help local business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs start and expand their businesses through access to capital and advocacy for economic development.

Jennifer is also an active member of our community. She is a founding member and current president of the Pacific Islands Microcredit Institute, which provides training and counseling to local entrepreneurs to gain access to capital and improve financial management. In this role, she is personally engaged with clients and helps build their networks to give them a better chance of success. She is also a member of the Guam Women's Chamber of Commerce, the Society of Human Resource Management, and the University of Guam School of Business and Public Administration Advisory Council and volunteers for Habitat for Humanity.

I join the people of Guam in congratulating Jennifer Sanchez on her selection as the SBA's 2016 Financial Services Champion for Guam. I commend her for her many contributions to our island and community.

IN HONOR OF MRS. EUNICE ELIZABETH ADAIR TINGLING

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life, legacy, and work of Eunice Elizabeth Adair Tingling; who was a well-known resident of Harlem and Washington Heights. On Friday, February 19, Eunice passed away after living a full life well-lived.

Eunice Elizabeth Adair was born January 4, 1919 in Anderson, South Carolina to Margaret Iola Jones, a third generation schoolteacher and Arthur Aton Adair, a Presbyterian Sunday school missionary. She was the second of four children and first of two girls. Together with her siblings, older brother Arthur Eugene (later a Presbyterian minister), and younger siblings Mary Rose (who became a teacher), and Joseph Arthur (who became both a minister and a teacher), she lived a busy, active life full of learning, music, family, church and travel. Eunice has a proud and extensively documented family history. She was the granddaughter of formerly enslaved Mary Magdalene Bomar who taught school for 60 years & Allen Augustus Jones, also formerly enslaved, who graduated from Maryville College in 1871.

Together they traveled the south as Presbyterian missionaries after their marriage, organizing schools and churches, teaching other newly freed blacks to read and write, raising 10 children, all of whom in turn went to college. While teaching at Brainerd Institute, a unique historic institution created from a former Freedman's school, later taken over by the Presbyterian Church, one of their daughters, Margaret Iola, met and married fellow teacher, Arthur Aton Adair, a union that produced Eunice and her three siblings. When Eunice was 12, her father died. Despite Arthur Aton's untimely death from pneumonia, her mother ensured that all four of the children went on to finish college, graduating with Joe, the youngest.

Eunice attended Brainerd Institute right across the street from her home in Chester, SC, where her parents had taught. It was there that her love of music was further nurtured into a lifelong love. After graduating from Brainerd at 16, Eunice attended Barber-Scotia Junior College in Concord, NC, then attended Knoxville College, graduating with a major in elementary education and minoring in music. On her way north, she stopped over in Washington, DC during WWII, and got a government job (after failing the typing test), working in the Food Stamp Program.

She eventually ended up in Harlem, helping her big brother Gene set up a day care program at Mt. Morris, the Presbyterian Church he was rejuvenating in central Harlem. A disastrous first date resulted in her meeting his brother, and Eunice was introduced to Milton Francis Tingling, a 1st-generation American of Jamaican parentage, aspiring statesman and law student that she met at an Episcopalian youth dance. They married on November 24, 1950.

This union produced three children: Michele, Milton, and Steven. Prior to the birth of her first child, Michele, Eunice obtained her Masters Degree in Education from Columbia University Teachers College on February 28, 1951. Milton and Eunice settled in NYC, raising and educating their three children. Eunice began teaching in NYC public schools, and Milton began practicing as an attorney. She was a founding member and historian for Barristers' Spouses of NY; an elder in Mt. Morris-Ascension Presbyterian Church; former board member & chair of Arthur Eugene & Thelma Davidson Adair Community Life Center; also helped build & was a member of innumerable community & neighborhood organizations.

Milton preceded Eunice in death on June 9, 1987. Eunice helped her husband get elected as a judge of the Civil Court of the City of NY in 1982. In 1996, she then assisted her son Milton Adair in his election to Civil Court of the City of NY in 1996, then, again in 2000 when Milton was elected to the Supreme Court. In 2014, Eunice attended the induction of her son, Milton, at the swearing-in as the first black county clerk in the history of NY State. Eunice was a warrior for God, her family and her church. This petite, quiet, modest, unassuming but powerful woman lived a full life, and was truly a role model for the thousands of women and men whose lives she touched.

Eunice passed on February 19, 2016, at home, surrounded by family per her wishes. She is survived by children Michele, Milton, & Steven; son-in-law Rick; daughters-in-law Carolyn (Milton), Tonja (Milton), Rochelle (Steve), & Lisa (Milton); granddaughters Aija Mai Tingling, Candyce Vines, Nzingha Michele (Carlos) & Jasmine (Langston) Tingling-Clemmons; grandsons Toussaint L'Ouverture & Langston Mandela Tingling-Clemmons; Milton Jordan (Tai), Marcus Jamal & Steven

Joshua Tingling; great-grands Zora Ann Tingling-Clemmons, Malcolm & Zayed Monadel Coleman-Tingling-Clemmons; sisters-in-law Thelma (Eugene) & Justine (Joseph); nephews Robert, Richard, & Maurice; nieces Daisy and Cindy (Rob); dozens of cousins, great-nieces, great-nephews; and multitudes of friends who were family.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my distinguished colleagues join me in recognizing Mrs. Eunice Elizabeth Adair Tingling. Great matriarchs like Mother Tingling are precious gifts we temporarily have in this world, but their caring assistance, contributions and accomplishments are far remembered and everlasting.

ANTON ZHOU IS A MASTER OF THE ARTS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Anton Zhou of Sugar Land, Texas for being named a Texas Young Master in visual arts for the spring of 2016. This is one of the most impressive awards given to a young artist in their state.

Anton currently attends Clements High School and previously attended the XinSheng Wang Art School. At 17 years of age, Anton has won multiple awards and recognition for his well-known impressionist and contemporary art style. Founded in 2002, the Texas Young Master program was developed by the Texas Cultural Trust and the Texas Commission on the Arts. They recognize students from 8th through 11th grade who have proven incredible artistic talent in either visual, performing, or literary arts. Students recognized as a Texas Young Master are awarded $5,000 in scholarships each year for two years, to assist with continuing education in their selected art form.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Anton Zhou for being named a Texas Young Master. We can't wait to see what the future brings for him.

CONGRATULATING MYRACLE MUGOL ON RECEIVING THE U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION'S 2016 HOME-BASED BUSINESS CHAMPION OF THE YEAR AWARD FOR GUAM

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Myracle Mugol on her selection as the U.S. Small Business Administration's 2016 Home-Based Business Champion of the Year Award for Guam. This award honors individuals who have experienced the rewards and difficulties of owning a home-based business and have worked voluntarily to improve the climate for other home-based businesses.

Myracle is the Managing Partner of Kahmeleon, a local graphics design, photography, and audio-visual production services company on Guam. She is also a Partner for Three Moon Productions, which partners with local artists by collaborating and providing opportunities to showcase talents throughout our island. These companies have worked with numerous artists and performers to promote their work and expand their outreach to our community. Through her work with Kahmeleon, Myracle has actively worked to promote programs that teach Chamorro language and culture, including developing a web series ''Siha'' and partnering with the Guam Department of Education and Twiddle Productions to produce an animated documentary, ''Maisa: The Chamorro Girl that Saved Guåhan.''

Myracle is also an active member of our community. She has worked on numerous projects to promote the arts on Guam, including the Guam International Film Festival and the GAX Exhibit at the Agana Shopping Center. She is also a volunteer with Island Girl Power and adopted a soon-to-be-completed media room with the organization.

I join the people of Guam in congratulating Myracle Mugol on her selection as the SBA's 2016 Home-Based Business Champion for Guam. I commend her for her many contributions to our island and community.

RECOGNIZING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF KERN COUNTY

HON. KEVIN McCARTHY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 150th anniversary of Kern County, California, which I am proud to represent.

When the California legislature founded Kern in 1866, they could not have imagined the empire they were creating. The borders they drew circumscribed a vast, underpopulated territory slightly smaller than New Jersey, where Spanish ranchers grazed their herds beside Paiute and Yokuts tribes living as they had for centuries. A few determined pioneer families worked the land, preparing that first cycle of spiraling growth and development that would ever afterward characterize our County.

Agriculture came first. Kern's early farmers planted cotton—our original cash crop—in 1865. Waves of settlers from the crowded East and the farthest stretches of the Old World brought new seeds, orchards and vineyards, carrots, almonds, and all the bounty of the Earth that would flourish in the rich alluvial soil and Mediterranean climate of the San Joaquin. Last year's $7.4 billion harvest is but the latest manifestation of the vast fertility of our Valley, a miracle of irrigation, agronomy, and hard work.

As the 19th Century ended Kern discovered an abundance of that resource which would dictate the 20th: petroleum. The Kern River strike of 1899 set new records in the West, unsurpassed until a still larger reservoir in West Kern spouted 24 million barrels in 1910. Energy quickly joined agriculture to become the twin engine of Kern's economy, augmenting the steady clip of rural development with the iridescent bloom of oil wealth.

Just as suddenly, a supersonic boom in the skies above Kern announced the birth of modern flight in 1947, and with it, the introduction of high-tech aerospace to our County. It was a natural fit. For whenever our community applies itself to a new challenge, it leverages that unique fusion of technical talent and practical entrepreneurialism that makes possible such feats of industry and science as accomplished in our County. Consider that Kern not only produces more petroleum than any other county in America, but also provides half of California's renewable energy, much of it from windfarms pioneered in our own Tehachapi Mountains. In agriculture too, our people were not content with the Valley's natural advantages, but invested in cutting-edge drip irrigation and precision sprinkler systems to double Kern's crop yield in less than 50 years while conserving water. And so in aerospace, where many of the same scientists responsible for the best military aircraft in history are now inventing a new industry—civilian space flight—in desert laboratories at the world's first spaceport, in Mojave, California.

There is so much about Kern that inspires pride. Those things I mention today are only the contours of our accomplishments, the tangible residue of the life's work of generations—visible and easy to identify. The true value of Kern, measured by the compassion and quality of our families and neighbors, is not so easily described. To understand this, you must know the people. You must live, and laugh, and love as fiercely as we do. You must walk the streets of Bakersfield. It is our home—my home—forever.

TRIBUTE TO SAL ARZANI

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Sal Arzani of Interstate 35 High School for winning the Class 1A, 160-pound bracket at the Iowa High School Athletic Association State Wrestling tournament on February 20, 2016.

Iowa has a long and proud history of strong wrestling programs, producing college and Olympic champions for years. Winning two state championships in a row is the culmination of years of hard work and commitment, not only on the part of Sal, but also his parents, his family and coaches.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by Sal demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication, and perseverance. I am honored to represent his family and him in the United States Congress. I ask that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Sal on competing in this rigorous competition and wishing him continued success in his education and high school wrestling career.

CONGRATULATING WILLIAM NAN LI ON RECEIVING THE U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION'S 2016 MINORITY SMALL BUSINESS CHAMPION OF THE YEAR AWARD FOR GUAM

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate William Nan Li on receiving the U.S. Small Business Administration's 2016 Champion of the Year Award for Guam. This award honors an individual on Guam who has fulfilled a commitment to support and assist minority entrepreneurs and small business owners.

William is an Assistant Vice President and Business Development Officer with the Bank of Guam, the largest financial institution on Guam, serving individual clients, small businesses, middle-market and large corporations, and government entities. In his role at the Bank of Guam, Will interacts with clients on a daily basis to provide assistance and counsel on appropriate commercial banking services to meet their business's individual needs. He has provided outstanding assistance to many local businesses, from restaurants to retail owners to contractors and investors. Further, he works with several Bank of Guam initiatives to promote financial literacy and sponsoring events and causes, including the Guam International Marathon, the Guam Football Association, and the "Nihi Tan Fan Bisita" which works with local mayors to extend financial counseling to island residents who may not have the resources to obtain it themselves.

Will is also an active member of our island community. He is a current Board Member of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Guam and the Guam Chinese Association, as well as a member of the United Chinese Association, Guam Chinese Contract Association, and the Chinese Women Association. Will also volunteers for outreach events that teach safe financial practices to local high school students.

I join the people of Guam in congratulating William Nan Li on his selection as the SBA's 2016 Minority Small Business Champion for Guam. I commend him for his many contributions to our island and community.

PASTOR KEVIN HINTZE

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to sponsor today's guest chaplain Pastor Kevin Hintze, the Associate Pastor of Missions and Outreach at Zion Lutheran Church and School in Georgetown, Texas. The guest chaplain program is a wonderful opportunity to welcome pastoral leaders from many different backgrounds. This practice brings to life the freedom of worship enjoyed across this nation.

Pastor Hintze is a steadfast servant of God who has dedicated his time and talents to the ministry of the Gospel in the Lone Star State for the past seven years. Despite the challenges of his profession, he remains enthusiastic in his calling to faithfully sharing the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Pastor Hintze is eager to support and encourage the leaders of our nation through communication and prayer. Today's not the first time he's ministered to an elected body. In addition to being a devoted servant in his community, he has also been a guest Chaplain in both the Texas Legislature and Senate in 2015.

Pastor Kevin Hintze represents his faith, church, and community with dignity and brings honor to the stirring words of the New Testament, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation." I'm privileged to sponsor him as guest chaplain for the House of Representatives.

HONORING PHILLIP E. SLOOP FOR EARNING THE NATIONAL AMERICAN LEGION CERTIFICATE

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Phillip E. Sloop for earning the National American Legion Certificate. This certificate was awarded to Mr. Sloop for his 70 years of continuous service in American Legion Post 115, located in Kannapolis, North Carolina. It is an honor to thank Mr. Sloop for his brave and selfless service to our nation.

After graduating from high school in 1934, Mr. Sloop took a job at Cannon Mills, a local textile company, until he was drafted into the Army Air Corps in April of 1941. Just a few months into his service, the attack on Pearl Harbor occurred on December 7, 1941 and changed the course of Mr. Sloop's life. Once the United States entered World War II, Mr. Sloop was sent to Australia and joined the 436th Army Signal Construction Battalion as part of the 5th Air Force.

While in Australia, he was responsible for installing communication lines in support of the Allied efforts in the Pacific theater. His service in the Pacific extended nearly five years before the eventual conclusion of the war. Upon his return home to North Carolina, he returned to his job at the textile mill and joined American Legion Post 115, where he has remained an active member for 70 years.

I am overjoyed that the American Legion recognized Mr. Sloop for his service during World War II and his participation in the American Legion. The men and women in uniform who have answered the call to defend our nation represent the best our country has to offer and they deserve our continued admiration. Opportunities like this serve as a reminder that we must never take the service and sacrifice of our veterans for granted, and that we as a nation must continually find ways to recognize these heroic patriots for their unparalleled dedication to protecting our freedom.

Mr. Speaker, please join me today in congratulating Phillip E. Sloop for earning this distinguished honor, and thanking him for his service and dedication to our country.

RECOGNIZING CARLOTTA LEON GUERRERO ON RECEIVING THE U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION'S PHOENIX AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO DISASTER RECOVERY AS A VOLUNTEER FOR GUAM

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Carlotta Leon Guerrero on receiving the U.S. Small Business Administration's 2016 Phoenix Award for Outstanding Contributions to Disaster Recovery as a volunteer. Carlotta is being honored for her efforts and contributions that have enabled businesses of Guam and neighboring island communities to recover successfully from disasters.

Carlotta is the Executive Director of the Ayuda Foundation founded the non-profit organization in 1995 with Dr. Mike Cruz of the Guam Medical Society and Christine Nilsen of Continental Micronesia, Inc. Carlotta began her public service serving six years as a senator in the Guam Legislature from 1994 to 2000, and has served in different capacities within the public and private sectors.

The Ayuda Foundation is based in Guam and is dedicated to helping Pacific islanders, especially our Micronesian region, in times of need. The Ayuda Foundation is meant to improve the health and wellbeing of Micronesia through medical missions, emergency relief and program support. The Ayuda Foundation is comprised of Medical Missions to Micronesia, Reach Out & Read Early Literacy Program, AIDS Education Project, Island Girl Power and Books to Schools.

Through Ayuda Foundation, Carlotta was able to bring important resources to areas recently hit by storms in places such as Philippines, Vanuatu, Chuuk, Yap and Saipan. She was instrumental in bringing diverse parts of the community together to assist in providing thousands of dollars of aid to areas affected by natural disaster. Carlotta creatively used her own resources to source, procure and distribute supplies and assistance to those in need in the form of donations and in-kind contributions.

Carlotta has selflessly, consistently and tirelessly worked to help victims of disasters in every way possible. In addition to providing food and supplies, she believes that it is critical to assist hospitals within communities struck by natural disasters to maximize assistance. Though, Ayuda Foundation has a broad mission of helping the community, the bulk of the work goes to disaster relief. Most noteably, Carlotta and the Ayuda Foundation partnered with MAP International, a non-profit in the U.S. to secure large donations of pharmaceuticals. She then worked with non-governmental organizations around the world to distribute them in areas of conflict and disaster. Ayuda Foundation was able to obtain $400,000 worth of medication with only $5,000 donated by the Bank of Gaum to donate to the islands of Chuuk and Yap after they were hit by Typhoon Maysak. Ayuda Foundation was also able to procure an inter Emergency Health Kit from MAP International for the community hospital on the island of Saipan after the devastating Typhoon Soudelor.

Again, I congratulate Ms. Carlotta Leon Guerrero on receiving the 2016 Small Business Administration's Phoenix Award for Outstanding Contributions to Disaster Recovery for Guam. I join the people of Guam in commending her for her award and thanking her for her many contributions to our island community.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF FUTURE SCIENTISTS AND TECHNOLOGISTS—GABRIEL AGU

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Gabriel Agu from Richmond, TX for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists to represent the state of Texas at the Congress of Future Science and Technology leaders.

Gabriel attends Strake Jesuit College Prep School and is one of 13 high school honor students selected from the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas. These students were selected as Texas delegates at the Congress of Future Science and Technology Leaders. This program was designed for high school students to be recognized for their hard work in school, as well as to support their aspirations of working in a science or technology field. The National Academy was founded by Richard Rossi and Dr. Robert Darling; Mr. Rossi currently serves as president. The Congress is being held at the Tsongas Center at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell from June 29th through July 1st. Gabriel was selected by a group of educators to be a delegate for the Congress thanks to his dedication to his academic success and goals of pursuing science or technology. We are proud of Gabriel and all of his hard work, and know he will make Richmond proud.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Gabriel for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists. Keep up the great work.

HONORING TWENTY-TWO TEACHERS OF THE GREATER BOCA RATON AREA

HON. THEODORE E. DEUTCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the twenty-two outstanding teachers from my district who have been awarded the Teacher of the Year award from the Rotary Club of Boca Raton Sunrise.

For the past 30 years, the Rotary Club of Boca Raton Sunrise has offered this annual distinction to one teacher at each of the twenty-two schools in the greater Boca Raton area. Each awardee is selected by the school's principal. These teachers have dedicated themselves to inspiring and empowering the next generation of young South Floridians. The amount of time and effort these exemplary teachers have spent betting the next generation of their community is truly admirable, and their passion is worthy of recognition.

These twenty-two exemplary teachers have made a profound impact on their students through their caring, commitment, and professionalism. They are a cohort defined by integrity, excellence, and the highest marks in all they do. The City of Boca Raton is fortunate to have such outstanding faculty, dedicated to ensuring a bright future for our students.

Congratulations to Cara Pavek, Polly Moorman, Jeanne Russell-Khan, Kenneth Johnson, Tina Garofalo, Alyce Lewert, Deborah Woolsey, Lori Paquette, Stephany Pierre, Gina Yallop, Linda Josaphat, Lorraine Overton, Margaret Longazel, Abbe Snyder, Rosanne Breland, Kristen Stern, Randy Weddle, Rachel Smith, Jenifer Berlatsky, Lindsay Ackerman-Conway, Lawrence Shane, and Nicole Scalisi on being nominated for this year's teacher of the year award. I am pleased to honor them, and I thank them for their continued service.

RECOGNIZING DAVID J. JOHN IN RECEIVING THE U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION'S 2016 SMALL BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR AWARD FOR GUAM

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate David J. John on being awarded the U.S. Small Business Administration's 2016 Small Business Person of the Year Award for Guam. David John is being honored and recognized as an individual who has demonstrated outstanding skills, savviness, and ability to create success in the small business community. He was educated at the University of Saint Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota and is the president of ASC Trust Corporation, a retirement management company located in Hagåtña, Guam.

For the last 25 years, ASC Trust Corporation has provided employer sponsored retirement plans in Guam and throughout the Pacific. The company manages approximately half a billion dollars in retirement assets for 23,000 participants and 340 retirement plans in the Western Pacific. ASC Trust Corporation has been committed to steady growth and has expanded to four offices with more than 50 employees in the region. David proudly supports the local workforce and all of his employees are native residents of the island or city where their office is located in.

ASC Trust Corporation is committed to revolutionizing retirement plans in the Pacific Region by providing plan sponsors and participants the services they need to plan for successful retirement. The company offers a local team providing unparalleled service and the support of industry-leading partners to help manage their technology and investments. Additionally, ASC Trust Corporation is the largest provider of retirement plan management services in Micronesia.

Not only is David a successful business person, he is also very involved in the local community. He is an active member of the Guam Economic Development Authority where is the Vice Chairman of the Board and the Chairman of the Tax Qualifying Program for Guam. He is a member and past Chairman of the University of Guam Endowment foundation, past Chairman of the Guam Chamber of Commerce and past President of the Rotary Club of Guam. Additionally, David supports other local organizations, including sponsoring the ASC Trust Corporation Islanders soccer and basketball teams.

David is a successful business man and family man. He is a leader in our local community and a role model for others in the private business sector. David and his company are committed to Guam and the region, and to improving the community through hiring local and boosting the economy.

I congratulate David on receiving the 2016 U.S. Small Business Administration's Small Business Person of the Year Award for Guam. I join the people of Guam in commending him on this award and thanking them for their many contributions to our island community.

THANKING CHARLES RUGGLES FOR HIS CHARITY AND SERVICE

HON. DANIEL T. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I ask the United States House of Representatives to join me in recognizing Mr. Charles Ruggles for the support he has offered to the city of Flint and its residents during the Flint Water Crisis.

Mr. Ruggles is a professional photographer who formed the Flint Teens Matter project as a response to the water crisis. As a result of the crisis, some families may not have the resources to have professional portraits taken for their graduates. The mission of Mr. Ruggles' project is to provide free senior photos to high school students in the city who have been impacted by the ongoing water crisis.

Mr. Ruggles empowers his cause through a strategy of social networking to recruit photographers and donors from around Michigan to join his efforts. Additionally, he accomplishes his project's mission by graciously donating his own time to schedule and shoot photography sessions with teens of families who have been affected by the crisis. This gesture leaves a lifelong impact on students and their families, and one that might not be present without Mr. Ruggles' commendable and charitable efforts.

It is my honor to represent such active and charitable members of our community, and Charles Ruggles is a shining example. The type of direct and individual care that Mr. Ruggles has shown is exactly what the citizens of Flint need.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the work done by Mr. Charles Ruggles and thank him for the service he has provided to the students and city of Flint.

TRIBUTE TO RALPH CRAWFORD

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Ralph

Crawford of Villisca, Iowa. Mr. Crawford has been recognized by France 71 years later for his bravery during his service in World War II on the infamous D-Day, June 6, 1944. He has been awarded the French Legion of Honour medal for his 'gallantry of action and the liberation of France in World War II.' This award joins his recognition medals from the United States of America: Purple Heart, Air Medal and Good Conduct Medal.

Stated Crawford: "The mission was to bomb Teluth." Mr. Crawford flew three missions on D-Day as a tailgunner on a B–17 bomber. The mission went awry and the Nazis spotted the group and without any prior parachute training, Mr. Crawford and his team had to jump for their lives, mid-air, with no certainty as to their fate. The entire crew survived with some injuries and continued in service to this great nation.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud and congratulate Mr. Crawford for this exemplary award from the French government. We are all humbled by his service and for keeping the United States of America and its allies free. I am proud to represent him in the United States Congress I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Mr. Crawford and wishing him nothing but continued success.

RECOGNIZING THE GUAM SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER ON RECEIVING THE U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION'S 2016 SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER AND EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION CENTER AWARD

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Guam Small Business Development Center on being awarded the 2016 U.S. Small Business Development Center Excellence and Innovation Center Award. The Guam Small Business Development Center is being recognized for their excellence in providing value to small businesses and advancing program delivery and management through innovation.

The Guam Small Business Development Center began operations in May 1995 through federal funds and celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. It became the Pacific Islands SBDC Network and first service center in the region. The Guam Small Business Development Center provides free, confidential, one-to-one counseling in all areas of business management to all existing and potential small business owners and managers that are U.S. citizens, green card holders or citizens of the Freely Associated States. These services include pre-venture feasibility, business plan development, marketing, record keeping, financial and human resource management, operations management, access to capital, and specialized areas such as international trade and technical services. The Guam SBDC is able to refer local businesses to high-quality external sources of information and ideas because of its membership with U.S. Association of Small Business Development Centers (ASBDC) and partnership with the U.S. SBA and the National Business Incubation Association.

Additionally, the Guam Small Business Development Center works with the local Guam Small Business Administration Branch Office and Hawaii Small Business Administration District Office as a champion for Small Business Administration products and services. This work includes the effective amplification of the Small Business Administration mission, priorities and programs. The Guam Small Business Development Center provides excellent customer service with a 95 percent client satisfaction rate and efficiently meets clients' needs by providing quality counseling. The Guam Small Business Development Center utilizes all resources available and partners with local government agencies and private entities to carry out its mission of helping entrepreneurs start and expand their businesses.

Again, I congratulate Guam Small Business Development Center on being awarded the 2016 U.S. Small Business Development Center Excellence and Innovation Center Award. I commend Guam Small Business Development Center Director Casey Jeszenka and the staff of the Guam SBDC for their leadership in helping to promote entrepreneurship and support for our local economy. I join the people of Guam in commending them for their award and thanking them for their many contributions to our island community.

HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VIETNAM WAR AND BRONZE STAR PRESENTATION TO LT. COL. JACK DEICHMAN

HON. RYAN A. COSTELLO

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, on March 29, 2016 we marked the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War to honor and express our gratitude to our Vietnam Veterans.

Our Vietnam War veterans served our nation with courage, dignity, and a willingness to make the ultimate sacrifice in service to our country.

Deserving particular praise and commendation for his heroism and service during the Vietnam War is Lieutenant Colonel (ret.) Jack Deichman of the United States Marine Corps.

I have had the pleasure of knowing Jack for over a year now, and I am grateful I had the opportunity to acknowledge Jack's leadership in Dai Do, Vietnam on March 30, 1968.

Mr. Speaker, Jack displayed expert leadership in maneuvering his Company through heavy enemy fire and remained steadfast in assisting his wounded Commander to establish their defensive positions.

Because of Jack's actions, many lives were saved that day, and many attribute this battle as the deciding factor in winning the war.

We as a nation are grateful for Jack's heroic actions that day.

His courage and selfless devotion to duty represents the essence of the United States Marine Corps and this great nation.

Mr. Speaker, on March 29, 2016, the nation acknowledged Jack's bravery with the presentation of the Bronze Star Medal.

I am proud to recognize Jack and all our Vietnam Veterans and we thank you for your service. Welcome home.

HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GREAT LAKES CENTER

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize and honor the 50th anniversary of the Great Lakes Center (GLC). For more than half a century, the Great Lakes Center has worked to improve the quality of the environment by providing the best possible science to decision makers concerned with the health and sustainability of our freshwater resources, with a primary focus on the Great Lakes and their watersheds.

The Center was established in 1966 when Howard Sengbush formed the Great Lakes Laboratory. The Great Lakes Center's field station is located on SUNY Buffalo State's waterfront campus along the Black Rock Channel. It is a multidisciplinary research, education, and service institute focused on advancing our knowledge and understanding of the largest body of freshwater on Earth.

The Great Lakes Center is the only institution within the SUNY system with a research field station physically situated along the water. The Center maintains a large fleet of research vessels dedicated to specific types of research and educational functions.

Over the last eight years under the Direction of Sasha Karatayev, the GLC saw sustained activity and productivity: over 80 research papers published, 240 presentations given at various state, national, and international meetings and 35 funded projects totaling over 14 million dollars. This living laboratory dedicated to the investigation of the ecology of the Great Lakes and its tributaries is staffed by research scientists, educators, technicians and professors with the Biology department. The Center provides opportunities to obtain Masters of Arts and Masters of Science degrees in Great Lakes Ecosystem Science.

The Great Lakes ecosystem is complex, dynamic, and fragile. The work conducted at the GLC informs policy makers, educators, community leaders, and environmentalists—and contributes toward effective stewardship and decision-making. As part of the Great Lakes Observing System, the GLC operates the only operating observation buoy in eastern Lake Erie. The GLC continuously works to reverse the damage of decades of abuse neglect of the Great Lakes. The Center continues to explore opportunities to expand its educational programs within the regional community.

In February of this year, I was proud to speak on the House Floor during Great Lakes Day to demonstrate the importance of Congress to continue to fund the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). Since the creation of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative in 2010, nearly $1.6 billion has been invested in projects to clean up the Great Lakes, the world's largest freshwater system. Locally, the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative supports a number of initiatives including the restoration of the Buffalo River.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me this opportunity to once again speak about the Great Lakes with pride in this visionary, vitally important and internationally renowned center whose home base is my alma mater, Buffalo State College as its Gold Anniversary was celebrated on April 15, 2016. Congratulations and deepest appreciation to all those who contributed to the past and present of this Center as the preservation, protection and promotion of the Great Lakes is of immeasurable importance to our future.

TRIBUTE TO DR. ROBERT L. BOWEN

HON. TODD ROKITA

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a notable Hoosier, Dr. Robert L. Bowen, who is being honored by the Anti-Defamation League at the 2016 Man of Achievement Award Dinner in Indianapolis.

The Anti-Defamation League's Man of Achievement Award was established to recognize individuals and companies who have demonstrated exceptional commitment to the community, justice and equal opportunity for all. Dr. Bowen was chosen for this honor because of his selfless support of underprivileged youth in Indianapolis.

Dr. Bowen and his wife Terry established the Bowen Foundation in 2000 to provide scholarships to minority students in Indianapolis to pursue education past high school. Over 700 students have received more than $2 million in scholarships. In 2002, the Bowens, along with the Purdue University President, founded Science Bound. The program mentors Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) students from grades 8 through 12 to pursue careers in science and technical fields and then receive a full-tuition scholarship to Purdue University. In 2009, Dr. Bowen was inducted into the IPS Hall of Fame for his philanthropy efforts.

Dr. Bowen also provides support to Purdue University through the Robert L. and Terry L. Bowen High-Scale Performance Civil Engineering Laboratory, and $11 million research facility test structure. Every fall since 2010, Dr. Bowen drives to Purdue's campus twice a week to teach leadership and advanced project management to 60 senior-level students.

Dr. Bowen is the founder and chairman of Bowen Engineering Corporation, a multi-market company specializing in water and wastewater treatment plants and energy utility construction. He received his bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Purdue University and has completed the Harvard Business School OPM Program. He has received many other awards and honors throughout his career.

He is a great friend and confidant of mine, and a wonderful asset to our community, state and nation. I wish to congratulate him on this latest honor and thank him for all he does and will continue to do to help ensure that the American promise as The Land of Opportunity is there for those who work to achieve it.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I had to return to New York, and as a result, I missed votes on April 14 through 15, 2016. Had I been present, I would have voted ''no'' on roll call vote No. 146, Final Passage of H.R. 3340, the Financial Stability Oversight Council Reform Act, ''no'' on roll call vote No. 149, Final Passage of H.R. 3791 to raise the consolidated assets threshold under the small bank holding company policy statement, ''aye'' on roll call vote No. 150, the Amendment offered by Mr. YARMUTH to clarify that nothing in H.R. 2666 prevents the FCC from requiring or enhancing transparency, ''aye'' on roll call vote No. 141, the Amendment offered by Mr. MCNERNEY stating that nothing in H.R. 2666 shall affect the authority of the FCC to act in the public interest, and ''no'' on roll call vote No. 152, Final Passage of H.R. 2666, the No Rate Regulation of Broadband Internet Access Act.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF FUTURE SCIENTISTS AND TECHNOLOGISTS—COY GARDNER

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Coy Gardner from Katy, TX for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists to represent the state of Texas at the Congress of Future Science and Technology leaders.

Coy attends Katy High School and is one of 13 high school honor students selected from the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas. These students were selected as Texas delegates at the Congress of Future Science and Technology Leaders. This program was designed for high school students to be recognized for their hard work in school, as well as to support their aspirations of working in a science or technology field. The National Academy was founded by Richard Rossi and Dr. Robert Darling; Mr. Rossi currently serves as president. The Congress is being held at the Tsongas Center at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell from June 29th through July 1st. Coy was selected by a group of educators to be a delegate for the Congress thanks to his dedication to his academic success and goals of pursuing science or technology. We are proud of Coy and all of his hard work, and know he will make Katy proud.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Coy for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists. Keep up the great work.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF MONSIGNOR JOHN DUCETTE

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of a great spiritual leader from Western New York, the Reverend Monsignor John I. Ducette, who passed away last week at the age of 79.

Msgr. Ducette was a native of Buffalo and Niagara Falls, educated in those cities and later at St. Bonaventure University and Christ the King Seminary, both in Olean, NY, and later at Seton Hall University, The New York Province Priests' Institute and the National Institute for Clergy Formation.

Ordained a priest on St. Patrick's Day 1962, Msgr. Ducette accepted diocesan assignments and ministered to congregants throughout Western New York, from East Otto to Niagara Falls before finally earning assistant pastor positions at two parishes in the town of Tonawanda.

In 1985, Msgr. Ducette was appointed Pastor of St. Timothy's Parish in the town of Tonawanda, and it is at this parish where he made his most lasting mark. As Pastor for more than 23 years, he established St. Tim's as a warm and inviting—and prospering—parish within the nearby Sheridan-Parkside community. Msgr. Ducette often spoke of St. Tim's as ''an intentional parish.'' He told his congregants that, ''the people that come to St. Tim's don't necessarily live in the community, but they long for the type of services that we provide to the people.''

The response he received to his work demonstrated that fact. Msgr. Ducette was a master at attracting retired priests to St. Tim's, where each might say one or two masses per weekend. In so doing, he managed a robust schedule of masses and attracted the followers of these retired priests to come and worship at St. Tim's, thereby growing the size of the parish and enhancing the parish's ability to provide services to a local community often beset by economic and social challenges.

Msgr. Ducette was known to run a tight ship. He liked to celebrate a well-organized and efficient Sunday mass. But within that efficiency was an innate ability to deliver a cogent and thoughtful message. While few of Msgr. Ducette's homilies during mass would exceed two or three minutes of length, all were memorable, and most if not all would end with a question, usually one that would cause his congregants to examine their respective faith and allow them throughout the ensuing week to consider what they were doing in their lives to do a greater good within their own communities.

In addition to having been named a prelate of honor by Pope St. John Paul II and his service as Chaplain of the Town of Tonawanda Police Department, Msrg. Ducette was a great lover of the sea. He served as Chaplain of the Port of Buffalo and for 35 years served as diocesan director of the Apostleship of the Sea, praying for the safety of all seafarers and blessing sailing vessels. He delivered blessings at the dedication of the USS *Little Rock* and USS *The Sullivans* at the Buffalo & Erie County Naval & Military Park. I was

proud to invite Msgr. to participate in a nautical ceremony at the Buffalo Yacht Club several years ago.

I was proud to have known Msgr. Ducette and to have been in his presence when he offered prayers. He was a kind soul, loved by all who had the privilege of knowing him. It is certain that his many friends and followers mourn his loss and will look to his great legacy—the successful St. Timothy's parish—for comfort at this time of sadness.

CONGRATULATING STUDENTS FROM WANDO HIGH SCHOOL IN MOUNT PLEASANT, SOUTH CAROLINA

HON. MARK SANFORD

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. SANFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the students from Wando High School, located in South Carolina's First Congressional District, who will be participating in the We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution National Finals a few short days from now. In order to qualify for the national finals, a class must win its state championship or qualify as a ''wild card'' class, which was the case for Wando this year. These students will join with approximately 1,200 high schoolers from 56 classes across the nation, all of whom will be competing in the mock hearings held at the University of Maryland.

At a variety of levels, it is encouraging to see so many students investing their time to further their education by taking an in-depth look at American history, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. And the support these students receive throughout the U.S. is remarkable—each year, local communities raise nearly $2,000,000 to support the national finalists.

During their time in DC, the high schoolers not only have the opportunity to explore our nation's capital, but they will come to demonstrate their civic knowledge by participating in a simulated congressional hearing before panels of judges made up of constitutional scholars, lawyers, journalists, and government leaders from across the nation.

In closing, I would like to congratulate the students from Wando, wish them good luck at the competition, and offer a word of welcome as they make their visit to the Capitol.

HONORING THE GALVAN BALLROOM

HON. FILEMON VELA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. VELA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Galvan Ballroom in Corpus Christi, Texas, which recently received the Texas Treasure Business Award.

The Texas Historical Commission, an organization authorized by the Texas State Legislature, honored the Galvan Ballroom with the Texas Treasure Business Award, as a business that has been in operation and has provided employment opportunities and support to the state's economy for over 50 years. This award, created in 2005 by Senate Bill 920, pays tribute to the state's well-established businesses and their exceptional historical contributions toward the economic growth and prosperity of the State of Texas. The Galvan Ballroom, located in the heart of Corpus Christi at 1632 Agnes St., opened its doors on March 2, 1950. The Galvan Ballroom was established by Corpus Christi police officer, entrepreneur, and musician Rafael Galvan, Sr. Mr. Galvan sought to open a venue for the Galvan Orchestra, a fifteen-piece ensemble featuring his four sons: Ralph, Eddie, Sammy, and Bobby.

The Galvan Ballroom earned its reputation as the place in Corpus Christi to visit for big band, swing, and jazz music. Due to its large size, the venue hosted national acts. The large dance hall, which featured a custom-made revolving chandelier with four spotlights, was a popular location for dances and other events. South Texans will recall that the Galvan Ballroom was fully booked with events nearly every night. On Saturday nights, the ballroom hosted functions for private clubs and community events, including student dances, church events, and the annual policeman's ball. On Sundays, the ballroom opened to the public for dancing and music, including performances by Duke Ellington, Count Basie, and Chester ''Chet'' Rupe. During the time of segregation, The Galvan Ballroom played a major role in the social and cultural development of Corpus Christi. The venue promoted integration of the Hispanic and Anglo-American communities through diverse musical acts, which included African-American groups.

The Galvan Ballroom continues to be a musical landmark in Corpus Christi. Today, the ballroom hosts weddings, quinceañeras and other events. On the first floor is the headquarters of the Galvan Music Company. Eddie Galvan, a member of the original Galvan Orchestra, was inducted into the South Texas Region XIV Band Directors Hall of Fame, and the South Texas Music Walk of Fame has also honored members of the Galvan family.

In 2015, the Galvan Ballroom was added to the National Register of Historic Places and was designated as a Texas Hispanic Heritage site. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in congratulating the Galvan Ballroom upon receiving the Texas Treasure Business Award, and wish them many more years of continued contributions to the Coastal Bend area.

VOTER SUPPRESSION IS UN-AMERICAN

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today on this Restoration Tuesday, I rise to shed light on the continued voter suppression around the country during this election year and the ongoing battle to protect every American's constitutional right to vote.

Alabama—Arizona—Texas—Wisconsin—the list goes on. We continue to hear tale after tale of modern day barriers to the voting polls this election year. After the Supreme Court struck down Section 4 pre-clearance requirements in 2013, several states took that ruling as a license to trample on the Constitution and violate the voting rights of vulnerable communities across the nation. These continued attacks on the rights of eligible voters in this country are unconscionable and unconstitutional. Congress needs to act now to stop this plague of voter suppression and fight for justice.

Today, as you know, the state of New York is holding its primary elections. Unsurprisingly, complaints have already been made by eligible voters who registered a minor party or with no party, and who will not be able to participate in the primary elections. New state rules allow only registered Democrats to vote in Tuesday's Democratic primary and only registered Republicans to vote in the GOP contest. This new law will leave out 3.2 million New Yorkers who are registered to vote.

Likewise, my home state of Alabama implemented new strict voter ID laws and then closed over 30 DMV offices; the most popular location to obtain a driver's license. Arizona implemented a similar voter suppression strategy by reducing their voting sites from 200 in 2012 to 60 in 2016, citing a so-called need for budget savings.

In all, 17 states across the country have implemented new restrictive laws aimed at blocking the American people from the ballot box. New laws with strict photo identification requirements, early voting cutbacks, new requirements of proof of citizenship, and practices creating grueling waiting lines are all burdensome barriers which would have likely been blocked through the Voting Rights Act process of pre-clearance. And not surprisingly, these new restrictions have disproportionately affected minority populations such as African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans as well as university students.

The fear of voter fraud is an excuse. The need for budget cutbacks is an excuse. The American people are fed up with the excuses. Fundamental to our democracy is the right to vote, and creating barriers to block the vote is truly un-American. It holds little value to give someone a car and then take away the keys. Our right to vote is the vehicle to democracy but we need the keys to easily access the polls. The suppression needs to stop, the oppression needs to stop, and the excuses need to stop. Congress needs to stand up and do something about it now.

On this Restoration Tuesday, I give us all the charge to battle against the continued suppression of the American vote and stand strong by our principles of democracy, liberty, and justice for all.

IN RECOGNITION OF IRVIN WARREN AND HIS SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

HON. RENEE L. ELLMERS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, Irvin Warren was born to a rural farming family in Sampson County, North Carolina where he spent his early years learning the value of hard, honest work and the importance of education. Later Mr. Warren pursued higher education at both East Carolina and North Carolina State Universities; Mr.

Warren acquired his Master's degree in Education. During his tenure in school he returned home on the weekends to continue working on his family's farm.

Upon graduation, Mr. Warren became a professor and it was during this time that his Uncle offered him a partnership in an auto parts business. To follow this new aspiration, Mr. Warren secured a loan from his mother and started Warren Oil Company in 1976 with only three employees.

Mr. Warren expanded his company over the next few decades, growing to over 450 employees and packaging oil products under its own brand, and for other companies. The company has expanded across the country, distributing its product across the United States and in over 49 countries globally. Warren Oil Company is currently the largest independent lubricant manufacturer in North America. Mr. Warren's grit and persistence have allowed for him to remain competitive with multinational oil and gas corporations such as Exxon and BP.

Even through this impressive growth Mr. Warren has never wavered in his commitment to his employees—even referring to them as part of his own family—furthermore, he continued to give back to the community.

His generosity, commitment to service and love for people is evident. He has provided relief funding for events such as the earthquake in Haiti in 2010—even personally visiting the country during this tragedy and remaining onsite during a significant portion of the recovery process.

Perhaps most notably, Mr. Warren has also provided several all-expenses-paid tours for WW II veterans to visit the D.C. museums and memorials, assuring that priority was given to those who had never been. Mr. Warren is committed to continuing these trips until each veteran has had the opportunity to see the Washington sites.

This self-driven entrepreneurial spirit, coupled with the generosity and family-like connection to his employees should be a model for aspiring business people across the United States. Through hard work and dedication, Mr. Warren has managed to create a highly competitive business while still remaining deeply connected to his hometown of Dunn, North Carolina.

HONORING THE WOLFE COUNTY HEALTH AND REHABILITATION CENTER

HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a very special organization from Kentucky's Sixth Congressional District. The Wolfe County Health and Rehabilitation Center recently received the 2015 Facility of the Year Award from the Kentucky Association of Health Care Facilities.

The Wolfe County facility is located in beautiful Campton, Kentucky. They are owned by First Corbin Long Term Care, Inc., a part of Forcht Group of Kentucky. The 100 bed facility offers high quality long term care and short term rehabilitation to its residents. Administrator Amy Prater and all the staff are to be commended for the wonderful job they do in caring for their residents. The award recognizes service of the highest excellence among the many long term care facilities in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Caring for the elderly population in our country is a very special and important calling. The Wolfe County Health and Rehabilitation Center offers excellent skilled care in a loving and compassionate environment. Their award was well deserved and serves as the standard for other facilities to emulate. I am proud to recognize and honor the Wolfe County Health and Rehabilitation Center before the United States House of Representatives.

RECOGNIZING GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. THEODORE E. DEUTCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise in commemoration of the 195th anniversary of Greece's independence.

America's Founding Fathers drew inspiration from ancient Greece's democratic example. Hundreds of years later, the modern-day nation of Greece continues to stand as an ally with the United States. Yet our relationship goes far beyond our mutual security concerns. Our bond is rooted in our shared values of democracy, liberty, and humanitarian aid.

As a co-chair of the Congressional Hellenic-Israeli Alliance Caucus, I will continue to promote greater collaboration between Congress, Israel, and Greece. I congratulate the people of Greece and extend my best wishes on the occasion of Greek Independence Day.

TRIBUTE TO KYLE BISCOGLIA

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Kyle Biscoglia of Waukee, Iowa for winning the Class 3A, 106-pound bracket at the Iowa High School Athletic Association State Wrestling tournament on February 20, 2016.

Iowa has a long and proud history of strong wrestling programs in our state, producing college and Olympic champions for years. Winning a state championship is the culmination of years of hard work and commitment, not only on the part of Kyle, but also his parents, his family and coaches.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by Kyle demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication, and perseverance. I am honored to represent him and his family in the United States Congress. I know all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Kyle on competing in this rigorous competition and wishing him continued success in his education and high school wrestling career.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE CAREER OF JOHN SHIELS

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career of John Shiels. John is a committed community servant in my hometown of Sacramento, California, who has dedicated much of his life to improving flood protection for the people who live there.

For the past decade, John served honorably on the Board of Trustees of Reclamation District 1000, which is responsible for maintaining the levees that protect the Natomas basin in Sacramento. John's leadership on the board of Reclamation District 1000 included sitting on the Executive, Urbanization, and Personnel Committees; in this capacity, John made many positive contributions to Sacramento's levee safety.

His association with Reclamation District 1000 led to John serving as a member of the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA), which has been an invaluable partner to me in my efforts to ensure that Sacramento has the highest possible level of flood protection. John's term on SAFCA was characterized by his strong leadership, astute coalition-building, and unwavering commitment to public safety.

Not all of John's career was spent protecting Sacramento from flooding. Indeed, before he became a Trustee of Reclamation District 1000, John spent a distinguished career with several Fortune 500 companies as a senior information systems executive. Prior to his professional career, he served with the U.S. Navy Supply Corps, earning several commendations.

Now that John has retired, he volunteers in the Natomas community and across the Sacramento region. He is currently President of the River Oaks Community Association, and assists with administrative responsibilities for his church.

Those of us in Sacramento who care about protecting our community from flooding owe a debt of gratitude to John for his years of distinguished service on SAFCA and at Reclamation District 1000. I wish John a happy and fulfilling retirement, and respectfully ask that my colleagues acknowledge him today.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I was not present for roll call No. 153.

Had I been present, I would have voted yes.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF FUTURE SCIENTISTS AND TECHNOLOGISTS—MARIA BENNETT

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Maria Bennett from Katy, TX for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists to represent the state of Texas at the Congress of Future Science and Technology leaders.

Maria attends Cinco Ranch High School and is one of 13 high school honor students selected from the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas. These students were selected as Texas delegates at the Congress of Future Science and Technology Leaders. This program was designed for high school students to be recognized for their hard work in school, as well as to support their aspirations of working in a science or technology field. The National Academy was founded by Richard Rossi and Dr. Robert Darling; Mr. Rossi currently serves as president. The Congress is being held at the Tsongas Center at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell from June 29th through July 1st. Maria was selected by a group of educators to be a delegate for the Congress thanks to her dedication to her academic success and goals of pursuing science or technology. We are proud of Maria and all of her hard work, and know she will make Katy proud.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Maria for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists. Keep up the great work.

CELEBRATING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF GREEN HILL RETIREMENT COMMUNITY

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of the 150th Anniversary of Green Hill Retirement Community located in West Orange, Essex County, New Jersey.

Green Hill Retirement Community is devoted to providing personal care to older Americans of lifestyles ranging from all levels of need. Green Hill continues to preserve the vision of its founders set 150 years ago by working to adapt to the changing needs of their community.

Established in 1866, Green Hill is a nonprofit facility dedicated to providing compassionate care to seniors and their families. Originally founded by the Society for the Relief of Respectable Aged Women in 1866, following the end of the Civil War with just 13 residences, Green Hill currently continues to expand and innovate new ways of living such as the launch of their Green House Homes development in 2011. Though the world has changed greatly since 1866, the need for selfless personal care continues to grow.

Additionally, Green Hill provides families of elderly loved ones with all of the necessary resources crucial in the transition to a senior living community. Green Hill provides the tools and services required to evaluate the level of need for each prospective resident, determine what financial resources are available to them, and explore their different lifestyle options at Green Hill. Green Hill understands that transitioning to a senior living community can be stressful for both the prospective resident and their family; therefore Green Hill is dedicated to all efforts helping to ease the process.

In addition to the quality care that Green Hill provides to seniors on both ends of the need spectrum, including those independent and ''on the go'' as well as those who require full-time assistance, Green Hill also offers an immense selection of recreational, educational, and social activities. These programs increase the comfort of living in the convenient metropolitan location of Green Hill.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in thanking the members and supporters of the Green Hill Retirement Community of West Orange, New Jersey for all of their service to the community, and in congratulating them on their 150th Anniversary.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 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 $19,203,643,099,493.25. We've added $8,576,766,050,550.17 to our debt in 6 years. This is over $7.5 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

TRIBUTE TO COLTON CLINGENPEEL

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Colton Clingenpeel of Thomas Jefferson High School in Council Bluffs, Iowa for winning the Class 3A, 152-pound bracket at the Iowa High School Athletic Association State Wrestling tournament on February 20, 2016.

Iowa has a long and proud history of strong wrestling programs in our state, producing college and Olympic champions for years. Winning a state championship is the culmination of years of hard work and commitment, not only on the part of Colton, but also his parents, his family and coaches.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by Colton demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication, and perseverance. I am honored to represent Colton and his family in the United States Congress. I know all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives will join me in congratulating Colton on competing in this rigorous competition and wishing him continued success in his education and high school wrestling career.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TODD C. YOUNG

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, April 18, 2016, I was unable to be present for recorded votes. Had I been present, I would have voted: ''Yes'' on roll call vote No. 153, and ''Yes'' on roll call vote No. 154.

TRIBUTE TO DR. ROBERT A. COPELAND, JR.

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of Dr. Robert A. Copeland, Jr. a leading American ophthalmologist who helped the profession deepen its understanding of disparities and broaden its international reach. Dr. Copeland was the founding chairman of the Department of Ophthalmology at the Howard University College of Medicine, the position he held at the time of his untimely passing on the evening of Monday, April 11, 2016. He is survived by his wife Candie, whom he married May 24, 2008, and children Kennedie, Robert III, and Lucas.

Dr. Copeland was widely admired as an advocate for the prevention of eye disease, a mentor to countless students, and an expert and attentive physician. His advocacy reached Capitol Hill, where I had the pleasure of working with him on patient issues. Dr. Copeland was scheduled to come to my office for a meeting in conjunction with the American Academy of Ophthalmology on April 14, the week of his passing.

Robert A. Copeland, Jr., was born on December 13, 1955, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. His interest in the condition of the eye arose during his first week as a Fisk University undergraduate in 1973. Copeland was injured playing football and had to be treated for blunt trauma to the right eye at Meharry Medical College. After completing his studies at Fisk, Copeland earned a medical degree in 1981 from Temple University School of Medicine. He subsequently completed an internal medicine residency at the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey in 1982, an ophthalmology residency at Howard University Hospital in 1985, an external disease/cornea fellowship at Wayne State University School of Medicine in 1986, and a cornea, external disease, and uveitis fellowship at the University of California, San Francisco in 1989.

Dr. Copeland contributed more than three decades of service to Howard University. In 1982, he arrived at Howard University Hospital as a young ophthalmology resident. Four years later, he joined the Howard University Department of Surgery, Division of Ophthalmology, as an instructor. He was elevated to

assistant professor in 1988 and to full professor in 2010. He served as interim chief of the division from 1993 until his campaign to make ophthalmology a stand-alone department was successful in 2000. He was named chair in the document ratifying creation of the Department of Ophthalmology by the Howard University Board of Trustees.

Dr. Copeland wrote multiple papers on corneal and external diseases, uveitis, and other diseases of the eye. His research focused on conditions affecting the eye, as well as the socioeconomic and gender disparities in cataract surgery, including factors such as insurance coverage, transportation, and other barriers to access.

In 2012, in conjunction with a Duke University professor, Dr. Copeland published Copeland and Afshari's Principles and Practice of Cornea, a definitive textbook on the cornea. The two-volume work is over 1,500 pages long, includes 119 chapters, and weighs over 14 pounds. Dr. Copeland also traveled throughout the world to perform humanitarian services for underserved populations. He served the people of Haiti, Saint Lucia, Ghana, Egypt, Ethiopia, Chile, Liberia, Nigeria, and India.

Over the years, Dr. Copeland's work drew numerous awards and accolades. He was frequently honored by the American Academy of Ophthalmology, garnering the Distinguished Service Award, Achievement Award, Council of Appreciation Award, Surgery by Surgeons Award, and the Secretariat Award. He was frequently listed as a ''top doctor'' in major publications. In 2008, Dr. Copeland received the Professional Service Award from the Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington, and in 2013, he garnered an Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society nomination. At Howard University, Dr. Copeland was honored at the Ninth Annual Spirituality and Medicine Seminar in 2005—he was a member of Washington's historic Shiloh Baptist Church, where he was a deacon. Howard also honored Dr. Copeland with a Citation of Achievement Award in 2008.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in remembering this barrier-breaking physician. Dr. Copeland was a leader in ophthalmology who used his expertise to help the underserved. His wisdom and compassion will be sorely missed, but his contributions will live on through all those who learned from him.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF FUTURE SCIENTISTS AND TECHNOLOGISTS—ARNYA ARORA

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Arnya Arora from Pearland, TX for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists to represent the state of Texas at the Congress of Future Science and Technology leaders.

Arnya attends Manvel High School and is one of 13 high school honor students selected from the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas. These students were selected as Texas delegates at the Congress of Future Science and Technology Leaders. This program was designed for high school students to be recognized for their hard work in school, as well as to support their aspirations of working in a science or technology field. The National Academy was founded by Richard Rossi and Dr. Robert Darling; Mr. Rossi currently serves as president. The Congress is being held at the Tsongas Center at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell from June 29th through July 1st. Arnya was selected by a group of educators to be a delegate for the Congress thanks to his dedication to his academic success and goals of pursuing science or technology. We are proud of Arnya and all of his hard work, and know he will make Pearland proud.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Arnya for being accepted into the National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists. Keep up the great work.

CELEBRATING THE 275TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM

HON. CHARLES W. DENT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. DENT. Mr. Speaker, in 1741, 275 years ago, a small group of Moravian settlers founded a community along the banks of the Monocacy Creek in an area about 60 miles north of Philadelphia.

In recognition of their faith—and in the hope that they were establishing a community that would stand the test of time—they named their settlement Bethlehem.

These Moravian settlers chose an excellent site for their settlement. Bethlehem quickly grew to become an important hub for commerce, industry and learning. It remains so to this day, and continues to evolve with the times while still retaining strong ties to its heritage and founders.

Bethlehem also remains a rich melting pot and serves as a shining example for other cities. Many of its citizens share a connection to the former Bethlehem Steel plant, which was once the number two steel producer in the United States. While time and circumstances resulted in Bethlehem Steel's closure, the people of Bethlehem have proven themselves to be as resilient and strong as the steel they forged. The City has continued to prosper, and it consistently appears on lists of the best places to live in the country.

Now with a population over 75,000, a diversified industrial base, and a unique blend of culture and commerce, Bethlehem is celebrating its 275th Anniversary.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor for me to serve and represent the people of Bethlehem, and I offer them my sincerest congratulations on their numerous achievements over the course of their city's long and storied past. May their city long continue to grow and to prosper.

RECOGNIZING TRENT HARMON, 15TH AND FINAL WINNER OF ''AMERICAN IDOL''

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, April 7, 2016, was an exciting night for Mississippians, as we were represented by gifted vocalists, Trent Harmon, of Amory, and La'Porsha Renae, of McComb, the final two contestants during the farewell season of ''American Idol.'' While Trent was ultimately victorious, he and La'Porsha have bright futures ahead of them and made Mississippi proud.

Born and raised in the First District of Mississippi, I was inspired by Trent's faith in God, hard work ethic, and humility. During the process, Trent was diagnosed with mononucleosis and was given the option to quit the show. Thankfully, Trent's hard work and determination allowed him to compete and overcome the illness.

Throughout the season, Trent was proud of his state and his state was proud of him. This was on display during the hometown parade and concert. Thousands of fans flocked to the parade in downtown Amory wearing blue and white ''Team Trent'' shirts, businesses had ''Vote for Trent'' signs in their windows, and fans crowded Amory High School to watch Trent perform. This is what is special about Mississippi. People are proud of where they come from and are happy to see each other succeed.

Most importantly, Trent had the love and support of his family. He discussed working on his family farm and restaurant and the need to leave in order to find success in the music industry. Even though he had to leave Amory, his family, community, and state continued to support his dream. I congratulate Trent on his success and wish him the best in his future career.

ESSAY BY JILLIAN SABOE

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Jillian Saboe attends Pearland High School in Pearland, Texas. The essay topic is: What makes the political process in Congress so challenging?

In recent decades, many political scientists as well as ordinary people of the

American population have taken notice of the seemingly endless routes that pieces of legislature take once they enter the hands of congressmen. Although the Constitution and other foundational texts and practices emphasize the democratic ways of government that sets America apart from the other nations of the world, what America gains in democracy, America lacks in efficiency. The polarization of Congressmen that results from diffirent morals, political parties, and religions is a major factor that makes the political process in Congress so challenging.

A piece of legislature is voted on a number of times throughout the process of becoming official. Legislature is passed through the houses of Congress sometimes several times, as well as the through the President and his peers. Each member of Congress and member of the President's cabinet come from a different and unique background. These backgrounds include ethnicity, geographical regions, religions, political beliefs, a sense of what is right and what is wrong, and several other distinguishing factors. Each different member of Congress/the Executive team votes on legislature on the basis of two different things: 1) what his/her constituency wants and 2) what he/she wants. Balancing these two things along with all of the previously mentioned personal factors, those who vote on legislature in Congress have an incredible amount of information to consider prior to making decisions. The natural and environmental differences between humans that lead to each balancing factor results in a competitive, argumentative, passive Congress.

Just like in any relationship between/among individuals, reaching agreements when faced with a challenge or suggestion can be difficult. When you extend hundreds of individuals, who are in charge of thousands of individuals each, into one single political relationship, reaching an agreement almost seems impossible. Therefore, congressional struggles that exist and prevent some pieces of legislature from being efficiently passed, are consequences of inevitability and must either be dealt with or Congress must be reorganized.

POEM BY ALBERT CASWELL IN HONOR OF ROBIN WILLIAMS

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of the remarkably talented Robin Williams, a man who gave the world one of the greatest gifts of all—laughter. The following poem was written in his honor by Albert Caswell:

LAUGH UNTIL YOU DIE IN MEMORY OF ROBIN WILLIAMS

(By: Albert Carey Caswell)

Laugh
Laugh until you die
Wipe those tears from your eyes
Laugh, laugh until you die
Because life is far too short to ever ask why
Robin Williams, was a shooting star so way up high
So out of this world and in his mind,
as to new heights he would climb
So brilliant and so bright,
soaring ever higher with his mind as he took flight
Was he really from another planet in time?
This comet that we called his life
Laugh until you dies
As he brought so many smiles
While, living with his own pain the while
A man of style and such grace
With that smile upon his face
Laugh until you die,
Cherish every moment we're alive
As his was a special place,
As none will take his place or reside
With his laughter bringing us to tears in our eyes
Robin Williams was such a genius none will deny
As everywhere he went,
His life was filled with the kindness so spent
With his warm heart as he to tried
Laugh, yea laugh until you die
Live life like it's your last night
And smile with delight so all inside
For Robin's gift was to bring joy and laughter into peoples lives
And the ''DEAD POETS SOCIETY'' wasn't really just an act,
it was the closest thing to real Robin Williams you will find
Yea, let's laugh until we die
Yes, he was one heck of a shusbut,
so Morked out all in time
So out of this world with his special comedic mind
So brilliant we can't deny
Reaching higher than most of us will ever attempt to fly
So fast and so far and so high
A natural born comic reacting with his gut in time
And there wasn't any DOUBTFIRE about Robin being a charming guy
For he traveled at light speeds
all in his need to entertain us in time
And if you ever thought you could catch up to him,
You were out of your mind
Because his mind was always in a race,
Towards laughter at such a pace
So interstellar,
so extraterrestrial as time he did not waste
So out of this world,
as he added new meaning to Area 51 with his design
All in the days of our lives,
When things seemed filled with sadness and strife
Robin gave the world what she so needed in time
LAUGHTER, is the best medicine you will find
Making us forget about our worries and our cares,
as we laughed until we cried with him there
And laughter,
HE MADE IT RAIN
Coming down in buckets so insane
Giving back everywhere he went
Was what his life's work so meant
''GOODWILL HUNTING'' was how his time was spent
Making us smile with laughter wherever he commenced
So laugh until you die
And one Robin's special loves so all inside
Were our men and women of The Armed Forces,
as half was around the world to them he would fly
Traveling overseas,
For their families there was nothing he'd deny
But his greatest loves of all,
were his children and his wife we saw
''THE WORLD'S GREATEST DAD'',
His children knew they had
Now, whenever we say his name,
our hearts fill with love and such pain missing him so bad.
Please laugh until you die
And anyone who's ever done standup will not deny
Robin was The Clown Prince of Comedy all at speed was this guy.
For he had the ''HOOK'',
as ''BACK TO NEVER LAND'' all of us took
And he could act, as his life was a work of poetry so profound
And this is why he belongs in The Hall of Fame,
with all those DEAD POETS SOCIETY he could claim now
For Robin was a Man For All Seasons,
and for so many reasons as he made us say ''WOW''
Whether, on the sidelines with his beloved Niner's,
he was everywhere so all in time here and how
Laugh until you die
Sadly, he must of been one hell of a magician,
how he kept all his tears of a clown so all hidden
But Robin's very core,
was the heart of a child of which will live on forevermore
Like Peter Pan, this wonderful man
refused to grow up and that's for sure
And that is why we should all laugh until we die
''GOOD MORNING, VIETNAM'',
when we hear him say those words we thing of Robin and his smile
As we watched him perform,
it was like a NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM as history was being born.
As he was always so strong to the finish,
cause like ''POPEYE'' he too ate his spinach
As ''THE FISHER KING'' he caught our hearts with his smile
Bringing us to new ''AWAKENINGS'' all the while
And that's why we should all laugh until we die
As he was one of ''THE ARISTOCRATS'',
Kings of Comedy and that's a fact
Equipped with such ''ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE'',
oh how he could rap
And upon the stage, Robin would ''SIEZE THE DAY''
Watching him, was always ''THE BEST OF TIMES'' we can say
As not the question we all must ask,
from his craft ''WHAT DREAMS MAY COME?''
While, riding in his ''RV'' or on the stage of life he brought such glee
As now it's all very clear,
because of his heart he was always the ''MAN OF THE YEAR''.
But ''THE FINAL CUT'',
Was so what we all felt when we heard he had died
As came the tears down upon our face as we asked why?
Knowing, that no longer on this earth Robin would reside
And on that day our world got a little bit sadder as we realized
But he's not really gone
For he lives on and on,
in everyone's heart who has seen him perform
As into future generations they will admire this sensation,
named Robin Williams living on as out his name they cry
And if we could all ''PATCH ADAMS'' up our hearts
And from his memory in all our tears try to start
TO LAUGH
By remembering what came from his heart
All in that laughter which was his TRUE WORK OF ART
In our hearts
And laugh until we die
Because, we all live short lives

TRIBUTE TO THE CRESTON HIGH SCHOOL WRESTLING TEAM

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the Creston High School wrestling team for winning the Iowa High School 2A Wrestling Championship title.

I send my congratulations to each member of the team:

Wrestlers by Weight Class—
113—Jacob Goodson
138—Wyatt Thompson
160—Cam Leith
195—Seth Maitlen
126—Trevor Marlin
145—Mitchel Swank
170—Chase Shiltz
220—Kadon Hulett
Head Coach: Darrell Frain.
Coaches: Cody Downing and Eric Ehlen.

Mr. Speaker, the success of this team and their coaches demonstrates the rewards of hard work, commitment, and determination. I am honored to represent them in the United States Congress. I ask that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating the team for competing in this rigorous competition and wishing them all nothing but continued success.

CELEBRATING THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF TEXAS BORDER BUSINESS

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the ten year anniversary of Texas Border Business.

Roberto H. Gonzalez founded Texas Border Business in 2005 as a source of business news for South Texas and Northern Mexico. Since its inception, it has been regarded by the business community as one of the most valuable and credible sources for commerce news. Their high caliber reporting and journalistic integrity offers the region's businesses a well-balanced and informative source for news.

Regular features include industry and market reports, company success stories and executive insights. The newspaper also provides regular updates on educational programs serving businesses, ongoing features introducing local company web sites, as well as articles on local politics and how they affect business in the Rio Grande Valley. In addition, Texas Border Business covers the high-tech industry, with reports on e-commerce, broadband, wireless, data storage, web design, computer peripherals, and security.

Furthermore, Texas Border Business also serves as a reminder that perseverance is the key to success. Roberto H. Gonzalez started this publication using the last few dollars that he had. His home was being foreclosed and bills were piling up. He had been unemployed for over a year and had barely enough money to make it day to day. However, he never lost hope. After, ten years of success through hard work and dedication, this anniversary shows what can be accomplished.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have the opportunity to recognize Texas Border Business on its ten year anniversary and I congratulate Roberto Hugo Gonzalez and the Texas Border Business team for their important contributions to the business community in the Rio Grande Valley.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE

HON. THOMAS J. ROONEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Mr. ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 75th anniversary of MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida.

The Base was officially activated on April 16, 1941 and named in honor of Col. Leslie MacDill, a World War I veteran and aviation pioneer who died in a plane crash. MacDill AFB has a long and established legacy of protecting our national security.

MacDill has continued to evolve and thrive over its 75 year lifespan. MacDill went from training crews to fly B–17 Flying Fortresses and B–26 Marauder bombers in World War II to B–29 Superfortresses, B–47 Stratojets and F–84, F–4 and F–16 fighters. It now is home to two wings that fly KC–135 Stratotanker aerial refueling jets. The base has played a key role in U.S. military actions from World War II, the Korean War, the Cuban missile crisis, the Vietnam War, the Gulf War and the ongoing fight against terrorism in the Middle East and elsewhere. From its first day in service to our nation to now, MacDill has consistently played a vital role in U.S. military achievement.

Currently, MacDill houses the 6th Air Mobility Wing and 39 Mission Teammates, including U.S. Central Command and U.S. Special Operations Command, Marine Corps Forces Central Command, the Joint Communications Support Element and dozens of other mission partners, including, until July, the aircraft operations center of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

As integral as it is to our national security operations, MacDill is also a critical partner in our nation's humanitarian response efforts. Its strategic location was used to respond and aid the millions devastated by the 2010 earthquake that ravaged the capital city of Haiti, Port-a-Prince.

MacDill is home to more than 13,000 military and civilian personnel. Nearly 170,000 retirees live in the Tampa area and depend on the base for many necessary services. MacDill remains a vital economic driver and a source of good paying jobs for Southwest Florida residents. The base pumps about $5 billion a year into the regional economy. MacDill is part of fabric of Southwest Florida; the relationship between the base and community is among the strongest in the military.

Many of my constituents work and serve at MacDill and I am proud to represent these brave Floridians in an area that is so integral to our national defense. I know that MacDill will continue to play a crucial role in protecting Florida's families as our nation faces ongoing and future security challenges. I am proud to support MacDill Air Force Base every day and especially today on its 75-year anniversary.

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

Senate passed H.R. 636, Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act, as amended.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S2131–S2203

Measures Introduced: Six bills and two resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 2814–2819, S. Res. 431, and S. Con. Res. 35. **Page S2197**

Measures Passed:

Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act: By 95 yeas to 3 nays (Vote No. 47), Senate passed of H.R. 636, to amend title 49, United States Code, to authorize appropriations for the Federal Aviation Administration for fiscal years 2016 through 2017, after agreeing to the following amendment proposed thereto: **Pages S2143–45**

Adopted:

Thune Amendment No. 3799, to amend the title. **Page S2144**

Fallen Heroes Flag Act: Committee on Rules and Administration was discharged from further consideration of S. 2755, to provide Capitol-flown flags to the immediate family of firefighters, law enforcement officers, members of rescue squads or ambulance crews, and public safety officers who are killed in the line of duty, and the bill was then passed. **Pages S2201–02**

Breast Cancer Awareness Commemorative Coin Act: Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs was discharged from further consideration of H.R. 2722, to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of the fight against breast cancer, and the bill was then passed. **Page S2202**

Recognizing the 4–H Program: Senate agreed to S. Res. 431, recognizing the immeasurable benefits of the national 4–H program to the young people of the United States and supporting the campaign to expand the 4–H program. **Page S2202**

Measures Considered:

Energy Policy Modernization Act—Agreement: Senate resumed consideration of S. 2012, to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, taking action on the following amendments proposed thereto: **Pages S2145–91**

Adopted:

Murkowski (for Cantwell) Amendment No. 3276 (to Amendment No. 2953), to strike certain provisions relating to technology demonstration on the distribution system, large-scale geothermal energy, and bio-power initiatives. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski (for Klobuchar) Modified Amendment No. 3302 (to Amendment No. 2953), to modify provisions relating to the energy efficiency materials pilot program. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski (for Flake/McCain) Amendment No. 3055 (to Amendment No. 2953), to establish a pilot project relating to the Western Area Power Administration. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski (for Flake) Amendment No. 3050 (to Amendment No. 2953), to require the Secretary of Energy to make available certain information about research grants of the Department of Energy. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski (for Hatch) Amendment No. 3237 (to Amendment No. 2953), to require the Secretary of the Interior to submit recommendations to Congress on incorporating Internet-based lease sales for the sale of Federal oil and gas in certain circumstances. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski Amendment No. 3308 (to Amendment No. 2953), to clarify certain provisions relating to the natural gas pipeline authorized in the Denali National Park and Preserve. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski (for Heller/Heinrich) Modified Amendment No. 3286 (to Amendment No. 2953), to promote the development of renewable energy on public land. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski (for Vitter) Amendment No. 3075 (to Amendment No. 2953), to require the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement to review the economic impact of a rule on small entities. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski (for Portman) Amendment No. 3168 (to Amendment No. 2953), to exclude power supply circuits, drivers, and devices designed to be connected to, and power, light-emitting diodes or organic light-emitting diodes providing illumination or ceiling fans using direct current motors from energy conservation standards for external power supplies. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski (for Shaheen) Modified Amendment No. 3292 (to Amendment No. 2953), to reduce barriers to combined heat and power systems and waste heat to power systems. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski (for Heinrich) Amendment No. 3155 (to Amendment No. 2953), to ensure that minority serving-institutions are considered in developing a strategy for the support and development of a skilled energy workforce, and to ensure the Secretary of Energy shall provide direct assistance in carrying out the energy workforce pilot grant program. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski (for Manchin) Amendment No. 3270 (to Amendment No. 2953), to modify provisions relating to the coal technology program. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski (for Cantwell) Modified Amendment No. 3313 (to Amendment No. 2953), to express the sense of the Senate on accelerating energy innovation. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski (for Cantwell) Amendment No. 3214 (to Amendment No. 2953), to provide for improved energy emergency response efforts of the Department of Energy. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski (for Vitter) Amendment No. 3266 (to Amendment No. 2953), to require the Comptroller General of the United States to prepare a report relating to the statutory and regulatory authority of the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement relating to the legal procurement of privately owned helicopter fuel, without agreement, from lessees, permit holders, operators of federally leased offshore facilities, or independent third parties. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski (for Sullivan) Amendment No. 3310 (to Amendment No. 2953), to provide for the correction of a survey of certain land in the State of Alaska. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski (for Heinrich) Amendment No. 3317 (to Amendment No. 2953), to require the Secretary of Energy to ensure that the costs of general and administrative overhead are not allocated to laboratory directed research and development. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski (for Vitter) Modified Amendment No. 3265 (to Amendment No. 2953), to provide additional priorities for an energy workforce pilot grant program. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski (for Kaine/Warner) Amendment No. 3012 (to Amendment No. 2953), to remove the use restrictions on certain land transferred to Rockingham County, Virginia. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski (for Alexander/Merkley) Amendment No. 3290 (to Amendment No. 2953), to add a provision relating to secondary use applications of electric vehicle batteries. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski (for Gillibrand/Cassidy) Amendment No. 3004 (to Amendment No. 2953), to allow the use of Federal disaster relief and emergency assistance for energy-efficient products and structures. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski (for Warner/Kaine) Modified Amendment No. 3233 (to Amendment No. 2953), to authorize, direct, facilitate, and expedite the transfer of administrative jurisdiction of certain Federal land. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski (for Thune) Amendment No. 3239 (to Amendment No. 2953), to establish a subcommittee to coordinate and facilitate United States leadership in high-energy physics. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski (for Udall) Amendment No. 3221 (to Amendment No. 2953), to establish a voluntary WaterSense program within the Environmental Protection Agency. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski (for Coons) Amendment No. 3203 (to Amendment No. 2953), to provide for a study of waivers of certain cost-sharing requirements of the Department of Energy. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski (for Portman) Modified Amendment No. 3309 (to Amendment No. 2953), to provide for activities relating to the centennial of the National Park System. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski (for Flake) Amendment No. 3229 (to Amendment No. 2953), to establish a program to reduce the potential impacts of solar energy facilities on certain species. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski (for Inhofe/Peters) Amendment No. 3251 (to Amendment No. 2953), to modify the calculation of fuel economy for gaseous fuel dual fueled automobiles. **Pages S2145–91**

Murkowski Amendment No. 2963 (to Amendment No. 2953), to modify a provision relating to bulk-power system reliability impact statements. **Pages S2145–91**

By a unanimous vote of 97 yeas (Vote No. 48), Murkowski/Cantwell Modified Amendment No. 3234 (to Amendment No. 2953), to add certain provisions relating to natural resources. (Pursuant to the

order of Wednesday, April 13, 2016, the amendment having achieved 60 affirmative votes, was agreed to.) **Page S2187**

By 66 yeas to 31 nays (Vote No. 49), Isakson Amendment No. 3202 (to Amendment No. 2953), to improve the accuracy of mortgage underwriting used by the Federal Housing Administration by ensuring that energy costs are included in the underwriting process, to reduce the amount of energy consumed by homes, to facilitate the creation of energy efficiency retrofit and construction jobs. (Pursuant to the order of Wednesday, April 13, 2016, the amendment having achieved 60 affirmative votes, was agreed to.) **Page S2188**

Murkowski (for Burr) Modified Amendment No. 3175 (to Amendment No. 2953), to ensure that the Secretary of the Interior collaborates fully with State and local authorities and certain nonprofit entities in managing the Corolla Wild Horse population on Federal Land. (A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the requirement of a 60 affirmative vote threshold, be vitiated.) **Page S2188**

Murkowski (for Cassidy/Markey) Amendment No. 2954 (to Amendment No. 2953), to provide for certain increases in, and limitations on, the drawdown and sales of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. (A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the requirement of a 60 affirmative vote threshold, be vitiated.) **Page S2145**

Murkowski Amendment No. 2953, in the nature of a substitute. **Page S2145**

Rejected:

By 34 yeas to 63 nays (Vote No. 50), Lankford Amendment No. 3210 (to Amendment No. 2953), to add provisions relating to acquisition of Federal land under the Land and Water Conservation Fund. (Pursuant to the order of Wednesday, April 13, 2016, the amendment having failed to achieve 60 affirmative votes, was not agreed to.) **Page S2189**

By 42 yeas to 55 nays (Vote No. 51), Boozman Amendment No. 3311 (to Amendment No. 2953), to require a report relating to certain transmission infrastructure projects. (Pursuant to the order of Wednesday, April 13, 2016, the amendment having failed to achieve 60 affirmative votes, was not agreed to.) **Pages S2189–90**

By 50 yeas to 47 nays (Vote No. 52), Udall Amendment No. 3312 (to Amendment No. 2953), to require the Secretary of the Treasury to develop a plan for issuance of Clean Energy Victory Bonds. (Pursuant to the order of Wednesday, April 13, 2016, the amendment having failed to achieve 60 affirmative votes, was not agreed to.) **Page S2190**

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

By 33 yeas to 64 nays (Vote No. 53), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, Senate rejected a motion to waive all applicable sections of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and applicable budget resolutions with respect to consideration of Paul Amendment No. 3787 (to Amendment No. 2953), to provide for the establishment of free market enterprise zones in order to help facilitate the creation of new jobs, entrepreneurial opportunities, enhanced and renewed educational opportunities, and increased community involvement in bankrupt or economically distressed areas. Subsequently, a point of order that the amendment was in violation of section 311(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, was sustained, and the amendment thus fell. **Pages S2190–91**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the previously scheduled vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the bill, upon reconsideration, be vitiated. **Page S2191**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that at approximately 9:30 a.m., on Wednesday, April 20, 2016, the time until 10 a.m. be equally divided between the two Leaders, or their designees; and that at 10 a.m., Senate vote on passage of the bill, as amended. **Page S2191**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the bill at approximately 9:30 a.m., on Wednesday, April 20, 2016. **Page S2202**

Message from the President: Senate received the following message from the President of the United States:

Transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the issuance of an Executive Order expanding the scope of the national emergency originally declared in Executive Order 13566 of February 25, 2011, with respect to Libya; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. (PM–46) **Pages S2196–97**

Nomination Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nomination:

Michael Joseph Missal, of Maryland, to be Inspector General, Department of Veterans Affairs. **Page S2203**

Messages from the House: **Page S2197**

Measures Referred: **Page S2197**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S2197–99**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S2199–S2200**

Additional Statements: **Page S2196**

Amendments Submitted: **Page S2200**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S2201**

Privileges of the Floor: Page S2201

Record Votes: Seven record votes were taken today. (Total—53) Pages S2143, S2187–91

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 6:50 p.m., until 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, April 20, 2016. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S2202.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies approved for full committee consideration proposed legislation making appropriations for fiscal year 2017 for transportation, housing and urban development, and related agencies.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies approved for full committee consideration proposed legislation making appropriations for fiscal year 2017 for commerce, justice, science, and related agencies.

NOMINATION

Committee on Armed Services: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nomination of General Vincent K. Brooks, USA, for reappointment to the grade of general and to be Commander, United Nations Command/Combined Forces Command/United States Forces Korea, after the nominee testified and answered questions in his own behalf.

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST AND FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities concluded a closed hearing to examine cybersecurity and United States Cyber Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program, after receiving testimony from Thomas F. Atkin, Acting Assistant Secretary for Homeland Defense and Global Security, Principal Deputy of the Principal Cyber Advisor to the Secretary and performing the functions of the Principal Cyber Advisor to the Secretary, and Lieutenant General James K. McLaughlin, USAF, Deputy Commander, United States Cyber Command, both of the Department of Defense.

BUDGET: EPA

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Committee concluded an oversight hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2017 for the Environmental Protection Agency, after receiving testimony from Gina McCarthy, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency.

CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE ALLIANCE FOR PROSPERITY

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee concluded a hearing to examine Central America and the Alliance for Prosperity, focusing on identifying United States priorities and assessing progress, after receiving testimony from Francisco Palmieri, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs; Elizabeth Hogan, Acting Assistant Administrator for Latin America and the Caribbean, and Jose R. Cardenas, former Acting Assistant Administrator for Latin America and the Caribbean, both of the United States Agency for International Development; and Jim Swigert, National Democratic Institute for International Affairs Latin America and Caribbean Programs, Washington, D.C.

PREVENTING DRUG TRAFFICKING THROUGH INTERNATIONAL MAIL

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee met to discuss preventing drug trafficking through international mail, receiving testimony from Guy Cottrell, Chief Postal Inspector, Postal Inspection Service, United States Postal Service; Joseph P. Murphy, Chief, International Postal Policy Unit, Office of Specialized and Technical Agencies, Bureau of International Organization Affairs, Department of State; Mark W. Hamlet, Special Agent in Charge, Special Operations Division, Drug Enforcement Agency, Department of Justice; Todd C. Owen, Executive Assistant Commissioner, Office of Operations, Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security; and Norman T. Schenk, United Parcel Service, Inc., Washington, D.C.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee met in closed session to receive a briefing on certain intelligence matters from officials of the intelligence community.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 4 public bills, H.R. 4992–4995; and 3 resolutions, H.J. Res. 88; and H. Res. 692–693, were introduced.

Page H1852

Additional Cosponsors: Page H1853

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 414, to amend the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act to repeal certain additional disclosure requirements, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 114–504);

H.R. 1975, to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to require the Securities Exchange Commission to refund or credit excess payments made to the Commission (H. Rept. 114–505);

H.R. 2357, to direct the Securities and Exchange Commission to revise Form S–3 so as to add listing and registration of a class of common equity securities on a national securities exchange as an additional basis for satisfying the requirements of General Instruction I.B.1. of such form and to remove such listing and registration as a requirement of General Instruction I.B.6. of such form (H. Rept. 114–506);

H.R. 3557, to amend the Financial Stability Act of 2010 to require the Financial Stability Oversight Council to hold open meetings and comply with the requirements of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, to provide additional improvements to the Council, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 114–507);

H.R. 3868, to amend the Investment Company Act of 1940 to remove certain restrictions on the ability of business development companies to own securities of investment advisers and certain financial companies, to change certain requirements relating to the capital structure of business development companies, to direct the Securities and Exchange Commission to revise certain rules relating to business development companies, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 114–508);

H.R. 4498, to clarify the definition of general solicitation under Federal securities law (H. Rept. 114–509); and

H.R. 1481, to amend the Small Business Act to strengthen the small business industrial base, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 114–510). Page H1852

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Ros-Lehtinen to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. Page H1805

Recess: The House recessed at 10:43 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. Page H1811

Guest Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the Guest Chaplain, Reverend Kevin Hintze, Zion Lutheran Church, Georgetown, Texas. Pages H1811–12

No Hires for the Delinquent IRS Act and IRS Oversight While Eliminating Spending Act of 2016—Rule for consideration: The House agreed to H. Res. 687, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1206) to prohibit the hiring of additional Internal Revenue Service employees until the Secretary of the Treasury certifies that no employee of the Internal Revenue Service has a seriously delinquent tax debt, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4885) to require that user fees collected by the Internal Revenue Service be deposited into the general fund of the Treasury, by a recorded vote of 239 ayes to 173 noes, Roll No. 158, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 239 yeas to 173 nays, Roll No. 157.

Pages H1814–19, H1824–25

Imposing a ban on the payment of bonuses to employees of the Internal Revenue Service until the Secretary of the Treasury develops and implements a comprehensive customer service strategy and Ensuring Integrity in the IRS Workforce Act—Rule for consideration: The House agreed to H. Res. 688, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4890) to impose a ban on the payment of bonuses to employees of the Internal Revenue Service until the Secretary of the Treasury develops and implements a comprehensive customer service strategy, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3724) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prohibit the Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service from rehiring any employee of the Internal Revenue Service who was involuntarily separated from service for misconduct, by a recorded vote of 242 ayes to 172 noes, Roll No. 156, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 240 yeas to 172 nays, Roll No. 155.

Pages H1819–24

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Internal Revenue Service should provide printed copies of Internal Revenue Service Publication 17 to taxpayers in the United States free of charge: H. Res. 673, Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Internal Revenue Service should provide printed copies of Internal Revenue Service Publication 17 to taxpayers in the United States free of charge; Pages H1825–27

Prohibiting the use of funds by the Internal Revenue Service to target citizens of the United States for exercising any right guaranteed under the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States: H.R. 4903, to prohibit the use of funds by the Internal Revenue Service to target citizens of the United States for exercising any right guaranteed under the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States; **Pages H1827–30**

Service Provider Opportunity Clarification Act: H.R. 4284, to require the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to issue regulations providing examples of a failure to comply in good faith with the requirements of prime contractors with respect to subcontracting plans; **Pages H1830–31**

Small Agriculture Producer Size Standards Improvements Act: H.R. 3714, to amend the Small Business Act to allow the Small Business Administration to establish size standards for small agricultural enterprises using the same process for establishing size standards for small business concerns; **Pages H1831–33**

Maximizing Small Business Competition Act of 2016: H.R. 4332, to amend the Small Business Act to clarify the duties of procurement center representatives with respect to reviewing solicitations for a contract or task order contract; **Pages H1833–34**

Unifying Small Business Terminology Act of 2016: H.R. 4325, to amend the Small Business Act to modify the anticipated value of certain contracts reserved exclusively for small business concerns; and **Pages H1834–35**

Small and Disadvantaged Business Enhancement Act of 2016: H.R. 4326, to amend the Small Business Act to expand the duties of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization. **Pages H1835–37**

Presidential Message: Read a message from the President wherein he notified Congress that he has issued an executive order expanding the scope of the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13566 of February 25, 2011 with respect to Libya—referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed (H. Doc. 114–124). **Page H1837**

Senate Messages: Message received from the Senate and message received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appear on pages H1814 and H1850.

Quorum Calls Votes: Two yea-and-nay votes and two recorded votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H1822–23, H1823–24, H1824, and H1824–25. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

Committee Meetings

FOCUS ON THE FARM ECONOMY: TIGHTENING CREDIT CONDITIONS

Committee on Agriculture: Subcommittee on Commodity Exchanges, Energy, and Credit held a hearing entitled ''Focus on the Farm Economy: Tightening Credit Conditions''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Appropriations: Full Committee held a markup on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill for FY 2017; Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill for FY 2017; and Revised Report on the Interim Suballocation of Budget Allocations for FY 2017. The Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill for FY 2017 and the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill for FY 2017 were ordered reported, as amended. The Revised Report on the Interim Suballocation of Budget Allocations for FY 2017 passed.

REVIEWING RECENT CHANGES TO OSHA'S SILICA STANDARDS

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Subcommittee on Workforce Protections held a hearing entitled ''Reviewing Recent Changes to OSHA's Silica Standards''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

DECIPHERING THE DEBATE OVER ENCRYPTION: INDUSTRY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSPECTIVES

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled ''Deciphering the Debate Over Encryption: Industry and Law Enforcement Perspectives''. Testimony was heard from Captain Charles Cohen, Commander, Office of Intelligence and Investigative Technologies, Indiana State Police; Chief Thomas Galati, Chief, Intelligence Bureau, New York City Police Department; Amy Hess, Executive Assistant Director for Science and Technology, Federal Bureau of Investigations; and public witnesses.

MEDICARE ACCESS AND CHIP REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2015: EXAMINING PHYSICIAN EFFORTS TO PREPARE FOR MEDICARE PAYMENT REFORMS

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Health held a hearing entitled ''Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015: Examining Physician Efforts to Prepare for Medicare Payment Reforms''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Communications and Technology concluded a markup on H.R. 4889, the ''Kelsey Smith Act of 2016''; H.R. 4167, the ''Kari's Law Act of 2015''; H.R. 4884, the ''Controlling the Unchecked and Reckless Ballooning of the Lifeline Fund Act (CURB Lifeline)''; H.R. 4111, the ''Rural Health Care Connectivity Act of 2015''; H.R. 4190, the ''Spectrum Challenge Prize Act of 2015''; H.R. 3998, the ''Securing Access to Networks in Disasters (SANDy) Act''; and H.R. 2031, the ''Anti-Swatting Act of 2015''. The following bills were forwarded to the full committee, as amended: H.R. 4889 and H.R. 4884. The following bills were forwarded to the full committee, without amendment: H.R. 4167, H.R. 4111, H.R. 4190, H.R. 3998, and H.R. 2031.

PREVENTING CULTURAL GENOCIDE: COUNTERING THE PLUNDER AND SALE OF PRICELESS CULTURAL ANTIQUITIES BY ISIS

Committee on Financial Services: Task Force to Investigate Terrorism Financing held a hearing entitled ''Preventing Cultural Genocide: Countering the Plunder and Sale of Priceless Cultural Antiquities by ISIS''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

FY 2017 BUDGET PRIORITIES FOR EAST ASIA: ENGAGEMENT, INTEGRATION, AND DEMOCRACY

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific held a hearing entitled ''FY 2017 Budget Priorities for East Asia: Engagement, Integration, and Democracy''. Testimony was heard from Daniel R. Russel, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Department of State; and Jonathan Stivers, Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Asia, U.S. Agency for International Development.

ISRAEL IMPERILED: THREATS TO THE JEWISH STATE

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade; and Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa, held a joint hearing entitled ''Israel Imperiled: Threats to the Jewish State''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

KEEPING PACE WITH TRADE, TRAVEL, AND SECURITY: HOW DOES CBP PRIORITIZE AND IMPROVE STAFFING AND INFRASTRUCTURE?

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security held a hearing entitled ''Keeping Pace with Trade, Travel, and Security: How does CBP Prioritize and Improve Staffing and Infrastructure?''. Testimony was heard from the following Customs and Border Protection officials: Eugene Schied, Acting Executive Assistant Commissioner, Office of Enterprise Services; Linda Jacksta, Assistant Commissioner, Office of Human Resources Management; and John P. Wagner, Deputy Assistant Commissioner, Office of Field Operations; Michael Gelber, Deputy Commissioner, Public Buildings Service, General Services Administration; and a public witness.

PIPELINES: SECURING THE VEINS OF THE AMERICAN ECONOMY

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Transportation Security held a hearing entitled ''Pipelines: Securing the Veins of the American Economy''. Testimony was heard from Sonya Proctor, Surface Division Director, Office of Security Policy and Industry Engagement, Transportation Security Administration, Department of Homeland Security; Paul W. Parfomak, Specialist in Energy and Infrastructure Policy, Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress; and public witnesses.

THE REAL VICTIMS OF A RECKLESS AND LAWLESS IMMIGRATION POLICY: FAMILIES AND SURVIVORS SPEAK OUT ON THE REAL COST OF THIS ADMINISTRATION'S POLICIES

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security held a hearing entitled ''The Real Victims of a Reckless and Lawless Immigration Policy: Families and Survivors Speak Out on the Real Cost of This Administration's Policies''. Testimony was heard from Charles Jenkins, Sheriff, Frederick County, Maryland; and public witnesses.

EXECUTIVE OVERREACH IN DOMESTIC AFFAIRS PART II—IRS ABUSE, WELFARE REFORM, AND OTHER ISSUES

Committee on the Judiciary: Task Force on Executive Overreach held a hearing entitled ''Executive Overreach in Domestic Affairs Part II—IRS Abuse, Welfare Reform, and Other Issues''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

RECENT CHANGES TO ENDANGERED SPECIES CRITICAL HABITAT DESIGNATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Committee on Natural Resources: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Recent Changes to Endangered Species Critical Habitat Designation and Implementation''. Testimony was heard from Dan Ashe, Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and public witnesses.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURE

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held a hearing on H.R. 3881, the ''Cooperative Management of Mineral Rights Act of 2015''. Testimony was heard from Glenn Casamassa, Association Deputy Chief, National Forest System, U.S. Forest Service; and public witnesses.

DOCUMENT PRODUCTION STATUS UPDATE, PART II

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Document Production Status Update, Part II''. Testimony was heard from Howard Shelanski, Administrator, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget; Jim R. Esquea, Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services; and Jonathan E. Meyer, Deputy General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, Department of Homeland Security.

DATA ACT: MONITORING IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on Government Operations; and Subcommittee on Information Technology, held a joint hearing entitled ''DATA Act: Monitoring Implementation Progress''. Testimony was heard from Michelle Sager, Director, Strategic Issues, Government Accountability Office; David Mader, Controller, Office of Federal Financial Management, Office of Management and Budget; David A. Lebryk, Fiscal Assistant Secretary, Department of the Treasury; and Michael Peckham, Executive Director, DATA Act Program Management Office, Department of Health and Human Services.

THE COMMERCIAL SPACE LAUNCH INDUSTRY: SMALL SATELLITE OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Subcommittee on Space held a hearing entitled ''The Commercial Space Launch Industry: Small Satellite Opportunities and Challenges''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

A CONTINUED ASSESSMENT OF DELAYS IN VETERANS' ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''A Continued Assessment of Delays in Veterans' Access to Health Care''. Testimony was heard from David Shulkin, M.D., Under Secretary for Health, Department of Veterans Affairs; Larry Reinkemeyer, Director, Kansas City Office of Audits and Evaluations, Office of Inspector General, Department of Veterans Affairs; and Debra Draper, Director, Health Care Team, Government Accountability Office.

TAX RETURN FILING SEASON

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Oversight held a hearing on the tax return filing season. Testimony was heard from Representative Renacci; John Koskinen, Commissioner, Internal Revenue Service; Timothy Camus, Deputy Inspector General for Investigations and Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration, Department of the Treasury; and Jessica Lucas-Judy, Acting Director, Strategic Issues, Government Accountability Office.

Joint Meetings

EUROPEAN JEWISH COMMUNITIES

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Commission concluded a hearing to examine anticipating and preventing deadly attacks on European Jewish communities, after receiving testimony from Rabbi Andrew Baker, Personal Representative of the Office for Security and Co-operation in Europe Chairman-in-Office on Combating Anti-Semitism, Washington, D.C.; Jonathan Biermann, Crisis Cell for Belgian Jewish Community, Brussels, Belgium; John Farmer, Rutgers University Faith-Based Communities Security Program, Newark, New Jersey; and Paul Goldenberg, Secure Community Network, Cream Ridge, New Jersey.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20, 2016

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Department of Defense, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2017 for Defense innovation and research, 10:30 a.m., SD–192.

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 Environmental Protection Agency, 10:45 a.m., SD–124.

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on SeaPower, to hold hearings to examine Navy and Marine Corps aviation programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program, 2 p.m., SR–232A.

Subcommittee on Personnel, to hold hearings to examine the current state of research, diagnosis, and treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury, 2:30 p.m., SR–222.

Committee on the Budget: to hold hearings to examine restoring stability to government operations, 10:30 a.m., SD–608.

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 stakeholder perspectives, 10 a.m., SR–253.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: to hold hearings to examine new approaches and innovative technologies to improve water supply, 10 a.m., SD–406.

Committee on Finance: business meeting to consider an original bill to prevent identity theft and tax refund fraud, and an original bill entitled, ''Taxpayer Protection Act of 2016'', 10 a.m., SD–215.

Committee on Foreign Relations: to receive a closed briefing on an Administration update on the Mosul Dam, 5 p.m., SVC–217.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: to hold hearings to examine the administrative state, focusing on an examination of Federal rulemaking, 10 a.m., SD–342.

Committee on the Judiciary: to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Inga S. Bernstein, to be United States District Judge for the District of Massachusetts, Stephanie A. Gallagher, to be United States District Judge for the District of Maryland, Suzanne Mitchell, and Scott L. Palk, both to be a United States District Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma, and Ronald G. Russell, to be United States District Judge for the District of Utah, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Committee on Rules and Administration: to hold hearings to examine the nomination of Carla D. Hayden, of Maryland, to be Librarian of Congress, 2:15 p.m., SR–301.

House

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Legislative Branch, markup on the Legislative Branch Appropriations Bill, FY 2017, 11:30 a.m., HT–2 Capitol.

Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Military Personnel, markup on H.R. 4909, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017, 11:30 a.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces, markup on H.R. 4909, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017, 1:30 p.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces, markup on H.R. 4909, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017, 3 p.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Energy and Power; and Subcommittee on Environment and the Economy, joint hearing entitled ''Fiscal Year 2017 Nuclear Regulatory Commission Budget'', 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Select Investigative Panel of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, hearing entitled ''The Pricing of Fetal Tissue'', 10 a.m., HVC–210.

Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled ''How Secure are U.S. Bioresearch Labs? Preventing the Next Safety Lapse'', 10:15 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Health, markup on H.R. 4978, the ''Nurturing and Supporting Healthy Babies Act''; H.R. 4641, to provide for the establishment of an inter-agency task force to review, modify, and update best practices for pain management and prescribing pain medication, and for other purposes; H.R. 3680, the ''Co-Prescribing to Reduce Overdoses Act of 2015''; H.R. 3691, the ''Improving Treatment for Pregnant and Postpartum Women Act''; H.R. 1818, the ''Veteran Emergency Medical Technician Support Act''; the ''Opioid Use Disorder Treatment Expansion and Modernization Act''; H.R. 3250, the ''DXM Abuse Prevention Act''; H.R. 4969, the ''John Thomas Decker Act of 2016''; H.R. 4586, ''Lali's Law''; H.R. 4599, the ''Reducing Unused Medications Act of 2016''; H.R. 4976, the ''Opioid Review Modernization Act''; and the ''Examining Opioid Treatment Infrastructure Act of 2016'', 1:30 p.m., 2322 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 1150, the ''Frank R. Wolf International Religious Freedom Act of 2015''; H.R. 3694, the ''Strategy to Oppose Predatory Organ Trafficking Act''; H.R. 4939, the ''United States-Caribbean Strategic Engagement Act of 2016''; H. Con. Res. 88, reaffirming the Taiwan Relations Act and the Six Assurances as the cornerstone of United States-Taiwan relations; S. 284, the ''Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act''; and S. 2143, to provide for the authority for the successors and assigns of the Starr-Camargo Bridge Company to maintain and operate a toll bridge across the Rio Grande near Rio Grande City, Texas, and for other purposes, 10 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on the Judiciary, Full Committee, markup on S. 1890, the ''Defend Trade Secrets Act of 2016''; S. 125, the ''Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program Reauthorization Act of 2015''; H.R. 3380, the ''Transnational Drug Trafficking Act of 2015''; and H.R. 4985, to amend the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act to protect classified information in Federal court challenges, 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Water, Power and Oceans, hearing on H.R. 1869, the ''Environmental Compliance Cost Transparency Act of 2015''; H.R. 2993, the ''Water Recycling Acceleration Act of 2015''; and H.R. 4582, the ''Save Our Salmon (SOS) Act'', 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Subcommittee on Federal Lands, hearing entitled ''Exploring Current Natural Resource Research Efforts and the Future of America's Land-Grant Colleges and Universities'', 10:30 a.m., 1334 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Subcommittee on Information Technology, hearing entitled

''Federal Cybersecurity Detection, Response, and Mitigation'', 9:30 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on the Interior, hearing entitled ''Barriers to Endangered Species Act Delisting, Part I'', 1 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Subcommittee on Energy, hearing entitled ''An Overview of Fusion Energy Science'', 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Small Business and the Federal Government: How Cyber-Attacks Threaten Both'', 11 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Full Committee, markup on General Services Administration Capital Investment and Leasing Program Resolutions; H.R. 4957, to designate the Federal building located at 99 New York Avenue, N.E., in the District of Columbia as the ''Ariel Rios Federal Building''; H.R. 4937, the ''Protecting our Infrastructure of Pipelines and Enhancing Safety Act of 2016''; H.R. 4231, to direct the Librarian of Congress to obtain a stained glass panel depicting the seal of the District of Columbia and install the panel among the stained glass panels depicting the seals of States which overlook the Main Reading Room of the Library of Congress Thomas Jefferson Building; and possible other matters cleared for consideration, 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Health, hearing on H.R. 2460, to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the provision of adult day health care services for veterans; H.R. 3956, the ''VA Health Center Management Stability and Improvement Act''; H.R. 3974, the ''Grow Our Own Directive: Physician Assistant Employment and Education Act of 2015''; H.R. 3989, the ''Support Our Military Caregivers Act''; draft legislation to ensure that each VA medical facility complies with requirements relating to scheduling veterans for health care appointments and to improve the uniform application of directives; and draft legislation to direct VA to establish a list of drugs that require an increased level of informed consent, 10 a.m., 334 Cannon.

Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, hearing entitled ''A Review of Veterans Preference in Federal Government Hiring'', 2:30 p.m., 334 Cannon.

Committee on Ways and Means, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 4923, the ''American Manufacturing Competitiveness Act of 2016'', 10 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

Joint Meetings

Joint Economic Committee: to hold hearings to examine our complex tax code and the economy, 2:30 p.m., SD–562.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

9:30 a.m., Wednesday, April 20

Senate Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Senate will continue consideration of S. 2012, Energy Policy Modernization Act, and will vote on passage of the bill at 10 a.m.

Following disposition of S. 2012, Senate will begin consideration of H.R. 2028, Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Wednesday, April 20

House Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Consideration of H.R. 488—IRS Oversight While Eliminating Spending Act of 2016 and H.R. 1206—No Hires for the Delinquent IRS Act.

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